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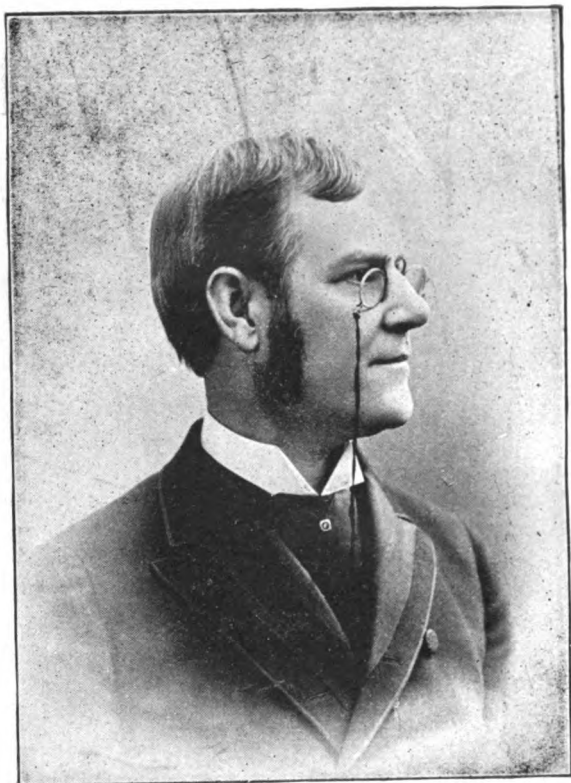
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WALLACE RADCLIFFE.

THE
PRESBYTERIAN PULPIT,

A VOLUME OF SERMONS

BY MINISTERS OF THE

SYNOD OF MICHIGAN,

WITH

AN INTRODUCTION

BY THE

REV. LEMUEL B. BISSELL.

BISSELL AND EASTMAN,

PUBLISHERS.

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A FOREWORD.

The publishers of this volume are of the opinion that the stronger sermons of the representative ministers of all our churches constitute an invaluable literature which should be made available to larger constituencies than those to whom they were spoken. Placed in the homes of our people, in convenient and permanent form, their influence may be continued and extended almost indefinitely. The publishers fully believe that the people are pleased to see the printed sermons of their pastors, and that when properly presented to them they will both buy and read them. These are the considerations which have chiefly encouraged the issue of this volume.

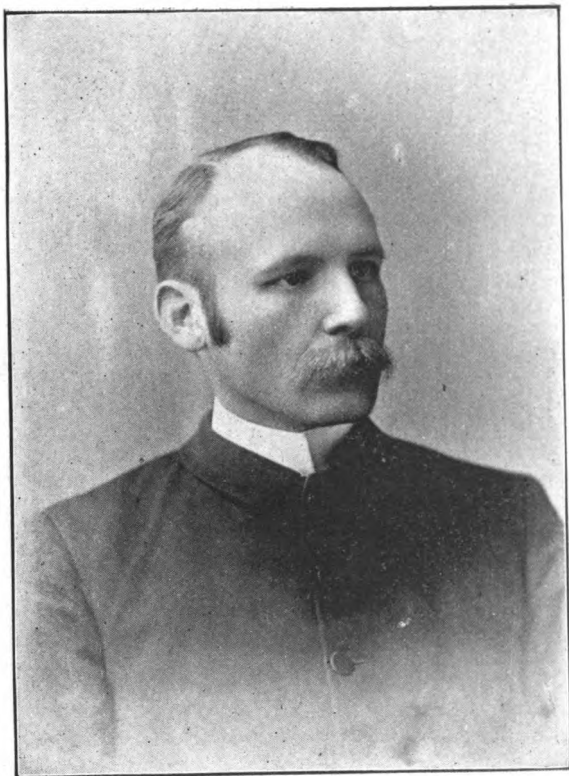
It has been the care of the publishers that the plan and mechanical execution of this book should be creditable to the authors, and worthy the noble church under whose auspices it issues. It is believed that, to many people, the value of the book will be much enhanced by the half-tone portrait of the author preceding each sermon. It will thus become, to many, a cherished memento of pastors beloved. There is also, even with the stranger, a desire to look upon the face of one who has greatly interested and profited him.

It will be noted that no general order of precedence has been observed, the sermons, for the most part, being inserted in the order in which they were received.

The publishers, for themselves and many grateful readers, present to the authors of these sermons their

most sincere thanks for their generous contributions. It is no small thing for a busy pastor to pause amid the ceaseless urgency of pastoral duties and prepare a sermon for the press. The valuable favor is cordially appreciated. The high character and attainments of the authors, and the intrinsic excellence of the sermons assure this book a mission. Wherever it is admitted it will strengthen faith, promote piety, inspire zeal, and elevate the standard of Christian character and experience.

THE PUBLISHERS.



LEMUEL B. BISSELL.

INTRODUCTION.

BY REV. LEMUEL B. BISSELL.*

Pastor First Presbyterian Church, Monroe, Mich.

John Knox on his death bed said: "I know that many have complained of my too great severity; but God knows that my mind was always void of hatred to the persons of those against whom I thundered my severest judgments." As his body was lowered into the grave, Nov. 26th, 1572, the Earl of Morton uttered these words: "Here lieth a man who in his life never feared the face of man; who hath been often threatened with dagge and dagger, but yet hath ended his days in peace and honor." Three hundred years after his burial, Dr. W. M. Taylor says of him: "Caution was never one of Knox's distinctive excellences; your merely cautious men are of very little service to their generation or to the world."

John Knox was the father of Presbyterianism in Scotland. He was a man of faith, because he was a man of prayer; he was a man of prayer because he was a man of faith. He prayed "Give me Scotland or I die;" and the queen said: "I fear the prayer of John Knox more than the combined armies." Such prayer goeth

* Mr. Bissell was born in Ahmednagar, India, Dec. 20, 1853. Graduated from Western Reserve College 1876, and from Yale Divinity School 1880. He ministered to the Congregational church, Memphis, Mich., 1880-1882; Presbyterian church, Caro, Mich., 1882-1890, and Monroe, Mich., 1890—.

not out but from faith, and such faith cometh not but by prayer. "Have faith in God.—Ye believe in God, believe also in me.—He, the Holy Ghost, shall take of mine and shall show it unto you, and shall lead you into all truth." This most blessed Trinity was the foundation of his character as a man and as a preacher. It is the truth that has made Christian heroes in all ages of the world. "Fear not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God." The preaching for to-day needs this background. Isaiah spake of the public teachers of Israel, saying: "His watchmen are blind, they are all without knowledge; they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; dreaming, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, the dogs are greedy, they can never have enough; they have all turned to their own way, each one to his gain." God forbid that to-day this reproach should rest upon the pulpit of Christendom, or upon any portion of it. Fearless preaching is demanded by present social conditions, though it be not wanted by present social beings. The messenger of God has his message from God. The kingdom of heaven is a kingdom of heaven, not of earth; and the citizenship of earth is to be transformed into the citizenship of heaven.

The twofold preaching of Paul appears in: "Knowing the terrors of the Lord, we persuade men;" and, "We beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ." These two he combines in the one verse, "Behold the goodness and severity of God." God is a God of peace; he is also a God of war. "The Lord of Hosts is his name." Christ is the peacemaker; he is also the sword bringer. "I propose to fight it out on this line, if it takes all summer," preceded, and will always precede "Let us have peace." The most heroic soldiery brings the most desirable peace. "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable." He who is

constantly fighting is intolerable; but he who never dares to fight is contemptible. I may surrender my rights, but I may never surrender my trusts; and every human being is a trustee. To refuse a battle because it will do more harm than good, is both right and wise; but to surrender a trust because you are too much of a coward to fight, is both sin and folly. Don't meddle with thistles if you can help it; but grasp them with courageous vigor, if at all. Let love nerve your arm. Strike for a purpose. Let the purpose consecrate the blow. When the purpose is accomplished, declare peace. Don't fire blank cartridges. He who is always quarreling, never fights. He who fights only for God and humanity, never quarrels.

The worst possible symbol on a preacher's coat of arms is an interrogation point. Many a man brilliant in conception, fertile in resource, energetic in action, has failed, because, unstable as water he could not excel. No one is courageously firm who is always doubting as to himself and his work. Believe in yourself and in your work, because you believe in God who has given you both yourself and your work. Elijah's motto before Queen Jezebel should be the preacher's motto before the world, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand." So stood John Knox before the Queen of Scotland. What he did for Scotland he did in fourteen years. 'Tis not a long life, but a heroic life that is needed. The children have inherited their father's trait. Presbyterianism in Scotland has not known what it was to bow to friend or foe in the matter of conviction. And from two such contemporaries as John Knox and John Calvin, Presbyterianism has gone to the ends of the earth and found many a St. John who has been a very Son of Thunder in the world. As Carlyle says: "If

hero mean a sincere man, why may not every man be a hero?" And Whittier writes:

"Deem not helm and harness
The sign of valor true;
Peace hath higher tests of manhood
Than battle ever knew."

In an article to the Independent on the "Trials and Triumphs of the Preacher," Dr. Howard Crosby wrote: "Success with a godly minister is found, not in amassing a fortune or achieving a great name, but in seeing the Spiritual Kingdom of Christ built up under his efforts. The conversion of a soul to God, or the marked advance in faith on the part of a believer is the minister's triumph. It is for this he speaks from his pulpit, teaches in his class and visits among his flock. It is only the *bogus* preacher, the charlatan, who makes a parade of rhetoric, seeks admiration for his eloquence, courts notoriety and subsidizes the press. Verily he has *his* reward. He is classed with the famous play actors and gains the applause of the multitude. That is what he sought, and that is what he gets. His triumph is the seal of his unworthiness." These plain words of eight years ago are most timely still. "Preaching to the times" is a just demand of the times. It is an example set by prophets and apostles who "served their own generation, and fell on sleep," and before whom the present-day condition of their age always stood. The industrial, social and political, as well as ecclesiastical disorders received unflinching reproof at their hands. But the never-lost-sight-of aim was to lead the soul to repentance, or to advance it in the faith. The Presbyterian preaching of the sixteenth century was nothing if it was not a condemning in the name of the Lord of the current sins in Church and State, and a heroic effort

to bring Church and State to God. And I believe this has been emphatically true of Presbyterian preaching ever since. In times of degeneracy, in Christian as in Pagan lands, amid the scoff of infidelity and the teachings of science falsely so called, the Presbyterian pulpit has not been recreant to its high trust. In no uncertain sound has it spoken forth the living truth of the eternal God.

With it all there has been a becoming humility before God. Shall I quote from a recent letter written to me by a busy pastor of a New York city church: "My many friends are kind enough to speak of me as successful. My dear fellow, one of the sorrows of my life is that I get so much credit for so little accomplishment. I have worked hard, and in a small way God has blessed me; or rather He has largely blessed the little I have done." This is characteristic of the genuine preacher's heart. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory." "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded of you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do." The preacher's work is great, but the results are greater, while his aid has been the greatest. "It is nothing with the Lord to help with many, or with him that hath no power." "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then, neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase."

I take great satisfaction in presenting to the public this volume of sermons. They have been solicited from the several brethren, and have seen service in the regular work of the ministry. No similar volume could be any more representative of the pulpit of the Synod of Michigan, nor of the fidelity of that pulpit to the vital truths of the "glorious gospel of the blessed God."

There is room for another volume that would be equally representative. Christian graces, Christian doctrines, Christian precepts and Christian service are held up here in the pure light of Revelation. False standards are exposed, sins are denounced, and hope imparted to the weak and erring that in the Christ they may be complete.

Ambassadors for Christ, be true. Laborers in the vineyard, be faithful. Workmen on God's building, be wise masterbuilders. "Preach the Word." "Preach the preaching that I bid thee." "Shun not to declare the whole counsel of God." "Be pure from the blood of all men."



Prest A. F. Brunske. D.D.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

REV. AUGUST F. BRUSKE, D. D.*

President of Alma College, Alma, Mich.

Mr. President, and friends of Alma College:

I am here to-day because I dare not be elsewhere. For months I have dreaded the approach of this hour. From the beginning, both in private and in public, I have advised against the step that is now taken. To do my part as a pastor toward the establishing and maintaining of this institution of learning has been an ambition with me; and to withdraw from it as soon as that could be safely and honorably done has been my constant purpose. Do not therefore, my friends, congratulate me upon this occasion. Do not think that this is to me an hour of joy. It is one the solemn and eternal issues of which God only can know. It is one the responsibility of which would hush and humble the spirit of the proudest man. It may be that in the providence of God I am here to succeed; it may be to fail. It may be to behold the continuance of that prosperity which has crowned the labors of my honored predecessor; it may

* Rev. August F. Bruske, born in Rachen, Prussia, was a soldier in U. S. Army from 1864 to 1865; graduated from Adrian College, Mich., in 1869; was pastor at Charlotte, Mich., from 1872-78, and pastor in Saginaw, Mich., from 1878-91; received the degree of D. D. from Lake Forest University in 1891; was made President of Alma College in 1891, a position which he still holds.

be to witness the shame and confusion of over-confident friends. But in any event we shall still believe, first in God, and second in Alma College. I have been good naturedly warned against the dangers besetting an Inaugural Address. And when we remember that six hundred wise men recently gave one day and a half of their valuable time to the consideration of one of these performances, and when we are assured that "the end is not yet," we may well "take" *not* "to the woods," but take to the warning kindly.

Let me seek to escape censure by speaking not my own thoughts or exhibiting my peculiarities of faith or opinion; let me rather endeavor to voice the mind of those who have established among us this center of Christian learning, and who by prayer, and gift, and toil and sacrifice have made it what it is.

1. The first sentence with which Alma College greeted its friends was, "In the name of God, Amen." This has more recently been inscribed upon its seal. It stamps us with a "credo." This college has a faith. It is the largest and freest possible to man. It is farther removed from sectarianism than that of Harvard. It is more Catholic than that of the Catholic University at Washington. We may look upon it as the charter of our liberties. Under its protection we may work out the true ideal of education, the harmonious unfolding of body and mind and spirit. We shall not be trammled here with the dogma that the Bible is a sectarian book. No Wisconsin or Michigan judge will ever enter these doors and tell us that the Bible must be removed from Alma College. "Hands off, gentlemen." This institution dug deep for its foundations. The church laid its corner stone—upon its walls "Salvation" is written, and upon its gates "Praise." We shall be free to study here the philosophy of Plato: we shall not silence here

the voice of Paul. We shall drink of the "ancient founts of inspiration" flowing from the Iliad of Homer; we shall not deny ourselves here those waters of life to which we are invited by Isaiah. We shall declaim here the Philippics of Demosthenes; we shall not be ashamed of reciting the "Sermon on the Mount."

This institution will never grant a divorce to science and religion. When it is asserted that "there is no theology in mathematics, no religion in chemistry," we must always protest and deny. If true to the founders we must continue to maintain that "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork." "No religion in chemistry?" Then Prof. Cook, of Harvard, is wholly mistaken in the title and contents of his remarkable work on "Religion and Chemistry." Then Prof. Drummond's position that natural law sweeps upward into the spiritual world is wholly a mistake. Then there never has been and there never can be a science of Natural Theology. When instituting an experiment in the presence of his class, Prof. Henry of Princeton once said: "Gentlemen, I am about to ask the Almighty a question: let us severally hear the answer." That should be the attitude of every teacher of youth. The experiment is man's question to the Creator. The discovery is God's answer to the creature.

2. It was still further the prayer of the founders, that Alma College may become a recruiting station to the army of Christ's ministers. Three thousand vacant pulpits in three denominations was not a hopeful spectacle. What to do for the waste places at home became a question hardly less serious than what to do for the unsaved millions abroad. There was a prophecy of a coming famine in the ministry. Unless the thoughts of educated young men could be turned toward the

work of the pulpit and the church, the coming days would be dark indeed. Public discussion soon brought into clearest light this truth, that while the state could educate soldiers, and sailors, and farmers, and physicians, it could not educate ministers of the Gospel. That is possible only where church and state are united. If we had a Church of America as there is a Church of England, we might ask for a theological faculty in every State University; but in our free church life what kind of a faculty would you have? It is manifest that religious instruction to any considerable extent is impossible in state institutions. So long as Jew and Gentile, Catholic and Protestant, Presbyterian and Episcopalian are taxed equally, the only consistent course is not to offend any. Hence the well nigh irresistible trend to secularize our system of public instruction. This is logical, consistent and just. But it is death to an educated ministry. Doubtless God could call his servants from the most unfavorable environments, but the fact is he does not. He could plant a lily bulb in the desert and make it bloom, but he does not. If any truth is written upon the pages of inspired and ecclesiastical history, it is that God calls to the pulpit young men trained in Christian colleges and schools. Four years ago Rev. Dr. Henry Darling, then president of Hamilton College, published what he called "A study of catalogues." The catalogues were those of our theological seminaries. The tabulated results of the study were, that while the colleges planted by our church furnished candidates for the ministry to the following extent, viz. :—Princeton 46; Washington and Jefferson 44; Wooster University 42; Hamilton 28; Lafayette 20; Wabash 17; Hanover 15; Park 15; Maryville 9; Blackburn 7; Lake Forest 7;—the record of the great universities was: Harvard 2; Yale 2; University of Vermont 1;

Michigan none ; Cornell none. Is anything more needed to convince the most skeptical that if we should have in our pulpits an educated ministry the church must maintain her own colleges and schools? This argument convinced the synod of Michigan. It shall be my constant purpose, my prayer "in season and out of season," to have the moral and religious influences of this college so strong that in every class there will be those who will say, "Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel."

3. There are certain marks of distinction which some of us greatly covet. We are ambitious that Alma should be widely known as "the poor man's college," as the "cheapest" of the "best." We proudly announce to the world as did the founders of Edinburg Review, "We cultivate literature on oat meal," or better, on "Indian meal." We will insist upon being worthy of respect though our dress and food shall remind men of John the Baptist.

" What tho' on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hoddin gray and a' that ;
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A man's a man for a' that."

We may be obliged to wait for years for the erection of a gymnasium on College Hill, but we will not suffer our muscles to be dwarfed in the meantime. We will develop them upon sawbucks and with hammers and beetles. The young men will prove that the race of the Lincolns and the Garfields is not yet extinct. Before the gymnasium arrives let some noble and generous man establish a factory or a kind of industry in this community, a form of work in which facility is easily acquired, in which those who choose can engage for two or three hours each day and thereby pay for their education as they proceed. Would not this be

benevolence wisely directed? Do you not think, my friends, that there are hundreds of young men, strong, ambitious and poor, who if they knew that such an opportunity of self-help were within reach, would quickly seize it and make the most of it? If there are such, we want them here. We do not expect to see in the near future in large numbers the children of wealth. They will say of this college, "It is small and cheap." They said so of Dartmouth when one Daniel Webster registered his name there. They said so of Williams when young James Garfield left it to become a preacher in an obscure sect. They said so of Amherst and passed on to Harvard, although Richard Storrs and Henry Ward Beecher were among the students. They will say so of us and pass on to spend their money in Harvard or Oxford or Berlin. We shall not complain. Give us the honest farmers' sons, the plain mechanics' daughters, give us the brain and the brawn of the children of toil and we shall be satisfied in the present and confident of the future.

4. It would be unbecoming in me not to make grateful mention of the progress already achieved by Alma College. You are still but at the beginning. You have made no boasts, you have marched under no false colors. You have been modest in your claims and truthful in your promises. At four years of age you have the satisfaction of graduating the first class, trained throughout the course by your faculty. What some colleges have failed to do after twenty-five years of existence, you have accomplished at the end of the fourth year. During this time you have erected your library building and filled it with the treasures of wisdom gathered from all lands. The training department for kindergarten teachers, founded by Miss Matilda Ross, you have strengthened and it has leaped into fame

as with one bound. Specimens of natural history almost innumerable have been added to your collection for the museum yet to be. In all the departments work faithfully done has made the name of Alma College honorable in our land. That this is largely due to the untiring labors, to the energy directed by consummate skill, of your first president, Dr. George F. Hunting, not even envy could deny. It is my pleasure to proclaim it this day.

Let me venture to hope that our march shall still be forward. Let us believe that other departments shall yet spring into being, until we shall have here a great school of varied knowledge. And if in the providence of God there shall come to us schools of medicine and theology, of business and law, let us accept them from the same hand—His hand, who has given us what we now have. Let us solemnly dedicate them to the glory of God and the welfare of man. Nor is this improbable. When we consider that this institution is without a competitor among a million of people; no similar college for seventy miles to the south, for two hundred miles to the west, for three thousand miles to the north, for over two hundred miles to the east; why may we not hope for great things in the coming time? As yet the central and northern parts of our State are inhabited largely by poor people. The farms are not yet cleared. The mortgages are not yet paid. But they will not always continue. The forests will bow before the woodman's axe, the hillsides and valleys will proudly bear the wheat and the corn. The change of a few years is wonderful. The pioneer of yesterday who fought the wild beast and the wilderness, is the well-to-do farmer of to-day, who asks where his children may find the advantages of an education which were beyond his own reach in youth. It is our privi-

lege to point the questioner to Alma College. These inquiries will become more and more numerous in the coming years. The result will be that our classes will grow larger; departments of instruction will be added; buildings will rise on college hill; friends and helpers will be multiplied, and the channels of usefulness for this institution will widen and deepen through the coming generations. I believe this, and therefore I accept the struggles of the present time. A great center of learning will remain here when you and I shall have passed into the other country. Thousands and thousands of youth will quench their thirst for knowledge here and go forth to bless mankind, when "the places that now know us will know us no more forever." Our sufficient reward will be that we did what we could at the beginnings.

And now I commit this institution into the hands of God. May that Spirit who inspired men of faith to found this enterprise, hover over it through all time! May the blessing of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost rest upon and abide upon all who shall gather here! I commit Alma College to the care of that church whose history is beautiful, because of its love of liberty and learning, of its soundness of doctrine and rectitude of conduct. May the eyes of that church be ever open toward this place! May the hearts of its people be quick to respond to every call and need! I commit this college to the care of the good citizens of this community. I beg you to open Christian homes to the young people who shall gather here. I beg you to be fathers and mothers unto them, shielding them from temptation, protecting them from evil, guiding them in paths of righteousness and holiness.

I commit Alma College into the hands of those honored and venerable men who are its board of trustees.

O ye fathers and brethren, what labors, what duties are these which God and the church have put upon you! Who is sufficient for them? May your "sufficiency be of God!" May you be sustained by the consciousness that thousands of Christian hearts are daily bearing you to the throne of divine grace and wisdom!

In behalf of the faculty and students may I leave this final word:

"Friends and brethren, pray for us."

CONCEALMENT AND REVELATION OF GOD.

BY REV. W. D. SEXTON,*

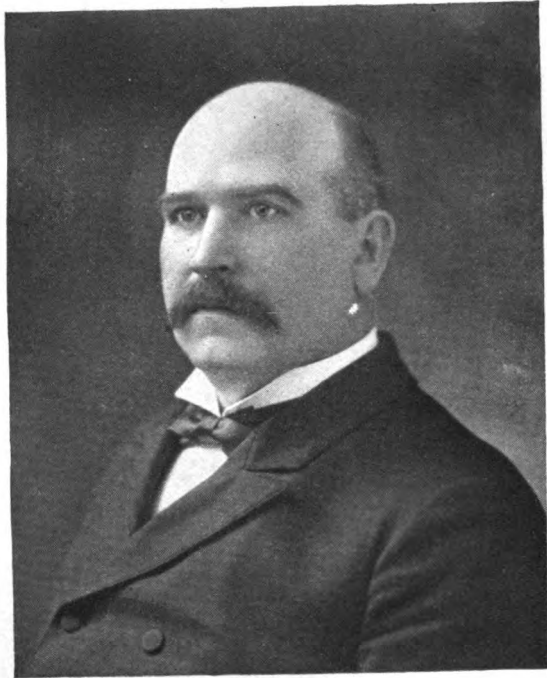
Pastor Bethany Presbyterian Church, Detroit.

Text: "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." Deut. 29: 29.

Concealment and Revelation. These are distinctions which exist in the divine nature itself. In every recorded revelation of God there is an element of concealment. Self-limitation is always an accompaniment, we may say indeed a necessary antecedent of revelation. For example, when God appeared to the patriarchs, he always appeared under the limitation of human or angelic form. Later in the progress of revelation, he concealed himself in connection with his manifestation in cloud, or wind, or fire. To Moses in the desert of Midian, he concealed and revealed himself in the burning bush. At the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, he concealed

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WILSON D. SEXTON.

himself from the frightened Israelites in the thick cloud and fire upon the Mount. The concealment was greater than the revelation in the cloud, the fire and the smoke. The sacred precinct of the Holy of Holies was a concealment as well as a revelation of God. Probably the clearest illustration of this element of concealment, as well as of revelation, is seen in the typical example of Moses when he asked, as a special favor, that he might see God's glory. We are told that God talked with Moses mouth to mouth. In the familiar intercourse of this man of God with God himself he said, "I pray thee, show me thy glory." The answer was, "Thou canst not see my face, for there shall no man see me and live." But hiding him in the cleft of the rock God gave him a partial disclosure of himself, doubtless as much as it was possible for him to endure.

We have another striking illustration of the same truth in the experience and testimony of the apostle Paul. In a time of intense spiritual ecstasy the apostle Paul was caught up into the third heaven and heard words which it was not lawful for a man to utter. In that disclosure of the glory of God he heard words which were unspeakable. And so, in accordance with this experience, he wrote to Timothy, "God dwelleth in light which no man can approach, whom no man hath seen nor can see." (I Tim., 6:10.)

1. *Concealment is a necessary antecedent of revelation.* The infinite cannot communicate himself to the finite except in a limited way. The whole of the infinite cannot come into manifestation. In accordance with this truth the Scriptures everywhere make a distinction between what may be known of God, on the one hand, and his hidden, incomprehensible essence on the other. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God." In the very attempt to reveal himself God must put him-

self under limitations in order that there may be a manifestation. We may illustrate this by material things and by material vision. Suppose you should attempt to examine the sun at mid-day when the air is clear and the sky is bright. The natural eye cannot look upon the sun at mid-day. The very glory of its brightness dazzles the eye and prevents vision. And so when you call to your aid the telescope, there must be in the telescope a colored glass to absorb the brightness or you cannot look upon it. But by limiting the brightness you can bring it within the power of human vision. There must be, to a certain extent, an obscuration, a limitation of the sun's effulgence before the human eye can appropriate it as an object of sight. It is just so with the glory of God. There must be an obscuration, a limitation of that glory before it can be brought within the field of human vision. That is to say there must be concealment in order to be manifestation. "The secret things belong to the Lord our God." They must belong to him, otherwise there could be no revelation of him. When you conceal the glory of the sun you can learn a great deal about it. But if you should attempt to study it unconcealed, you simply blind your own eyes. This self-concealment of God is not, therefore, arbitrary but necessary in order that there may be revelation. People make a great mistake, therefore, when they complain about the mysteries of God. If there were no mysteries there could be no knowledge. By concealment there is manifestation; with secrets there is revelation; with mystery there is knowledge. We ought really to thank God that it is his glory to conceal a matter, for in the concealment of his glory there is a revelation of his character. Just as when the glory of the natural sun is concealed the astronomer can examine and determine its constituent elements.

Now this element of concealment which is an aspect of the divine nature in relation to men, manifests itself also in his works and in his dealings with his creatures. Concealment is one of the chief characteristics of nature. The elements and forces of nature are exactly the same to-day that they were six thousand years ago. With all the discoveries and the experience of the ages past, with all the marvelous advancement of the present age, it may still be fairly said that nature contains many secrets that have not been disclosed to the human mind. This element of concealment in nature has been the chief incentive to scientific investigation and discovery. It is true here just as in relation to knowledge of God himself, if there were no mystery there could be no science. Moreover, there seems to be a limit set to human knowledge, even in the realm of nature. Men can advance along the line of research and knowledge until they reach a certain limit where the Almighty seems to have drawn a curtain and inscribed upon it as a notice to the human mind, "Thus far shalt thou come and no further." Unless we are prepared to assert a larger knowledge of nature than now seems possible, we may say that nature conceals continually more than she reveals.

The same element of concealment is evident in the divine government. Even after all that has been revealed, we may still say when we contemplate the administration of the divine government that clouds and darkness are round about him. Unsolved problems meet us on every hand. Whether we look out upon the world and contemplate the divine government in its whole sweep with relation to the human race, or look upon it in its narrower circle of relation to our individual or family life, we are compelled to say with Cowper,

“God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform.”

He rides upon the storm which crosses our pathway, and when it beats us down and we are crushed, our only consolation is that “some day, somewhere we’ll understand.” There are here many secret things which belong unto the Lord our God. The apostle Paul expressed not only his own conviction but a truth for all time when he said, “Now we see through a glass darkly, now I know in part.” This is only the childhood of our eternal years. The immaturity of childhood cannot understand the maturity of manhood.

2. But with all this concealment there is also, and because of the concealment, abundant revelation. “Those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever.” God has concealed his essence and his glory in order that he might reveal to men his character and his attitude towards his sinful children. In considering any revelation which God has made it must be conceded, first of all, that it must be adapted to the fallen condition of mankind. How God might have revealed himself, had man maintained his original condition of uprightness and holiness, is not for us now a practical question. There can be no questioning the fact that with sin there came a dulness of spiritual apprehension, which added to the difficulty of the divine communication to the human mind. It is not worth our while now to discuss how God might have revealed himself to mankind in a state of absolute innocence. It is now a question of fact as to the method by which he does reveal himself.

This revelation of God is now of two kinds. The first we may call the natural and the other the supernatural. The natural is the revelation of God through

nature as it exists in the world around us and within us. There is a revelation of God in the universe which he has made. The Psalmist expressed it for all time when he said, "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handy work." This revelation of the power and the wisdom of God is so marked that the apostle Paul says that even the heathen may know sufficient of God to make them without excuse. Heathen philosophers are here in agreement with the apostle. Aristotle said, "Although invisible to every mortal nature, God is yet manifested in his works." Cicero said, "Thou seest not God and yet thou knowest him from his works." The two elements of the divine character, which are specially revealed in the universe, and which we can see and study, are his wisdom and his power. Surely only infinite wisdom could construct such a marvelous system which runs on its course through all the ages in perfect harmony. Here are worlds upon worlds, systems upon systems, filling this whole heaven as far as the eye of man, aided with the most powerful telescopes, can reach, and yet all moving on in perfect harmony. It is no wonder that the ancients sang of "the music of the spheres." For, while there is no audible voice, they all declare in their continuous circuits the wisdom of the Creator. And what shall we say of the power that is here manifested? Have you ever stood before the mammoth Corliss engine and witnessed the mighty revolutions of its ponderous wheels? If so, you have been impressed with the idea of power. But what is the power of the mightiest engine when compared with the power which swings these mighty worlds through space with such absolute accuracy that astronomers can predict to the fraction of a minute where each one will begin its circuit ten years hence! Talk about power! Why, this world of ours,

vast as it is, is but a fraction, indeed a small fraction, of the myriad worlds which constitute the universe. While it accomplishes its daily rotations and yearly revolution and so fulfils the divine purpose of years and seasons and months and days, yet this is but an insignificant item of the vast machinery which makes up this material universe. He must be singularly dull who can look out upon this vast array of worlds and not be impressed with the wisdom and the power herein displayed.

A second method of divine revelation is within us. It is through that faculty of our inner being which we call the conscience. This is well expressed by Paul in his letter to the Romans, (Chap. 2:14-15.) Conscience is a matter of experience. It approves, it condemns. Cicero said that conscience is the arrows of the gods penetrating the heart of the ungodly. Now the difficulty here is that while the fact of conscience points to a revelation of law, a law of God which binds, yet it has been greatly obscured and confused by sin. These are the two sources of revelation through what we may call natural means. Now the question arises, are these sufficient? Notice what they have given us. They have given us wisdom, power and the fact of moral law and moral obligation. Now the question is simply this, are these sufficient to guide sinful man back to his Father's house? We cannot do better than to let history answer. What, according to its testimony, have conscience and nature accomplished for true theology apart from revelation? We have to admit the fact as we read history that the heathen, "notwithstanding all their listening to the voice of conscience, as it spoke in the very noblest spirits among them, did not attain to the knowledge of God as the personal, absolutely Holy One, but changed the glory of the unchangeable God into an image like to perishable man and beasts."

Take a glance at the heathen world and note what their conscience has done for them along the line of getting rid of sin. "One man aims at deliverance from sin by means of a bath; another (e. g., the North American Indian) thinks to purify his heart by means of an emetic; here another sets prayer mills in motion at the caprice of the wind; another pours out libations of wine or tea, sheds human blood, or offers his only child as the most acceptable sacrifice." These are all samples of a conscience, indeed, but of an erring conscience; a conscience strong enough to insist upon sacrifice or expiation, but still too dark to apprehend the true means of expiation.

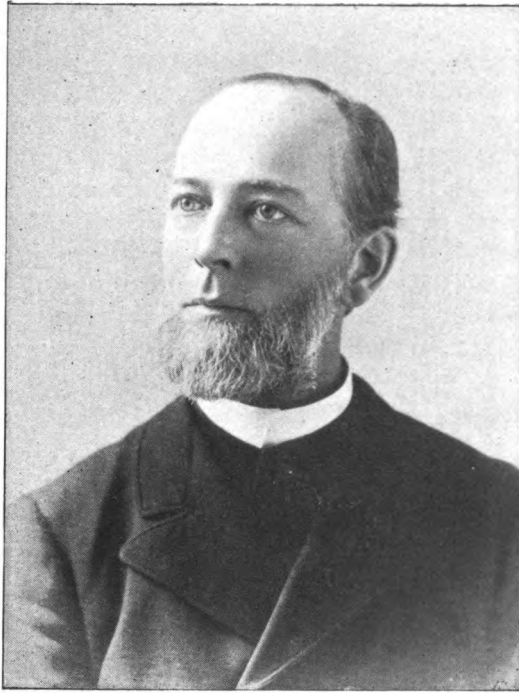
The other method of revelation, which is needed to rectify and supplement the revelation given in nature and the conscience, is the supernatural. This supernatural revelation is given to us in the word of God. In the record of God's manifestations to patriarchs and prophets, in the record of his dealings with his chosen people through whom he was working out his purposes of redemption, and finally in the record of the life and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, we have the full, clear revelation of God to mankind. This is the supernatural revelation. It breaks in upon the world from without. It does not come in the ordinary course of nature. It is extraordinary and so we call it supernatural. Into the discussion of the nature of this revelation and of its various parts it is not my purpose to enter.

There are just three things about this revelation, which are emphasized in the text, to which I desire to call your attention. "The things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever; that we may do all the words of this law." The three things distinctly emphasized here are, the *personality of the revelation*, "unto us and to our children"; the *permanence*

of the revelation, "forever"; and the *purpose* of it "that we may do all the words of this law." To these three features of the revelation I can call attention only briefly. The revelation of God's character and redemption plan was intended for the children of men. It was not necessary for the maintenance of the divine existence or government that God should reveal himself to fallen man. But it was necessary for fallen man to lift him up into the fellowship with his Creator. And so from beginning to end, the whole revelation of God, as contained in his word, moves among living persons. Through persons of like passions with ourselves he communicated his will. For ages this was the special method of his revelation. Then in the fulness of the time he sent forth his son, and he came also in the likeness of sinful man. Through a human personality there came the highest revelation of God to the world. It was through persons to persons.

The second characteristic is its permanence. This is a feature frequently emphasized. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away," said Christ. This was not a revelation for a particular generation or for a particular period of the divine administration. It was to all generations forever. It is complete and it is final.

The third characteristic is its purpose, to bring men into harmony with the divine law. All the disclosures which God has made of himself were not to gratify human curiosity. They were not to awaken admiration and wonder. Their purpose was rather to bring men back from the paths of sin into the way of righteousness, into the divine likeness, and so into the divine favor. This is the high aim of all the divine manifestations. The history of divine redemption is to end in the recognition that God is all and in all.



JOHN T. OXTOBY.

GOD IS THE KING OF ALL THE EARTH.

BY REV. JOHN T. OXTOBY, D. D.,*

Pastor First Presbyterian Church, Ionia, Mich.

Text: "God is the King of all the Earth." Ps. 17:7.

That God rules in the heavens, all who believe in the heavens will readily concede. But that God is the "King of all the Earth," some have dared to deny.

How magnificent is that idea of the government of God as revealed in the Bible! Think of it, as it is whispered that God pervades all things with his presence, inspecting, every moment, each and every portion, upholding all things by the word of his power. God's will orders each element wisely to do its function,—his goodness develops each atom lovingly and tenderly;—his thought, not mere intellectuality nor play of the fancy, is power, tingling in the vine-roots and in the depths of the sea, as well as in the movements of the human mind! His actions, though a million times more

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rapid than the motions of the light, are yet never confused;—unwearied throughout all eternity, he is the “King of the Earth,” as well as of the heavens.

Strange it seems that men once having attained such an idea should be disposed to let go of it. We would think that when the government of God is so clearly revealed, it would be a matter of rejoicing, as it not only explains the problems of life, but also brings harmony to the soul of man. There not only is truth and beauty, but joy as well, in the idea, “God is the King of all the Earth.”

Whenever we fall into doubt, and imagine that this world is exclusively in the hands of men, we lose the only rudder by which we may guide the vessel. We then let go the only line which anchors us to the throne of God;—we cut the link between the divine and the human;—we are divorced from the natural relation of God as a sovereign, and of men as the developers of his plans. Strike out the idea that “God is over all,” and we are victims of despair. If we believe that there is no God presiding over the affairs of men, we are ripe for revolution, for riot, disaster and darkness.

We sometimes smile at the theories of men, forgetting that men are shaped and colored by theories. Thackeray was surprised in America, to see how the humblest came in contact with the mightiest; the plainest husbandman was not terrified when he shook hands with the President; the lowliest was not affrighted when he was introduced to the great literary man. Why? Because we are brought up under the theory that “all men are equal,” politically,—that there is no station to which the American may not look forward, if he is fit for it.

So in morals, we are as the theories which we adopt. If we are led to believe that there is no God over all, it

affects not only the intellect, but the soul. It makes a difference not only in all the motives which impel us, but it colors differently all the life. If this land shall ever fall into the clutches of that form of thought, that God is not interested in us,—then we may write “Icha-bod” over her history.

Said a prominent business man: “If we fall into the hands of those who deny a personal God, God only can tell into what troubles we will fall.” Is there any truer saying? Who *can* tell? Saturate the minds of the masses with the idea that no God is at the head of affairs, and what can we expect? If there be no God to whom we can look in hours of impatience, then we must resort to our fellow men alone; then the demagogue will be more to be feared than ever.

You have seen children playing with fire; what a good time they have! “Father was mistaken when he said this was dangerous;”—see the fun, as they light the matches, and the paper burns so brightly; “Those old fogies who said it was dangerous, we have had enough of them; let us have a good time while we may.” But see! the carpet is on fire, the house is wrapped in flames;—call out the fire department! “Father was right after all,” the children have seen many a time, in the ashes and ruins of a beautiful home.

Teach men that they may trifle with divine things;—that the Bible is a fiction;—that God is a myth;—this is playing with that fire which may consume the fairest political and moral edifices which men have ever wrought.

It seems bold to sneer at the holiest thoughts, to hoot at all beliefs of the past, to brand believers in the Bible as fogies, to prate of liberty when they chiefly desire license.

I say this looks bold, but it is the boldness which

leads to demoralization. Rashness is often ruin. Remember that to disregard all the lessons of the past, is to fall in with that conceit which fits into the groove of this time, that the present is utterly cut loose from the past. Yet this sort of thinking is simply playing with fire in a more dangerous realm than the physical. As mind is more than matter, as soul is more valuable than body, so is the danger with trifling with moral sentiments more dangerous than any playing with fire by children.

In ancient mythology dragon's teeth were fabled to spring up armed men. But this is the truth of God:—"They who sow the wind will reap the whirlwind." This is a law from which there is no escape: "As we sow so also shall we reap." Nations have proven its truth. France publicly declared that there was no personal God, enthroning reason as God, while the populace cheered with delight, imagining that the brighter era had dawned. But the Encyclopedists had only sown tares, and soon the nation reaped the awful harvest. That very populace which cheered so lustily was soon alarmed with the sights and sounds of an angry mob, while the guillotine slew the best of the land, and blood ran like water in the place called the "Place of Concord."

Trifle with scriptural truth, and ruin will stalk all over America. If this land shall let go her Sabbaths, her sanctuaries, what shall the harvest be? Dragon's teeth, moral, political death.

I am not now speaking of the future life. Of course none can picture the future of those who live without God. I am only trying to point out the lessons of the past as to the good of religion on earth.

There is no voice clearer-sounding than this, that when a nation falls into the hands of those who declare

there is no God over all, then there will be an eruption more to be dreaded than that of Vesuvius. What mind can entertain save with horror that picture of a land which is not under the spell of the idea of an ever-living, ever-guiding God, who doeth all things well,—who sitteth in the heavens watching the surgings and controlling the upheavals of men?

No land is worth living in, where men have flung aside the Bible and its hallowing ideas. And any effort to do away with such ideas, or to banish them from the life, not only shuts the gates of heaven, but it shuts the gates of earthly progress and of earthly happiness.

No, it is not a light affair what theories we adopt. For we live according to our theories, in governments, as in morals. If we have come into existence in any other way than as the offspring of our heavenly Father, who made us all in Adam, then we must adopt some other gospel than the gospel of Christ. Really we shall have no gospel to sound in the ears of a sin-ruined race. This is why we resent other theories, not simply because they are theories, but because theories are seed, of which conduct is the fruit. If it shall ever be successfully dinned into us, that we are animals, having no relation save through a common ancestor, then we shall be afloat on a sea which will carry us far away, far away from sight of the cross, far away from the teachings of him who declared "that as in Adam all men die, so in Christ, the second Adam, shall all be made alive."

A common humanity, having the same passions, the same woes, the same trials, having like hopes, having the same Savior leaning over the cradle and the grave, sympathizing with all men,—what would the world be, were that hope banished? And where do we find that hope save in the Bible? It was thought to be a grand truth stricken out at white heat, when America de-

clared that all men are created free and equal; yet it was simply a bringing of men back to Scriptural ideals.

Tell us what views a man entertains as to the problem of life,—at once we can tell the quality of his life. The ideal life is based on a recognition of these two fundamentals:—(1)—God is over all, and (2)—all men are brethren. Discard the former, and we become as atheists, having no tie to link us to the eternal God;—banish the latter, and we become utterly heartless as to our fellow men. If we believe that we are aggregates of individuals, not bound together by the bonds of a common faith, hope and love, then we are logical in believing that whoever attains earthly gains or pleasures, is a real success, and that all others are failures.

Never forget God is our portion in eternity. This is joy amid sorrow, light in the darkness,—the voice of that hope which never forsakes a believer. That we shall sit down in the Father's house with many mansions, sing the songs of the redeemed, explore the depths of providence, and of grace, this is a solace in affliction, a song of triumph in the darkest outlook. But do not date all the benefits of the Gospel in the future. "God is the king of all the earth."

We need to be fully persuaded, that religion is the best thing for all the ways of life, for the social circle, for the exchange, for the home, for all the relations which we bear.

Not vagueness, but a vividness, is this glad vision. "God is the king of all the earth."

" There is no joy in all created things,
No drop of sweet, that turns not in the end
To sour, of which the righteous man does not
Partake,—partake, invited by the voice
Of God, his Father's voice,—Who gives him all
His heart's desire."

Napoleon said to the old guard, in the crisis of Waterloo: "If we lose this position, the battle is lost." It was even so, and worse—the army was lost, as well as the battle. We stand not only for God, but for men, as we defend this post: "God is king of all the earth."

" This book, this holy book, on every line
Marked with the seal of high divinity,
On every leaf bedewed with drops of love
Divine, and with the eternal heraldry
And signature of God Almighty stamped
From first to last,—this ray of sacred light,
This lamp, from off the everlasting throne,
Mercy took down, and, in the night of time,
Stood, casting on the dark her gracious bow,
And evermore beseeching men, with tears
And earnest sighs, to read, believe, and live."

Seal this book,—we have no word as to the glory of heaven; put out this lamp,—there is no clear light as to the earthly living.

As we love our God, as we love home, as we love society, as we love our country, let us pray that this grand old truth may be our experience:—"God is the king of all the earth."

SPIRITUAL MAN MANIFESTED IN MIND.

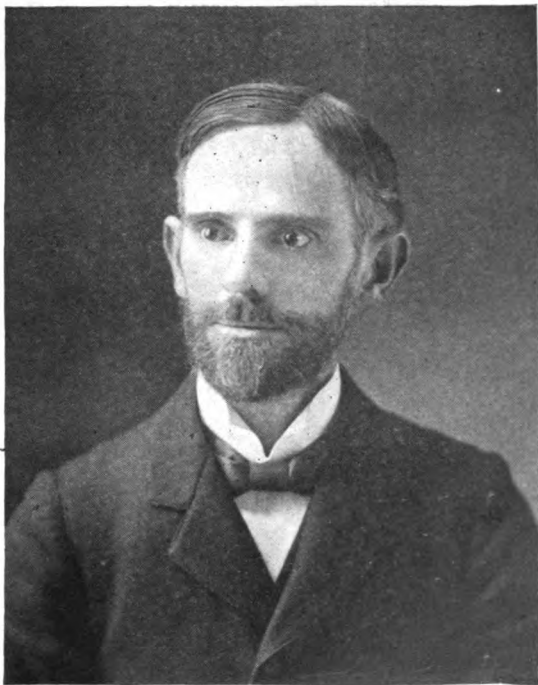
BY REV. W. T. JAQUESS,*

Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Albion.

Text: "With the mind I myself serve the law of God." Rom. 7:25.

The true man is found in the soul, which is the center of all emotion, thought, will, and the mainspring of action. The world seems to be unacquainted with this fact, for its measurement of manhood is entirely physical. It asks, "How many pounds can he lift? How many acres does he own? What is his name worth in the money markets? How many languages has he mastered?" and if these questions are satisfactorily answered, gives him a place in its Westminster of fame. But in spite of the world's superficial judgment, man is only spiritually discerned. Three men go to a stone quarry. One is a builder, the second a sculptor and the third a geologist. The one values its ledges of rock because of the number of feet of building material to be gotten out of them; the other studies the fineness of its grain and its possible service to art, while the last turns it over as pages in the earth's history; thus the view of

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WILLIAM T. JACQUESS.

each is biased, or at least modified, by his vocation in life. We are therefore not surprised that the world should take a worldly view of each individual in it, and that the mind must be lifted up into an atmosphere not clouded by the dust of business or profession before we can form just opinions of our fellow men.

But where is the soul to be found which is to form the basis of all opinion of our neighbor? With scalpel in hand we dissect every part of the physical man in vain. Look into the eye, with its wonderful lenses and coats, and though we may catch the shadow of its presence, it is not the soul. Visit the ear and notice its wonderful adaptation to the sense of sound; see the drum as it is played upon by the drum-sticks of vibration; speak through the first telephone, the chain of bones which connects with the nerves, and yet it is still all physical. Or go to the heart, which is honored as the high priest of our affections, and see the ebb and flow of life's tide, and our search is still unrewarded. Or even the brain, with its millions of cells where facts and thoughts are stowed as treasures in a vault, throws little or no light upon it. In despair we turn from the physical and the actual, from matter to conduct, and in what man does, in what he thinks or in what he is, we find the true man, the power behind the throne, manifest in mind, which is reflected in actions.

The first evidence of spiritual man is that of mental control, both within and without this princely palace. Not only control over his feet when he walks or his hands when he works, but control over his relations to others and control over objects about him. Man first learns to master his environment and then himself, but it does not take him long to find out that no one can master successfully the forces which are about him, in nature, in society and in business, unless he can also

master the more difficult problem of self. This power of control is likewise one which may be delegated. He says to his machine, bind my wheat, print my paper, weave my garment, propel my chariot, until all mechanism is throbbing with mind. Here is a likeness to God, and in the might of controlling power man becomes God-like, and that man has fallen furthest from his Maker who has lost control over self, thus failing to serve that law of God which is to subject all else to the spirit nature.

A second manifestation of the spiritual man is seen in a tireless mind. A feature of the merely physical is fatigue; the evidences of decay are to be seen on every side, and nowhere stronger than in man, from the little child whose eager footsteps hasten to its bed with the close of day, to old age "when the keepers of the house tremble, and the strong man shall bow himself, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened." On the other hand, the evidence of the Divine is the absence of repose, for God and God's agents never rest. What is soul rest if not its fullest and highest employment, when it has assumed the ascendancy in the affairs of life? The best definition you can find of rest is a change, and the Sabbath day is only a day in which man's best nature is given a chance to employ itself unhampered.

The mind is never still. Awake, asleep, you can no more escape its activity than you can the ticking of a clock, while in death it only abdicates the throne. No wonder the tomb could not imprison long the "Son of Man," when the very spirit of God was incarnate in his flesh. Magnify the mental which we see in the individual and the difficulties of the resurrection disappear.

Another manifestation of the spiritual man is the mind's independence of the material. Like the sea gull

which wings its way in ceaseless flight day after day with the ship in its journey, never seeking a perch, so the mind is independent in its operation, or like the condor that flies from Andes peak to Andes peak, far above the reach of man's weapon, so the mind is far above every earthly necessity. It traverses the seas and visits scenes of history far distant, while the body remains at home. The mind oft manifests its greatest vigor when the flesh is paralyzed with disease, or in a dream it is conscious of physical impressions while the body has suffered no hurt. This mental part of man, through its power to personify, gives reality to the ideal until virtues stand full formed before us like ideas spread upon the painter's canvas fresh from his brush. This boundlessness is akin to the omnipresence of God, and the mind stands as made in his likeness, when independent of the flesh.

The spiritual man again manifests himself in mental virtues unknown to the flesh. How often in your work of ministry to your fellow men have you seen hope flame the highest amid physical despair. It may have been the consumptive, while breathing almost the last breath, planning for the future. Or old age, buffeted, defeated, prostrate in financial ruin, no longer able to compete with younger men in modern ways of business life, still planning to build higher and stronger on the old foundations. The statement that "while there is life there is hope," is an acknowledgment that behind the external is the eternal man. We are informed by science that "self-preservation is the first law of nature." It may be so of physical nature, but spiritually self-dissemination is stronger than all. Especially is it true of mental acquisitions, for no true mind can long hide its treasures behind rusty and unused doors. The first impulse of mind acquiring a

new truth is to impart it and to disseminate itself.

Or again, how often the body plays the coward while the mind is heroic in the extreme. The soldier's limbs may tremble and his feet would fain carry him from the field of battle, but his mind drives him into the thickest of the fray. The same thing takes place in the presence of the surgeon's table, where deeds of mental heroism are daily enacted. Here the soul shining through the mind is akin to the unchangeable purposes of the Infinite, and serving the law of God declares its immortality.

Your mind is truest to itself when communing with its Maker, for man is a born courtier, and everywhere is found bowing before some conception of Deity. Naturally the study of theology and the purchase of books upon theological subjects has increased from the fourth to the second place in literature, for man is finding himself as he draws nearer to Jehovah. He but prostitutes his mind in service of gain; its truest employment is in seeking God. As water journeys till it finds its level, as all colors combine in the white ray, so our natures are never at rest and all the forces of our being act only as one when we perfect ourselves in holy communion.

We come to know God in two ways, through contemplation, or association. And while it is true we can see something of him in the logic of nature, his loveliness in its beauty, his kindness in its utility, we can only see all of God through association. Oh, for that nearness to God which only comes through meditation, prayer, and, as our text indicates, "With the mind serving his law!" Thus God spoke to Jonah and Samuel. Thus Moses communed and Enoch walked with God, and thus may we, beloved, commune and walk with him.

Mind is always coupled with immortality. But

what kind of mind is immortal? Surely not mere intelligence, for the animal world is capable of that. Mind exists only in co-relation; the fish in the cave has no eye; deafness is followed by dumbness. Max Muller says that thoughts cannot exist without words in some form. Take an object out of the world, and in time all thoughts of it disappear. Therefore, when the things of time disappear, the objective mind, which is the product of such things, will disappear also and the subjective alone remain. This may be the second death, for what profit hath a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? And this "whole world" does not mean wealth alone.

We have passed beyond the point where thought is dependent upon symbol, whether it be word, letter, figure or motion, but that thought can be conveyed from mind to mind without any of these, is already a scientific fact.

Man finds himself in an objective world, and consequently in possession of an objective mind, produced by the universe approaching him through sense. Ninetenths, and in some tenths, of life is made up of this objective experience, for few, like Paul, carry on a conflict between his inner and outer self. But there is a second and potential life, called by Thos. J. Hudson subjective, behind the objective. Each one of us is conscious at times of a vague something we have felt or seen before, again like Paul, "Whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;" and modern students have taken advantage of such experiences to make a play upon such terms as *clairvoyant*, *mesmerism*, *hypnotism* and *planchette*. From the "Maid of Orleans" to the latest hypnotic subject, the susceptibility of the subjective mind to suggestion is beyond doubt. By some this is

called telepathy, or thought conveyance, a scientific fact taken advantage of by so-called spiritualists to delude their victims, for in spiritism the revelation is never superior to some present intelligence or experience. Music and art appeal to this sub-consciousness. "Blind Tom" is an idiot, and yet a master musician. The reasoning mind is objective, but faith and intuition are subjective; thus Christian faith is an appeal to this inner consciousness, the perfect exercise of which is lacking in so many. I have no time to speak of dreams and prophecies and miracles in connection with this subject, but must hurry on. Sufficient is it to say that a new light is breaking which is making faith and intelligence one.

Jesus calls "All ye that labor and are heavy laden" to come unto him; also, "Take my yoke upon you." This is something more than change of employment, or the rest of the Hindu, which to him is the highest felicity, but that rest found in the faith life, possible amidst all kinds of employment. Again he says, "Who-soever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." Look into the face of a little child. Of what is it thinking? Here is a greater mystery than that of the Pyramids. The child's mind is in its subjective stage, and its objective growth is often at the expense of the subjective, or faith life. Such must have been the experience of Adam.

Therefore this sub-consciousness is spirit, and by subjective development we may come to know the mind of God. But if we neglect it, what then? The question then becomes the question of immortality, "If a man die shall he live again?"

Now, while I am not ready to argue for conditional immortality, yet I am prepared to say that the resurrection means nothing to you if you have neglected the

spiritual side of your nature. The law of survival seems to declare that God will not preserve that which is lacking in worth. "Is immortality an inherent right of life unless it be spiritual life?" is a question we may not be able to answer, but here is a question you *can* answer: "Have you a mind which transcends and survives the life of sense?" and serves the law of God? If not Easter morning is the beginning of endless night.

THE PILGRIMS OUR PATTERNS.

(A sermon for Forefathers' Day, Dec. 19, 1897.)

BY REV. W. K. SPENCER, D. D.,*

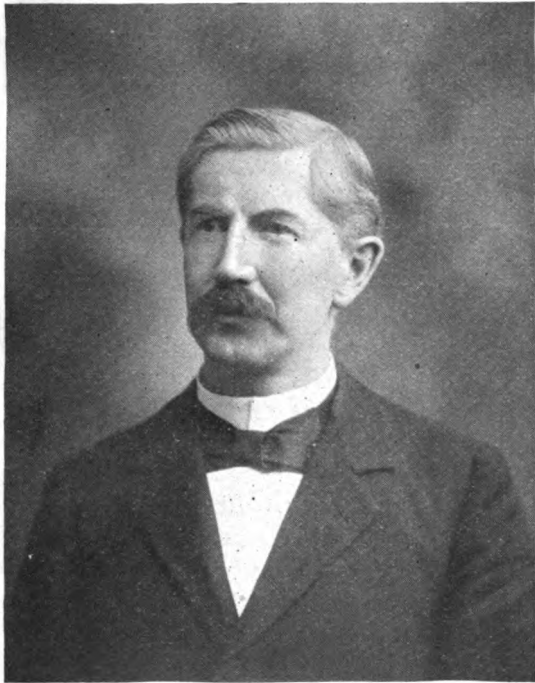
Pastor First Presbyterian Church, Adrian.

Text: "Our fathers trusted in thee; they trusted, and thou didst deliver them." Ps. 22:4.

God's hero-roll is yet unfinished. In every century there have been those who through faith have subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, of whom the world has not been worthy. The eleventh chapter of the letter to the Hebrews is given to us, not simply for itself, but also that we might be taught the habit of making God's faithful servants in every age our patterns as we strive to do our duty. "Be ye imitators of me even as I also am of Christ," is carved into the life of every noble soul.

We are this week to pass the anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims. Two hundred and seventy-

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WILLARD K. SPENCER.

seven years ago the Mayflower was lying at anchor in Cape Cod Bay. Two hundred and seventy-seven years ago to-day an exploring party of ten men, among whom were Miles Standish, John Carver and William Bradford, was resting, since it was the Sabbath, on a little island. Two hundred and seventy-seven years ago next Tuesday these same men landed from their shallop on a solitary boulder that the glaciers had brought down from the frozen North, to be the object of a nation's veneration. But why is this occurrence exalted above others of its kind? And why should we in Michigan, who most of us do *not* trace back our origin to the New England Pilgrims, *why should we* pay special attention to Forefathers' Day? Because Plymouth Rock is one of the corner stones of the Republic; because we, of English, Scotch, Irish, Dutch, and German blood, are still the spiritual children of the Pilgrims. Because that landing at Plymouth was in reality the beginning of America. Listen to the words of Thomas Carlyle: "There were straggling settlers in America before; some material as of a body was there; *but the soul of it was this*: These men I think had a work. The weak thing, weaker than a child, becomes strong if it be a true thing. Puritanism was only despicable, laughable then; but nobody can manage to laugh at it now. It is one of the strongest things under the sun at present."

We may therefore with wisdom study for a little time these Pilgrims, that we may learn from them the secret of true greatness.

I. They were men possessed of intense religious devotion. They believed in God; they believed in his Word; they believed in the atoning power and kingly rule of Jesus Christ. They bowed before the claims of conscience; and recognized the truth which was a few

years later given lasting shape in the first answer of our shorter catechism, that "Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever." To God's service they were willing to devote themselves; while they esteemed it their highest privilege to learn his will and to enter into personal relations with him as Redeemer, Master and Friend. In their day England had awakened from the moral torpor of the middle ages. Men's minds were occupied once more with the rescued treasures of the Scriptures. Wyclif had given England national life and power by his translation of the Bible, and ever since his day England's best were found among the Puritans. They were men who believed that it was possible to know God's will, duty to perform it, joy to receive his commendation. Having satisfied themselves that the Scriptures were inspired of God, they set themselves deliberately to study them, and in the task would brook no interference. King, priest or preacher must not interfere between the seeker and his God. They would listen to no voice except the still voice of the Spirit speaking to their souls. They would have no intercessor except Christ. They would seek no rank, honor, or dignity, but the supreme one of being members of the family of God. They believed, *for Scripture stated it*, that each one of them was personally known and cared for by Jehovah; that there was no respect of persons with the Lord; that for them as individuals the Savior came to suffer and to die; that even the beggar by the roadside might enjoy closest intimacy with his Master. And the possession of these blessings they determined at all cost to gain. Unless we understand this controlling motive of the Pilgrims' character, we never can come into sympathy with their lives. For this drove them forth from pleasant England first to sojourn among a people of strange customs, different tem-

perament and foreign speech; and it was fear of losing this privilege of worshipping God according to the demands of their own conscience, that caused them to resolve upon a migration unparalleled in history. A little band of men, women and children, singularly weak as they seem to us who read their names, determine to leave home, kindred, native land, the triumphs of centuries of civilization and the opportunities of comfortable livelihood, to face a barren soil, a severe climate, a land infested by wild beasts and savages, where hardship and privation must be the lot of all and death the first winter was to slay half of them, all for the privilege of serving God according to their understanding of his will.

“ Ay, call it holy ground,
The soil where first they trod ;
They have left unstained what there they found,—
Freedom to worship God.”

Surely the text can be applied to men like these; and on this quiet Sabbath morning, rejoicing in our sacred privileges, made possible by their heroic sacrifice, we can in gratitude exclaim: “Our fathers trusted in thee; they trusted and thou didst deliver them.”

Is it necessary for me to declare that in this devotion to God we should make the Pilgrims patterns? We live in a strange and sickly age, when it is fashionable for one to divest himself of strong conviction, when a man who knows what he believes is called in one breath narrow and fanatical. The type of the age is carved upon a tombstone in the south. It was raised by a father to the memory of two sons who died, one in the Union and the other in the Confederate army. The monument is four-square, with the family name upon one tablet, the names of the two boys upon two more,

and on the fourth the evasive sentence written, "God knows which was right." Now in all great matters of civil or religious life it is not enough to say, "God knows which was right." God expects *us* to know also and to take our stand with him. Either God exists or he does not. Either the Bible is his word or not. Either Christ is a savior for man's sins or not. And it is at once a mark of weakness and ignorance to be willing to say upon such matters, "God knows which is right." A man may know; a man *should* know; a man is guilty if he does not know the truth. Thus only can he find peace of conscience, pardon for his sin, and power over men. For it is the man who knows what he believes, and who is willing to risk all for his belief that rules his fellow-men. Unbelief is paralysis. The blood of the martyr is the seed of the church; but the death of the unbeliever or the coward is barren, and his body lies in a forgotten grave. Take pattern, therefore, by these men of Plymouth, who were willing to give up all that life held dear, that thus they might obey their God; who went on board the ship with prayers and songs of praise, and who rested shelterless on a desert island two hundred and seventy-seven years ago to-day that they might keep the Sabbath holy.

II. We may take pattern by the Pilgrims also in their love of liberty. They were the kind of men who a little later took the head from treacherous and tyrannical King Charles rather than suffer the loss of national freedom. It was to be expected, for those who bow most heartily before Jehovah are always the most resolute in resisting unjust command. It is a proverb as true as it is old, that "When the real Gods come the half Gods go." Let tyrants tremble when men learn to stand with bowed heads and listening hearts before the great white throne. This was what made Elijah dare

the frown of Ahab and the wiles of Jezebel; this was what caused the Apostle Paul to look with perfect calmness on the cruel face of Nero; this was what nerved Hampden, Pym and Cromwell for their work; this was what caused John Endicott at Salem to tear the red cross out of the King's banner when royal authority was unjustly used to oppress the conscience. And yet those stalwart men did not mistake liberty for license. There is a scene which should be kept forever in the memory of the lover of America. It is the picture of the Pilgrims gathering in the cabin of the Mayflower to draw up and sign the first written constitution of free government. There they covenant "with God and with each other" to maintain the glory of God, the advancement of the Christian faith and the honor of king and country; they promise to frame just and equal laws for the general good of the colony, unto which they declare that they will render all due submission and obedience.

Here are qualities sorely needed at the present day, obedience to righteous law, and firm resistance unto tyranny. Apply these principles to the case of corruption, the rule of the boss in politics, the cowering of freemen beneath the threats of the saloon. From twenty-five to thirty-five saloons in Adrian, and a city of ten thousand people ruled by them to its great loss! Oh for the spirit of 1861 when men could send back word to the haughty South, "Our goods are for sale, but not our principles!" Woe worth the day when men look with indifference upon the spectacle of evil triumphing simply because of the indolent permission of the better minded, when those who seek to have the law enforced are told that they would better be in other business, when men think it impolitic to even humbly petition the sworn officers of the law to keep their solemn oaths!

III. A third quality because of which these men may well be patterns to us, is their possession of Dauntless Courage.

They never faltered amidst difficulties that would have crushed weaker souls. Three times they tried to escape from England, that in Holland they might find liberty to live and worship God; and only at the third trial did they reach their refuge. Even there it was necessary to move from Amsterdam to Leyden. Then when they found their children ceasing to be Englishmen, because of constant association with a foreign people, they bravely formed their great resolve. They would create a new and freer England across the billowy ocean. Twice they embarked from Plymouth and twice put back because the *Speedwell* was reported unfit to sail. At last, determined to be gone, one hundred and one persons crowded into the *Mayflower*, and with God's good hand upon them came hither, but not as they expected. By blunder or treachery they were landed far north of their intended destination. Hunger, cold and sickness welcomed them. The first winter one-half of the whole number were buried in graves that were leveled and sown for fear the Indians would learn how weak the survivors were. The *Mayflower* still swung at anchor in the bay, but when in the spring she spread her wings for England, not one of the fifty that were left ever spoke of returning with her. The well worked and cared for the sick, often stopping their nursing to bury a comrade's body in the snow-clad ground; but, with unshaken faith in God, they came back from the funeral to the sick room again. Such courage conquered obstacles, as it always will. And it needs to be commended and imitated in these days of limp and effeminate humanity, which has through disuse so weakened its back-bone, that it has not strength

to stand erect. Endurance, self-control and fortitude were Spartan virtues, the historians say. If that is so, the Pilgrims, men and women, were Spartans of the purest blood. I say both men and women, for the lot of women in a new and desolate country, separated from all they love, is always harder than the lot of men. Men drive away their sorrows by adventure and activity; but grief abides at home with women, and the confinement of their lives affords opportunity for bitter anguish. All honor to the Pilgrim Fathers and the Pilgrim Mothers, for they taught us how to face difficulty and bear sorrow with self-control that was majestic in its dignity.

IV. And finally, the Pilgrims should be patterns to us, in that they practiced Purity of Life. Admit that they were grave, too sober if you will; admit that life with them was robbed of much of its cheer and God-intended beauty, still there is one fact which forever honors them. *They bore white shields and wore unstained garments throughout life.* Leaving an England that reeked with gross licentiousness, they kept themselves pure. They had one standard for both men and women. They could not bear the echo of profanity, and set the swearer in the stocks; they branded their thieves and pilloried the gossip-monger. They sought to reproduce the Sermon on the Mount and the Golden Rule, together with the thunders of the Decalogue, in New England; they believed that loyalty to God and consideration for humanity required that the Sabbath should be observed as holy to the Lord, and they recognized the modern doctrine of the solidarity of mankind by making it an offense against the colony for one to be immoral or a Sabbath breaker. Their preachers were prophets like Elijah, Isaiah and John the Baptist, and when the voice of God spoke through them it found its echo, as Je-

hovah's voice will always find an echo, in the soul. Men listened to the message and obeyed. It is the fashion now to ridicule the Puritan virtues which those men possessed, who trod upon that boulder on the Massachusetts coast, and we see the consequences in the condition which prevails in certain circles of society. If it be Puritanism to keep one's soul unsullied, one's life chaste, one's thoughts and speech free from defilement, and one's hands clean from unjust or dishonorable gains, then I declare that the very hope of this land is hanging on a revival of Puritanism.

Welcome the earnestness of the Plymouth colony with its stern condemnation of all sin, in high or low, in man or woman; with its reverence for God and loyalty to conscience; even though we have less fashion and frivolity, fewer gilded youth and reckless maidens, fewer ruined lives and heart-broken women's tears. If we must choose between the gaiety and wickedness of Paris and the righteous, sober life of Plymouth, in the name of poor humanity for which Christ died, I pray that God will let the mantle of the Pilgrims fall on us who have inherited the riches of their labor and have too far departed from the teachings of their lives.

“Depart from evil and do good ; seek peace and pursue it.”—
[The Psalmist.

“To the counsellors of peace there is joy.”—[Solomon.

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given ; and the government shall be upon his shoulders ; and his name shall be called * * * The Prince of Peace.”

“Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.”

“And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever.”

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace.”—[Isaiah the Prophet.

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.”—[The Christ.

“For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Let us, therefore, follow after the things which make for peace.”—[Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ.

“For where envy and strife is there is confusion and every evil work ; but the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.”—[James, a servant of God.

“For others a diviner creed
Is lived in the life they lead ;
The passing of their beautiful feet
Blesses the pavement of the street ;
And all their looks and words repeat
Old Fuller’s saying, wise and sweet :
‘Not as a vulture, but as a dove,
The Holy Guest came from above.’ ”—[Longfellow.

“There are two sorts of souls. Those who seek for themselves the advantages of things as they are, and those who seek to give themselves to the advantage of things as they ought to be, and therefore may be made to be ; those who accept advancement and those who confer it ; those who would exploit the world, and those who would save it,—benefactors and malefactors,—Christ and the thieves !

If shadows are to fall from truth, and falsehood die, the times challenge and demand souls who shall be filled with the instinct of help, souls ablaze with that love which ever ‘Seeketh not her own,’ who, born for resolute, aggressive and undaunted leadership, are exemplars in interpreting every lost task by the largest ideals.”—[M. Woolsey Striker.

THE PEOPLE OF PEACE.

BY REV. JAMES GALE INGLIS,*

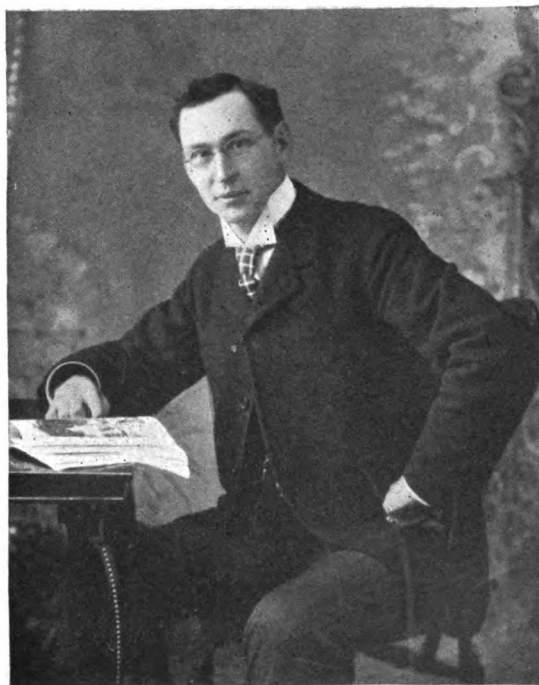
Pastor First Presbyterian Church, Petoskey.

Text: "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." Rom. 12:18.

There is no sweeter word than "peace." It breathes of quiet tenderness, restful confidence and hopeful trust. It sounds the harmonies of life and like a summer's breeze or setting sun, it seems to cast upon the fretted soul a benediction soft and gracious. We call the maiden "Irene" because we fondly trust that the gentle ministries of her heart and hand will be as angels of "peace," a thousand gracious influences to bless all the life she touches.

However hot the fires may burn, however fierce the passion or willful the petulance of man, beneath it all, deep down in the better self, there lies the instinct for peace. Shall a man love a quarrel, or delight to be at variance with his brother? Surely not. In barbarous days when the sheer animal that is in man welled up

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and overflowed, its pent-up flood oft-times burst all bounds and poured forth in tides of rage and hate and bloody cruelties. But even in those days the inevitable reaction came and an exhausted passion paid the penalty in a real, if morbid and vain, remorse. But those are the days and things that humanity now apologizes for, and shudders to look back upon, and calls inhuman, stamping it thus with the deepest negative, because the human recognizes it as foul, brutal and untrue.

Humanity, in her truest self, rises to a fine sense of peace and rejoices to believe, with one of her best-beloved interpreters, that in spite of all the selfishness that, like east winds, doth chill the world, "the whole human family is bathed with the element of love like a fine ether."

Nevertheless Paul struck with unerring accuracy a true chord of human nature in his introductory clause, "if it be possible." "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." "If it be possible!" What a world of significance in these words! The old, old story of wrong and rancor and revenge; of jarring and friction and fierce contention between man and man; of hatred and strife and sad bitterness in place of brotherhood!

As Paul looked out upon the world about him, so cruel, so brutal, so ignorant, and as he thought of all that was before that little band of Christ-born men and women, all that their tender ideals and heavenly purposes would be subjected to in the rough usages of a barbarous people, he could not help but say, "If it be possible!" It was so hard, so well-nigh impossible a task. And, beloved, as we look out into the world to-day—a better world than Paul's, thank God!—yet still to-day as we look out upon the turmoil and the tempest of life's fierce desires, the friction and passion of hu-

manity's struggle, the heart-burning and heart-breaking of personal ambitions and social selfishness—as we look out upon all of these, shall we not also say, almost with a sigh, “If it be possible.” How shall it be possible? In view of such conflicting and uncertain motives, these perplexing cross-purposes of life, and counter-currents of society, the inherent weakness of humanity, how shall it be possible to live peaceably with all men?

Paul's second sentence reveals the secret: “As much as lieth in you.” Now Paul would never have said this of himself—Saul, ambitious, resentful, relentless. Behold! a greater than Saul (or Paul) is here! And in this sentence is revealed the secret of the divine economy of him who was Paul's Master, Savior, King!

Christ's mission was two-fold. He came not alone that the people should be at peace with God, but also that men should live at peace with men. Nay more; he taught that the latter was the necessary corollary of the former, and that he who loved God truly would love also his fellow-man. Nay, he went further still, and declared that the latter was the chiefest test of the former, and that only as we loved our fellow-men did we truly love God, for “he who loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?” To this degree at least Christ's mission was a social and economical one; to found a kingdom of righteousness and peace and joy; to separate a people of peace the whole fabric of whose government, political, economic and social, should be of harmony and confidence and love.

And by a sort of irony of fate the world's noblest achievements and its saddest failures have alike been nurtured by the inspiration of this noble thought. Strangely enough this same thought has been the sad world's dream in every age. From Plato to St. August-

tine, from Savonarola to Sir Thomas More, every age has dreamed of its ideal republic, its city of God.

Right here we find the pre-eminence of Jesus. In the method, the program, nay rather the very spirit, logic, philosophy, of his political economy, the secret lay. Most reformers have undertaken to proceed from without and by social machinery. Christ proceeded from within and by personal influence. Savonarola, driving out the Medicis whose vileness had rotted the heart and corrupted the whole city of Florence, crowned Jesus king of the Florentines in the public square. They burned their vanities that day with good will and well-meaning sincerity, but nevertheless Jesus was *not* king of the Florentines because he had no real place in their *individual* characters and their *personal* life; and as they had burned their vanities one day, so on a later day that fickle populace burned Savonarola himself.

Jesus, then, would build his kingdom by first building individual character. He will bring heaven on earth simply by making men and women heavenly in spirit and in purpose. This kingdom of Jesus cometh not with observation, with blare of trumpets or public crowning in the market places, but silently, as here a man and there a woman "enters in," in solemn soul-conviction deliberately following Jesus and willing to pay any cost of such discipleship. Yesterday that kingdom was one man! to-day it is a group!—and thus are born the "people of peace" to bless, albeit unconsciously, and build, albeit undiscovered in each community, the kingdom of heaven.

"As far as lieth in you," then, is the sweetly solemn call of Jesus to the people of peace. It is the call of one who well understands the stress and strain of life, the fret and friction which makes the "if it be

possible" of this thing of peace. This is no fancy of some idle dreamer; this is no utterance of some poetic idealist. These are the words of a man of strong passions who has come into daily contact with the rush and the fierceness of life.

"As much as lieth in *you*." Not what the world, society will bring to you, but what you will bring to them. It is the deliberate essaying to a fearful task. It is God's call for volunteers in a fearful emergency. What he needs now most of all is peace men; not men whose souls are blazing in the fires of hate, but men whose souls are glowing in the light of love; men who are enrapt with the spirit of a holy brotherhood; men who seek not their own in the mad rush of business; men who will not easily be provoked by the weakness, and selfishness, and petulance, and passion of the human; men who will think no evil in the sad spirit of criticism and backbiting that plagues society to-day; men who, when reviled, will revile not again, but bear in meekness of love the wrongs of life. These are the men that Jesus needs, needs most of all to-day, these "the people of peace."

Beloved, will you be one? Remember I have not deceived you; I have told you it was hard. Is your heart hot or heavy with its burden? Do you think that you have been deeply wronged? Do you resent it and are you hard and unforgiving? I cannot blame you,—how dare any of us who must need fight so hard ourselves to keep the spirit sweet, blame you? I do not blame you—but Jesus calls you, calls you to deliberately bury it all; all the anger, all the resentment; to bury your feelings, your pride, yourself; to let it all go unto the uttermost of humiliation, if need be—and deliberately, at every cost, take up the *task of peace*. Will you do it? He and he only can give you strength. Will

you do it? The poor, sad world, despairing almost, waits your reply! Angels wait the answer of your courage! Jesus stands waiting! God himself waits! It is, indeed, an hour of crisis in the world's tumultuous strife, and the whole creation waits, longing and yearning for "*the people of peace!*"

THE LONELINESS OF CHRIST.

BY REV. GEORGE W. BARLOW, D. D.,*

Pastor First Presbyterian Church, Caro.

Text: "He went up into a mountain apart to pray; and when the evening was come he was there alone." Matt. 14:23.

Jesus was Emanuel, God with us. But he was also a man. "He took upon himself our nature, and became one of us."

There was a little babe in the manger at Bethlehem; there was a little boy playing in the streets of Nazareth; there was a young man standing on the banks of the Jordan, about to be baptized. He slept, waked, ate, drank, sorrowed, rejoiced, just as we do. To-day I wish to speak of his human character, or rather of one peculiarity of his human character; I wish to show how lonely his earthly life was.

The disciples have sailed away to cross the Lake of Galilee; the people have gone to their homes; the sun has set; Christ has ascended into the highlands, on the east side of the lake, to spend the night in prayer. As I think of him kneeling amid the still solitude of the

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GEO. W. BARLOW.

mountain, far apart from every human being, while deeper and deeper night flings her gloomy shadows over him, that one scene seems a picture of his whole earthly life. From the manger to the cross he was alone. Through his whole life there ran a deep, silent, sad under-current of loneliness. Let us examine some of the causes which produced it.

1st. Great minds, in advance of their age, are always lonely. Suppose a man steps out into the street of a great city about 2 o'clock in the night. The thoroughfares, like arteries, stretch away in every direction, but no life throbs through them. The city's pulse is still. The long lines of business houses are somber, blank walls. The stillness of a vast cemetery rests on everything. A dull sound heard afar off, or a form gliding through the distant shadows but makes the scene more weird. An indescribable feeling of loneliness comes over the spectator. That man standing in the midst of a slumbering city, is a good type of a great mind in advance of his age.

How lonely Martin Luther must have felt when he looked around him and saw all Europe asleep; drugged into profound unconsciousness by those powerful opiates, the false teachings of the Roman Catholic church. When Galileo published his discovery that the earth moves the priests pronounced him a heretic, and on pain of death they made him kneel and say that he was mistaken. But it is told that as he rose to his feet he muttered through his clenched teeth, "It does move." As the great astronomer went back to his observatory and looked out upon his only friends, the stars, he must have felt very lonely.

When Columbus was upon his first voyage of discovery, far out on an unknown ocean, though he was the commander of the little fleet, he walked the deck of his

ship a solitary man. And when the coward fears of his crew became so great that they rose in mutiny and gathered around him to force him to turn back, and here and there he could see the gleam of a half-drawn dagger, Columbus stood at bay a grand picture of loneliness. Such men as Columbus, Galileo and Luther stand out like the peaks of a mountain range. They tower in lonely grandeur far above their companions. Christ was the grandest, loneliest of them all.

True, the people of Luther's age were asleep. Spiritual night had settled over Europe, but the lives of the early church fathers beamed down upon them like stars, and the Bible, like the full moon, had risen into the sky, and, though clouds of error sadly obscured its light, it shone occasionally through the rifts with great brilliance as upon the homes of the Waldenses in the Christian valleys of Piedmont. But the people of Christ's age were asleep in the rayless darkness of heathenism. The night of Egypt had settled over the world. There was not even any little Land of Goshen where the people had light in their dwellings. Deep spiritual darkness "that might be felt" rested upon the souls of men. Their greatest philosophers wondered and doubted if man is immortal.

The Bible was but partly written and had scarcely risen above the hills of Palestine, and there its light was so obscured by a dense cloud of vain traditions that it might be called a "land of darkness, the region and shadow of death!" Christ was immeasurably in advance of the age in which he lived. His teachings were new, such as had never been dreamed of before. The Sermon on the Mount fell with startling strangeness upon the ears of those who heard it. It had been said, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth"; that is, if a man tears out your eye, tear out his eye; if he knocks

out your teeth, knock out his teeth. This was the teaching of the whole world. He was considered a coward who did not promptly punish one who had injured him.

Revenge was honorable. But Christ said, "Resist not evil"; "If a man smite thee on the one cheek, turn to him the other also"; "If a man sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also"; "If a man compel thee to go with him a mile, go with him twain." It had been said, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy." But Christ said, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you and do good to them that despitefully use you and persecute you." The doctrine of forgiveness was as new to the people of that age as it would have been to the North American Indians. Christ brought a new power into the world's history and proclaimed that love was stronger than hate; nay that love, pitifully weak as it seemed, should yet rule the world.

Again, in the time of Christ, woman was degraded; everywhere she was the slave or the toy of her master; nowhere was she considered his equal. But Christ said, "The man and his wife are no more twain but one flesh"; thus making her the equal of her husband.

Again, Christ said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Thus in one breath he swept away every system of religion on the earth, for all the world were trusting in good works; like Nicodemus they had never so much as heard of the new birth.

Again, Christ was the first to recognize the value of man; the first who strove to elevate the masses because they were men; the first who taught that a human soul is a diamond and no less valuable because it is in the mud. Nay, he stooped to raise that outcast class we

fear to touch with the tips of our gloved fingers ; I mean the Mary Magdalenes of society. Christ set up a kingdom in which there were to be absolutely no distinctions. What great statesman ever did that, where rich and poor, bond and free, white, black, yellow and red should meet upon precisely the same level? He proclaimed the universal brotherhood of mankind ; a lesson so contrary to men's haughty notions, that for eighteen centuries they have not half learned it, though God has often written it before their eyes in letters of blood. In the midst of his mighty ideas, the man, Jesus Christ, stood alone.

2d. Christ was lonely because he was pure. Imagine Satan in heaven. Though he could see happy beings around him in every direction and the songs of the redeemed were to swell up into his ears like the sound of many waters, still he would be lonely. He could not make them his companions. Their thoughts are pure, his are impure. Their aspirations are holy, his are unholy. Their hearts are full of love, his is full of hate and all manner of wickedness. He would have nothing in common with them ; his loneliness would be profound. Reverse the picture. Christ came to this sinful world. His stainless purity had no fellowship with the wrongs and shames of which the earth was full. He looked around him upon "a world lying in wickedness." His sensitive soul must have shrunk within him at hearing the name of God blasphemed, or listening to the cry of the oppressed, or the fine sounding prayer of the hypocrite. His very disciples wounded him again and again. He had no companions. He was alone.

3d. Christ was lonely because he was not appreciated. What a solitary road inventors have sometimes been compelled to journey. Unappreciated, ridiculed,

sneered at, they have worked on under a great burden of loneliness, and sometimes they have been crushed by it. Poor John Fitch, the real inventor of steamboats, despised as a visionary, laughed at as a fool, finally took his own life. Christ "came to his own but his own received him not." "He was a light shining in a dark place, but the darkness comprehended it not." Sorrowfully he said, "The Queen of Sheba shall rise up in the judgment with this generation and shall condemn it; for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold a greater than Solomon is here." "The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation and shall condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold a greater than Jonah is here." They not only neglected Christ, but they ridiculed him. "He was despised and rejected of men." They said, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" "He casteth out devils by Beelzebub." "He has the devil in him, himself." They spit upon him; they slapped him in the face; they put a crown of thorns upon his head and mocked him.

Christ must have been peculiarly sensitive to ridicule; pure natures generally are. Sin makes one calous, but he had never sinned. How lonely he must have felt under all this ridicule, especially as it came from those he loved. Full of loneliness is that sad wail, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thee as a hen doth gather her brood, but ye would not."

4th. Christ was lonely because he knew that his nation and his friends were disappointed in him. The Jews supposed that the Messiah would be a temporal king. A haughty people, the Roman yoke fretted them exceedingly. They had fought with fierce desperation

to preserve their liberty. Crushed by superior skill and numbers, overrun, powerless, but unsubdued, their hopes clustered around the coming Messiah and their eyes watched for his appearance with eager joy.

They believed that the grand prophecies concerning him indicated that he would be an irresistible earthly conqueror. David had said: "He shall rule all nations with a rod of iron, he shall dash them in pieces as a potter's vessel." Isaiah had said: "The government shall be upon his shoulder." Jeremiah had said: "The Lord shall raise unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper." Zachariah had said: "He shall build the temple of the Lord and he shall bear the glory." Cruelly oppressed, suffering indignities which rankled in their bosoms, longing to be revenged, they waited with feverish impatience for the coming of this mighty warrior.

Christ came a lonely babe, cradled in a manger. He grew up a carpenter's son. He began his public life among ignorant fishermen. He was meek; without earthly power; he counseled quiet submission to the oppressor. Was he the conqueror who should "dash all nations in pieces as a potter's vessel?"

He humbly walked through the heat and dust of the street while the Roman rode by in a chariot. He had not where to lay his head, while Caesar's minions dwelt in the palaces of the land. He was followed by nothing but a crowd of poor people. A single centurion's band would scatter them like a flock of sheep. Was this the king of whom the prophets had given such a magnificent description? They laughed him to scorn and cried, "Away with such a fellow from the earth; it is not fit that he should live." Now, no one is so lonely as a good man who knows that he is generally considered an impostor. Christ knew that nearly all his countrymen

considered him an impostor. His own disciples were bitterly disappointed in him. They shared in the hopes of their countrymen. They could not understand "that his kingdom was not of this world." They were constantly expecting the time when he would ascend the throne of his father David. Once if he had not hid himself they would have taken him by force to make him a king. When he rode into Jerusalem they were wild with joy; they believed the time had come; they spread their garments in the way and cut down branches of trees and strewed them in the way and shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

When he told them that he must suffer many things of the chief priests and elders and be mocked and scourged and crucified, they rebuked him, saying, "Be it far from thee, Lord, these things shall not be unto thee," and when these things had really happened, their bitter disappointment was well expressed in the words of the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, "We thought it had been he that would have redeemed Israel." Christ knew that his career was a series of disappointments to his friends; that almost every step was misunderstood. Their eyes were so blinded by the blaze of expected temporal glories that they could not see the magnificent spiritual kingdom he was founding. His heart must have yearned for sympathy. Nobody could give it to him, for nobody could understand him. He must work on alone.

5th. Christ was lonely because the wrath of God was poured out on him alone. When his enemies came with lanterns, torches and weapons to take him, all the disciples forsook him and fled. He was bound, led to the mock trials, condemned, scourged, crucified. None but John and Peter dared be present at his examina-

tion ; and when Peter was in danger of being discovered he denied him with oaths. Christ was fastened to the cross by nails driven through his quivering flesh. He was numbered with the lowest malefactors. He was dying a painful, shameful death. The priests were wagging their heads and mocking him. The multitudes were sitting around with hard unmoistened faces, waiting to see the end, watching to see him die. Nowhere could he discover the least sympathy save when his eyes fell upon a little group of women gathered about his stricken mother, and the beloved disciple. It was very lonely.

When the three Hebrews were thrown into the burning fiery furnace, they faced death very calmly. But when Nebuchadnezzar stooped down and looked into the furnace he saw the cause of their courage ; " One like the Son of God was walking with them." Christian martyrs have gone to the rack and stake with absolute joy in their faces ; God so flooded their souls with a sense of his presence that they had no sense of pain. Once the persecutors determined to make a young man recant. They tortured him in every fearful way their fiendish ingenuity could devise, but he never uttered a cry or groan. Baffled, defeated, they finally left him. He lay upon the ground a helpless mass of bruised flesh and broken bones. His friends gathered around him to tenderly minister to him, asked how he was able to bear such pain so quietly. He answered, " when the pain was worst, an angel stood beside me and pointed with his finger upward." But during those three hours of supreme agony, when Jesus was hanging upon the cross, no angel stood beside him. He was alone. Even God, the Father, forsook him. Probably we cannot conceive how profound Christ's loneliness was after this mysterious hiding of the Father's face.

It forced from his pale lips that most fearful cry the earth has ever heard, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

My friends, who are not Christians, Christ "was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." Why? Because "on him was laid the iniquity of us all." Ingratitude is so great a crime that a man seldom acknowledges himself guilty of it toward his fellow-man. Is not ingratitude toward Jesus as great a crime?

My dear Christian friends, it is good for us to stand sometimes in the lonely shadows of Christ's life. It will give our souls deep, solemn earnestness. Do you wish to develop an enduring, symmetrical, Christian character? Make the life of Jesus your daily study. He is our example; the sinless one; the model man of the human race. The study of his life will yield you a rich per cent. of growth in grace. Your intellect will bow before his grand ideas. The world's greatest men never uttered such sublime thoughts as he; thoughts, which, like the "leaven hid in three measures of meal," will silently and resistlessly work on until the whole earth is renewed. Your affection for him will increase as you begin to comprehend his matchless love. There is a curious scientific toy in many of our homes, called a kaleidoscope. Look through it toward the light and you will see a beautiful geometrical figure; turn it and you will see another and another equally shapely; an endless succession of them; no two alike; each absolutely perfect, and the colors blend together in exquisite harmony. So it is with Christ. View his character from any direction and you will see a beautiful and absolutely perfect model, and, as you begin to "see him as he is," you will begin "to become like him."

Napoleon's Old Guard went into battle shouting,

“Long live the Emperor.” One glimpse of him filled them with the wildest enthusiasm. When they talked about him their eyes would light up with excitement. No man dared speak disrespectfully of him in the presence of one of them. When he sent them to take a point they threw themselves upon it like an avalanche. To call forth their mightiest efforts he had but to say, “I will be looking at you.”

Oh, if our hearts glowed with a similar feeling for Christ, our Great Captain; if enthusiasm for him blazed like fire through the Christian host, his army would be invincible and their victories would thrill the world.



JOHN GRAY.

DANIEL IN BABYLON, OR POLITICS AND RELIGION.

BY REV. JOHN GRAY, D. D.,*

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Text: "Then said these men, we shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God." Dan. 6:5.

Daniel in Babylon furnishes one of the most interesting and inspiring pages in all history. Exalted in rank, perhaps of royal birth, he was when fifteen years of age carried into captivity. Thus the cheering prospect of a noble and honored place among his own people was suddenly changed to one of servitude in a foreign land. His brave young heart, however, was not broken by disappointment. The fires of hope, which burned so brightly upon its altar, were not easily extinguished. Chaldea, with its splendid worships of gods many and lords many, had not removed from him faith in the God of his fathers. He knew that the God of the Hebrews was as nigh to him upon the plains of Shinar as upon the banks of the Jordan, and that a captive in

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Babylon was as precious, in his sight, as a prince in Jerusalem.

As he had not been crushed by humiliation he was not disturbed by sudden exaltation. The banqueting chamber of the King of Babylon could not destroy within him the well grounded principles of his early Hebrew home. Interwoven into the very warp and woof of life, they gave him courage to refuse even from the royal board meat and drink, which had been consecrated to the praise of heathen deities. Nor was he prompted by weak prejudice, as the advanced phases of religious liberalism would account it. He was animated by an intelligent conviction of truth and duty. Not pledged to the spirit of the age, he did not accept, unchallenged, the popular teaching, "When you live in Babylon you must observe the manners, customs and religion of her people." Moreover, the most scrupulous devotion to the God of the Hebrews did not unfit him for the services of the Chaldean court. An advanced secularism would have us believe that a regard for the world beyond makes us too tolerant of the evils that belong to this.

The atheistic, infidel doctrine has found a too ready acceptance, on the part of many, that politics and religion must dwell apart, and that we must not be over-careful in morals if we are to be intimately associated with public affairs. Could we, anywhere, obtain a more complete denial of such an assumption? Here is a man, with all the vast and varied interests of the most extended empire in the world resting upon him, and maintaining, at the same time, unswerving devotion to his personal convictions. When unrighteous plotters, anxious to substitute their meaner service for his high discharge of royal decree, sought to dishonor him before the king, they were not "able to find any occasion

against him, except they found it against him concerning the law of his God." High testimony to a noble and exalted character! Was there ever such a fitting tribute from so corrupt a source? Might it not well be written upon the high places of the nations? Is it not a motto for kings and for those who are round about them?

"The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his." He did not permit evil to come upon Daniel in consequence of his righteous deeds! God's pledge is sure, "them that honor me I will honor." Notwithstanding apparent impossibilities, Daniel was spared before the nations to administer the affairs of Babylon, and to prepare for the Hebrew people the way of deliverance from a long captivity.

Representatives of a religious system, boasting our descent from honored ancestors and called to stand in our lot with kindred peoples from other lands and of other faiths, that we may prove ourselves worthy of the heritage committed to our trust, I can recall none in all the commonwealth of kings more worthy of our study and imitation than Daniel in Babylon. As a grateful, reverent church we ask, "What advantage then hath the Jew and what profit is there of circumcision?" The answer is "much every way, chiefly because that unto us were committed the oracles of God." So, in the midst of darkness, superstition and merciless persecution, the God of our fathers hath chosen them to bear the torch of light and truth before the peoples of the world, and, upon a strong foundation, in solemn league and covenant, build up a temple to Christian truth and liberty which would stand as their bulwark in every land. Thus, inspired by her tradition, animated by her courage, nursed in her pious homes,

trained in her parish schools and molded by her simple reverent worship, hopeful sons and daughters have gone forth from her like Joseph to Egypt, and Daniel to Babylon, to shine as lights in the high places of the nations and the church.

If we, as we justly may, are proud of our privilege in this respect, we must at the same time be mindful of our responsibilities. Though dead, Daniel yet speaks. Not his word only, but the memory of his deeds has gone out into all the earth. The good as well as the evil that men do lives after them. We cease from our labors and our works do follow us. Promoted to the Chaldean court, Daniel might have esteemed it as no high honor to belong to the children of the captivity. He might readily have forgotten the sluggish waters of the Jordan in the presence of the shining silver flood of the fast-flowing Euphrates. The covenant glory of the Hebrew worshiper might have faded from view in the light of the most splendid ritual of the Babylonians. Selfish gratification might have come forward in the most plausible manner to ask, is it politic and proper, under existing circumstances, to allow principle to stand in the way of the king's favor? If, however, considerations such as these had been allowed to silence the voice of conscience, the sun of Daniel's prosperity had set ere it was yet noon, the instrument of Israel's redemption had been broken and the Chaldean monarch had not proclaimed and decreed "that in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel."

As the temptation came to Daniel in Babylon, urging preference of place to principle, so it will come and it does come to all. Happy for us if we can stand where Daniel stood, if his rock is our rock! It was the foundation upon which our fathers built. If animated

by their example, we are to be elements of power in molding the future of this land, we must appreciate and cherish like principles. These they were that have made the name of the Puritan and the Covenanter synonymous with all that is pure in devotion, great in self-sacrifice and holy in religion.

Whatever may have been the changes wrought during two hundred and fifty years, there is yet no armor so befitting as that which we have been wont to bear. The sling of David was more effective in the skilled hand of the youthful strapping than the sword of Saul. Daniel could have added no new lustre to the festivities of the Chaldean court, nor turned to sweeter note the splendid chorus of Babylonian song. His strength was in the Lord his God. If some seductive Delilah of sensuous desire or worldly ambition had shorn from him the locks wherein his great strength was found, he had been weak and helpless as another man. So if forgetful of our traditions we seek to accommodate our hearts and lives to principles and practices alien to them, we will manifest and declare our folly and our sin. We may be assured of this, that as unscrupulous courtiers we can never excel. We know not how to organize society upon a superficial basis. Being wont to build upon principles of truth and liberty, the institutions we would erect upon any other foundations weak and disproportionate would fall to pieces. The architecture may be greatly modified. In outward form the diversity may be as great as that which distinguishes the modern house of worship from the mediæval cathedral. Building, however, we must remember the old foundations, and employ material like unto that out of which our ancestors reared their goodly structure, or we build in vain.

The church was ever an essential element in their

institutions. It was the mainspring in the machinery of their social fabric, which, responsive to the veriest touch, moved them in their demands for liberty and in the accomplishment of their grandest achievements. Let us learn from them that any endeavor to build up a nationality in which there is no church, and no religion, must prove a fruitless effort.

Eliminate the Bible from our national life, and you have removed from us the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, and left our people to wander disconsolate in the desert wastes of infidelity and national dissolution. It must continue to hold its rightful place in the hearts and homes of our people. Nations there have been without such saving power, but where are they? Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome, where are they? In all the sad scene of wild desolation which marks the place of their departed glory, no voice is heard save the solemn language of Jehovah, "I am God and there is none else." Rejoicing in the civil and religious liberty which gave to those who have gone before us their proud pre-eminence, and which by its gracious light and power they have been enabled to hand down to us, is not our duty clear? Must not the word of God be the man of our counsel? Is not God repeating to us "thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thine house, and on the gates. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children."

Nor do we properly understand and appreciate the heritage committed to us, without waiting to reflect upon the influence of the Sabbath in the determination of our national character. If we have no time nor disposition

for such consideration, let us not regard ourselves as the worthy representatives of an honored past. The stupendous nineteenth century would seem to have surpassed the Divine expectation and outgrown the Divine purpose! Was the command, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy" given for a mere elementary period of the world's history, or for every age? Was there a time to come in which the exigencies of his kingdom were to control the purposes of the King? Must the demands of heaven yield to the necessities of earth? While we must remember the Sabbath day as one of freedom from toil, we must bear in mind also that it is not to be given over to pleasure. If the holy recollections of childhood's Sabbath remain with us, if the familiar chiming of the old church bells have not ceased to vibrate upon memory's ear, if a thousand fond associations of it linger with us, as

" A day of sweet reflection,
A day of holy love,
A day of resurrection
From earth to things above,"

shall they not serve as the voice of God's gracious spirit calling upon us to contend for the sanctity of his holy day. He speaks to us in terms of peculiar personal expostulation. We are constrained not only by the principles of patriotism and religion; but the sepulchres of our fathers, the lives of heroes and the deaths of martyrs, all beseech us to "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

Intensity is the distinguishing characteristic of our age. It leaves no place for neutrality. Every arrow flies with lightning speed. The driving is like the driving of Jehu. The battle has been fiercely fought. Nothing but character can endure. They only who

have stamped upon them the image and superscription of the King shall wear a crown. How are we to stand in such a time? We have had honored ancestors, but honored ancestors cannot support us in such a strife. The victory we seek is won by personal courage and grace alone. Daniel had no helper. To meet the sneer of plumed and belted courtier, who with haughty mien despised the lineage of a Hebrew slave, he had but the answer of a blameless life. Thus to stem the sweeping torrent of national dishonor, to rise above what seemed to be an irresistible destiny, and to trample upon the base assumptions of a privileged audacity, he had no weapon save the indestructible armor of a resolute and holy purpose. It was enough. God and the right shall stand when the pillars of Hercules have fallen. I would commend to you Daniel as at once your patron and pattern saint.

There has been given to us in this land a heritage of freedom. The arm of the oppressor is broken. There can be no enemy against us except that which is within, and no bondage save the corruption of our nature. The enemy may be powerful and the yoke galling, but the God of Daniel is able to deliver us. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things." It has been written and read and sung and said that "happiness is our being's end and aim." The assumption is false, nevertheless. Human experience, the universal conscience, God's word and spirit all declare that "not happiness, but perfection is our being's end and aim." An ancient prince inquired of his ambitious son as to what was the end and purpose of his life. "To conquer the world," was his prompt reply. "And when you have conquered the world, what then?" "Then I will sit down and take my rest." "Why

not first sit down and take your rest?" The father did not know the passion that burned within him. He did not comprehend the fact that so long as there was one flag which had not been lowered, one sceptre which had not been broken, one kingdom which had not owned allegiance to his sway, that so long he could not rest, and therefore would not rest. Such is the attitude of the Christian life. He knows that he "has not yet attained." There are almost whole continents in the spiritual realm which his footstep has not reached, whose flora has never yet greeted his eye, whose bird song has never delighted his ear. Why should he thus rest satisfied to whom the Master has said, "Be ye perfect even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect!" So long as there is one passion which has not been subdued, one evil habit which has not been overcome, one unholy desire which has not been dispelled, so long he can not, will not rest.

O living will that shalt endure
 When all that seems shall suffer shock!
 Rise in the spiritual rock,
 Flow thro' our deeds and make them pure;
 That we may lift from out of dust
 A voice as unto him that hears,
 A cry above the conquered years,
 To one that with us works and trusts,
 With faith that comes of self control,
 The truths that never can be proved;
 Until we close with all we loved,
 And all we flow from, soul to soul.

PAUL'S SONG IN THE NIGHT.

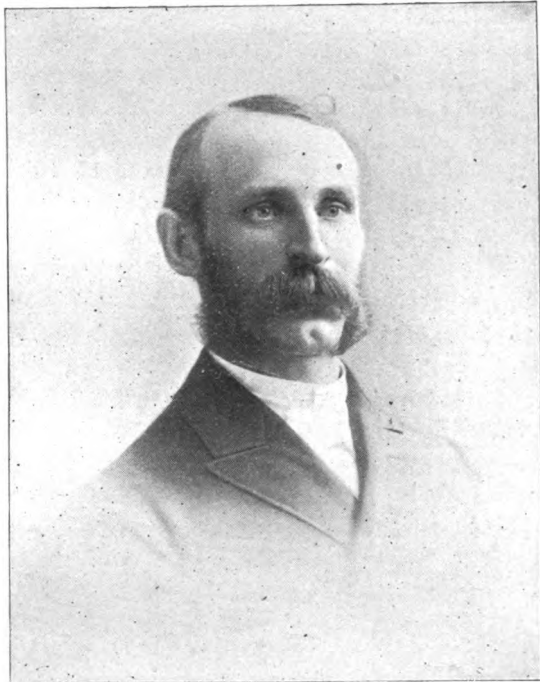
BY REV. D. B. SPENCER,*

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Text: "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed and sang praise unto God." Acts 16:25.

There is one word which is continually coming to my mind as I read these narratives concerning Paul, and that word is, irrepressible. They have a rule in the prize ring that when a man is knocked out, if he does not come up again within a certain number of seconds, time is called and he is declared beaten. Thus far we have seen Paul down in many combats; but he always comes up again. Thus at Antioch where Paul was stoned, he was down for a moment, but he came up again. At Iconium he was again knocked out, but straightway he was on his feet. At Lystra he was stoned and this time left for dead, but while they stood about him he rose up and went into the city to renew the contest. And here in Philippi is this finely victorious spirit singing from the depths of a loathsome dungeon. Paul has been downed again. The enemy

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DAVID B. SPENCER.

has his feet fast in the stocks this time, but they cannot conquer this irrepressible spirit; for "at midnight Paul and Silas prayed and sang praise unto God, and the prisoners heard them."

There was at Rome a famous dungeon called the Mamertine prison. This was a dungeon entirely beneath the pavement, and entered alone through an opening in the top. Down into this pit prisoners were lowered or thrown, where little light penetrated, where the vilest odors and the most abominable filth abounded. Into a dungeon of this sort was Jeremiah cast. "Then took they Jeremiah and cast him into the dungeon, that was in the court of the prison. And they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon was no water, but mire. So Jeremiah sank in the mire." No description of the jail at Philippi remains to us. It may or it may not have been fashioned after the Roman model. But confinement in it could have been no holiday affair. At best we may consider it worse than anything which George Kennan has described as belonging to Siberia. Into the very worst portion of the prison the jailor thrust Paul and Silas, bleeding and lacerated from the brutal scourging which they had just received. And still more, he made their feet fast in the stocks—wooden blocks which stretched the feet far apart. That was no comfortable night which those men spent in that Philippian jail. And yet in the midst of its drear, in the face of its discouragement and suffering, Paul and Silas made the old dungeon vocal with song and prayer.

What a victory was that,—a victory over the discouragements and ills of life! Dr. Franklin tells us that the New England Thanksgiving day had its origin in a time of great depression and despondency among the early settlers. Between the wilderness and the deep sea, between the rocky soil and the wintry skies,

it seemed to them that they were to be crushed. They had had one day of fasting and prayer and were proposing to hold another, when an old Puritan proposed that they have a day of thanksgiving instead; for after all their discouragements they had many mercies for which to be grateful. And that spirit struggled to the uppermost. And so they had a day of thanksgiving instead of a day of fasting. That was the Pilgrim Fathers' song in the night. Was it not a victory, a victory over discouragement?

There is no victory in singing when the sky is bright, when the pocket is full of money, when you have had a prosperous year, when your loved ones are all safe, when your plans have carried to a successful issue, when there is a fair prospect before you. Any one can sing then. The song will go of itself. The victory comes when you are praising God in circumstances just the reverse. Praising God on an empty stomach, and on an empty pocket book, and on a bleeding back; praising God when you are out of work and cannot find it, and your plans have all gone to ruin; that is a different thing. If you sing when all is bright what thank have ye; do not sinners even the same? If you cherish a glad heart in health and prosperity, what do ye more than others; do not even the publicans the same? It is the song in the night which counts for Christian character and testifies to an inward power, which lifts the soul above circumstances and makes him superior to them. This was the kind of victory which Paul won. ?

Philippi, you will remember, was the scene of one of the great military victories of ancient history. There the Republicans of Rome took their final stand. There Brutus and Cassius fell, while Mark Anthony by his courage and subtle generalship won his notable victory. But time has taken the crown from Anthony

and put it upon Paul, for his was the more splendid achievement. Anthony's victory is almost forgotten. I was obliged to refresh my memory of it; but Paul's splendid victory there over his adversities is a household tale; everyone knows of his song in the night.

Let us look for a few moments at the elements of that victory.

I. First and lowest, in it he overcame physical pain. Paul's back was bleeding. They had torn his raiment from off him, and each blow of the scourge had torn open the veins. Great purple welts marked the track of each cruel thong. With his feet far apart in the stocks a sitting posture was well nigh impossible, but any attempt to lie back upon the stone floor could only have brought fresh agony. That must have been a night of suffering long to be remembered, and yet Paul sang praises to God.

Perhaps we can measure the force of this fact by our own experiences. Have you ever had an opportunity to know how hard it is to be pleasant in suffering? When pain is on, human nature prompts to oaths and expletives and complaints instead of cheerfulness. I have heard of those with whom one can hardly live when they have an ache or pain. A toothache is sometimes quite sufficient to transform a genial gentleman into a brute with snarls and groans and explosions of temper. There are women whose nerves get the better of their souls, who when fatigued or in poor health are prone to fretfulness and querulous complaints. A suffering flesh is a foe to a Christian cheer not easily held under restraint, and a smile, a cheerful demeanor, a song, costs a battle. That was one battle which Paul won.

II. In the second instance Paul's song in prison showed his victory over the discouragements of adverse circumstances. Fortune had frowned upon the apostle

at each step of this his second missionary journey. It began with a quarrel and separation from his old friend Barnabas. Then he was taken sick among the Gauls, a strange people. And when at last he reached Asia he was baffled in his attempts to preach the gospel. He then essayed to go into Bithynia, but that way was blocked up. He had come down to Troas, perhaps wondering what all these hindrances meant, when he saw in a vision the man of Macedonia, saying, "Come over and help us." Hope then gleamed afresh, and Paul had crossed the Ægean Sea thinking that at last an open door was found. But at the very first place he had visited, when as yet he had gained only a single disciple for Christ, he found himself seized by the Roman authorities and after barbarous treatment cast into a dungeon. We might think that would have been a sober night for Paul, a night of serious misgivings and discouragement. It was less than this which cast Elijah down under the juniper tree, wishing that he were dead. It was less than this which led Moses to abandon a long cherished ambition and for forty years to wander as a cowboy in the wilderness lands of Midian. It was no more than this which made David, all discouraged, exclaim, "There is but a step between me and death."

Our feelings are apt to respond to our successes and failures as the mercury does to the changes in the atmosphere. Sometimes a man comes home from business at night, and from his crabbed, ill-natured manner, from the way he treats the cat or speaks to the children, from the way he grumbles about the dinner and then gloomily retreats within the evening journal, his wife does not need to be told that something has gone wrong with him during the day.

It is not difficult to sustain the shock of one disap-

pointment or two, perhaps, but it is the succession of reverses which tells upon the spirits. Sometimes a man finds his whole life's dream broken to fragments by the repeated blows of adverse fortune; can he look on and smile and thank God and build anew, or is he known among his fellows as a disappointed man? Sometimes a man finds reverse following reverse in his efforts to lift himself into financial independence, and the years go and still he is in poverty while his comrades are in affluence. Is he still sweet-tempered, with a song going to his toil, or is he broken in spirit and soured by the misfortunes of his lot? There are those to whom repeated disappointments have wrought a crushed spirit. Pride has not gone. Life has not made them humble, but it has bitterly humiliated them. They no longer aspire. They bitterly submit to their lot. They are like a wounded eagle which no longer strives to fly, but there is fierce defiance in the eye. The battle has gone the wrong way. Misfortunes have conquered the soul.

III. Paul's song in the night was also a victory over resentment. He had suffered from wrong as well as from disappointments. He had been unlawfully scourged. He had been lied about. He had been persecuted for doing good, and with the stigma of a traitor upon him cast into prison. It is no easy thing to raise a song over the consciousness that we have been unjustly treated. A person who can be sweet in suffering and cheerful in spite of adverse circumstances, may utterly fail under the indignity of wrong, may flame with resentment when unjustly treated in word or deed. If we had been met at the church door this morning with the intelligence that we had been wronged by an employer, a customer or a neighbor; if some breath of slander blackening our character, misconstruing our

sincerest deeds had been told us, how many could rise above it and command a spirit to praise and worship God? I saw a man sitting in the parlor service, whose hearty singing attracted my notice. Then an unjust and thoughtless remark was made by one of the brethren which touched that man, and I noticed his lips came tight together, and there was no more song on them for six months, and for weeks he refused to come near the sanctuary.

Men and brethren, I want this morning to commend to you and to myself Paul's victory—that victory over aches and pains, over repeated disappointments, over personal injuries—which proclaimed itself in that midnight singing. Perhaps here is a side of our battlefield on which we have not won so many triumphs as on some others. There are some strict with themselves in other respects, who seem to reserve to themselves the luxury of being cross when they feel like it. They acknowledge God's law as the rule of word and deed, but they claim the selfish privilege of feeling as they please. They reserve to themselves the luxury of being moody and unsociable at home, the luxury of a resentful spirit to brood over real and fancied injuries. They will march up to the line of integrity, but will feel bitter without compunctions of conscience. The devil knows how to get some of us down. He would never think of approaching some men with a solicitation to lie or steal or cheat or swear. They are proof on those sides. The barriers of character are up. But the adversary comes at them with vexations, with disappointments, with irksome pains, with slanderous treatment, and forthwith they give way in the sheer indulgence of a personal selfishness that is thus artfully played upon, and the devil has his victory and the man is down.

In this world reverses and disappointments are

sure to come. In reference to them two courses of conduct are open. One is to let them embitter us, make us feel hard toward God and man, to withdraw from the society of our fellows, because we cannot match them in conscious success or in the style of life we maintain; that is defeat. There is a better way, and that is to go on cheerfully and bravely; to overlook circumstances in behalf of the soul within; to put on the old coat and the old dress and wear them as if they were new; to sustain poverty with the dignity of a prince; that is victory.

In this world you are sure to encounter the barbed arrow of unjust treatment. You can let it rankle in the soul. You can hide away like a wounded beast in its lair, feeling others are pointing the finger of shame at you; that is defeat. You can go calmly to your duty among men without shame, conscious that truth will win and willing to abide her day; committing all vengeance to God; returning good for evil; that is victory.

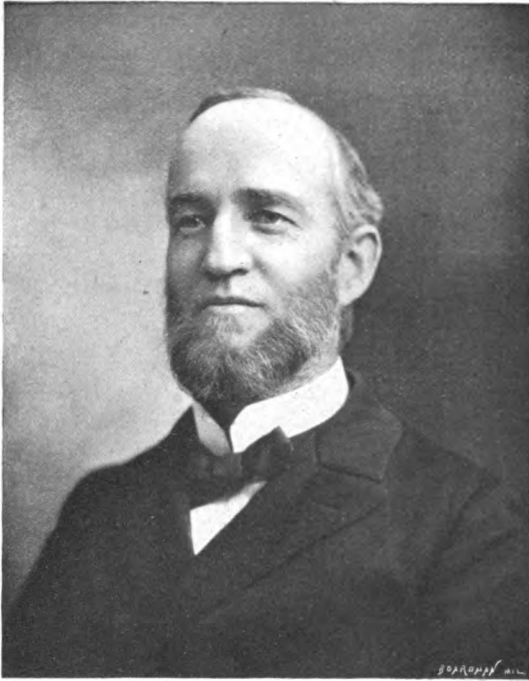
In this world offenses will come. The church will do wrong. Christians will sin. Things will be done in the church which you cannot and ought not to approve. You can go out and declare that you will have nothing more to do with the church; you can throw up the work you have been doing, throw up church attendance and even trying at all to be a Christian; that is defeat. You can continue to do your duty to the church, rendering service as to God and not to man; you can be steadfast and determine that whatever faults others may have, or whatever mistakes God's people may make, as for you, you will be true and faithful; that is victory.

In this world dark shadows will fall. It will be night sometimes. Death will come, and putting out the lights in the sky, carry some away on whom love and hope have fondly dwelt. You can shut yourself up with

your sorrow and tear open the wounds as nature mercifully heals them ; that is defeat. You can bravely set yourself to conquer your grief, to minister to the living, wiping away the tear perhaps as you think of the absent in their better estate ; and then the thought of far off glories may induce forgetfulness of self, and straining to catch the new song they are singing, you yourself may begin in unison with them and may thank God who giveth songs at night ; that is victory.

As we close this theme we have but two words to say. There is a peculiar power in a life which exhibits this sort of victory. It is a species of self-conquest which proclaims the mighty man. Those who can exhibit this are the ones who, before the morning dawn, may perhaps have the joy of seeing others coming and saying, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved ?"

But remember this, such victory is reached only by the indwelling of Christ in the human heart. A buoyant temperament will make it easier. A determined will is an aid. Habit can lend valuable assistance. But these all combined can at best but make a stoic. They cannot make a singer in the gloom. It is only as an atmosphere of Jesus fills the soul ; as his blessed inward light sweetens every thought ; as his divine power gives uplift, that the soul can reach this triumph. It is God in the heart who giveth songs in the night.



J. MILLS GELSTON.

WHAT IS INSPIRATION? *

BY REV. J. M. GELSTON,†

Pastor First Presbyterian Church, Ann Arbor.

Text: "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:8.

Most of the difficulties on this question of inspiration are due to a lack of clear ideas. As darkness flees before the light so there is a power in clear ideas to dispel error. The fact is the truth is often hampered, if not loaded, with the misconceptions of individuals. I am more and more persuaded that a very large share of intellectual difficulty is explained by this fact. I shall content myself, therefore, with giving as clear an idea of this great truth as I can, and then let it speak for itself. Let us remember then at the outstart that there is such a thing as a *general* inspiration, which is common to all; and there is such a thing as a *particular* inspiration, or inspiration for a particular purpose.

* One of a series of discourses in answer to questions by young men.

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FIRST : *What is general inspiration ?*

Answer : It is that "inbreathing" of the Holy Spirit which is common to all Christians. The word inspiration means "inbreathing." Inbreathing of what? Of course nothing else than the Holy Spirit. As it is written, "He breathed on them, and saith unto them, receive ye the Holy Ghost." (John 20:22.)

General inspiration therefore, is being imbued, led and taught by the Spirit of God ; which all the spiritually-minded are. Christians have this inbreathing of the Spirit in varying degrees, but they all have it. There have been a great many people since the days of the Apostles, who were "full of the Holy Ghost and of power." There have been many who have preached the gospel with the manifest presence and influence of the Spirit of God. The fact is, the strongest testimony to the truth is the direct testimony which the Spirit of God, who is the spirit of truth, is giving all the time ; yes, and a great many individuals, Christians, are asking daily to be led by this Spirit. It is their meat and drink to be subject to and abide in the Spirit. Are they not inspired? Certainly they are. Nothing is gained by denying such inspiration. They have the inbreathing of God's Spirit which is common to all who love God.

This is what the scriptures directly teach. "Know ye not [says the apostle] that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you!" (1 Cor. 3:16.) That is inspiration. Again, Christ said, "If a man love me he will keep my words ; and my Father will love him and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." (John 14:23.) Considerable inspiration about that! "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." We must not deny our inheritance. We all have the "inbreathing" of the Spirit of God, if so be we have given our hearts to God ;

and in this sense inspiration is common to all.

SECOND: *What is particular inspiration?*

Answer: It is inspiration for a *particular* purpose. What was the particular purpose for which the Apostles were inspired? Our text says it was that they might be Christ's witnesses—witnesses to the life, deeds, teachings, and revelations of Christ—not only in Jerusalem and Judea, but “unto *the uttermost part of the earth.*” (Acts 1:8.) For this Christ called them to be his disciples. For this he trained them and taught them, setting them apart from all others who believed on him. For this he embraced them with his spirit, that they might communicate his revelations to all the world. Did Christ commission anyone else to do this? No. When Judas by transgression fell, Christ miraculously called Paul to the apostleship. But beyond this Christ never appointed any others to his work. They were inspired for the express purpose of preserving and conveying to all the world the revelation of God in Christ Jesus. No other persons in whatever sense they have been inspired can be said to have had this apostleship which Christ gave to the twelve.

I dare not deny that Luther, Zwingli and Knox were as truly called of God to their work as were the Apostles to theirs. But the Apostles were called to preserve, communicate and record for all the world the revelation of God in Christ. Theirs was a particular inspiration.

Notice what special help was given by the Spirit of God to the Apostles in the execution of this purpose. (John 14:26) Christ said, “The Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” Their memories were quickened. They also received

special revelations. John says he was "in the spirit on the Lord's day," when he had that vision of Christ and received those revelations he has recorded in the book called Revelation. Paul says he received so many revelations, there was given him a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him lest he should be too much exalted. (2 Cor. 12:7.) The Apostles had the miraculous gift of tongues, and wrought miracles in the name of Christ. After the ascension of Christ, miracles by Peter, John and Paul are especially mentioned. If we read the account as bare history, it is very clear that these men were carefully selected by the Savior, as carefully trained, and still more wonderfully equipped for their special work. They were the *Apostles* of Christ. They were the responsible and authorized witnesses for Christ to the world.

Now the question arises, were there any irresponsible persons who also undertook to write concerning Christ? I suppose there were, for Luke in the preface of his gospel (1:1) says, "Many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us." So, too, we know after the Apostles were dead, their successors, the pastors of the churches, especially the most eminent, often wrote letters of advice, exhortation and warning. Their letters were read in the churches and often highly prized. Now the question naturally arose whether these letters and any similar writings should be given equal standing in the churches with the apostolic writings. The early church said, "No." The common sense of the church to-day says, "No." These other writers were neither apostles nor wrote by authority of the Apostles. They themselves never claim equality with the Apostles. The Apostles alone come to us as the chosen and ordained witnesses of Christ. This is

the historical basis on which the decision as to what rightly belongs in the New Testament Canon rests. Admit the historical fact that Christ called, authorized and commissioned certain Apostles to communicate his revelation to the world, and the question as to what should be in the New Testament settles itself. A decision is reached in each and every case by simply asking, is the writing either by the Apostles or by apostolical authority?

THIRD: Let us consider certain *difficulties and questions*.

So far I have spoken of inspiration simply as an historical fact. If you accept the statement as history that Christ did select and train these Apostles, that he gave them his Spirit for this purpose of communicating and preserving his revelation to the world—why then you have inspiration of course. You would not expect God to come into the world and make a personal revelation for the benefit of all mankind, and then take no pains to have that revelation communicated and preserved. Of course not. Inspiration then is an historical fact, if Christ and his life are historical facts.

Now, starting with this historical fact of the particular inspiration of the Apostles, men have gone to theorizing about it. This fact of inspiration all accept who fully believe the history. But when we come to the different *theories* about inspiration, the best of men differ. One man, for instance, will go so far as to say the Apostles in the execution of their appointed task were merely the amanuenses of the Spirit—mere typewriters through whom the Holy Spirit wrote.

I cannot accept any such theory as that. It is to me absurd. Another man will go to the opposite extreme and say inspiration is simply genius. It is that exaltation of soul which is witnessed in all displays of

genius. This definition is as bad if not worse than the other. The particular inspiration the Apostles had, was a direct command from Christ to communicate and preserve his revelation to all the world; and in order to the execution of this command Christ gave them his Spirit to help them in carrying it out. Now, a man might have all the genius in the world, and unless he had such a command from God and the gift of the Spirit to help him, he would not be inspired in the way the Apostles were. Indeed, if you say inspiration is genius, Satan himself will have a chance, for he displays considerable genius.

Another view is known as the partial theory, or inspiration in spots. You ask such a man to point out the spots in the New Testament which he believes are inspired, and he will tell you, "Oh, every man must decide that for himself!" A very convenient thing you see! Every man can have a Bible of his own making and made to suit! Quote a text of scripture to such a man, and if it crowds him badly he will say, "Oh, I don't believe in that!" That is one of the spots which are uninspired. Now, the trouble with this theory is that its advocates deny the New Testament record to be *credible history*. The record, they say, is true only in spots. If they did not deny that Christ wrought the miracles as he is said to have done, that he taught as he is said to have done, that he died, rose from the dead and ascended into heaven, and that he gave his disciples their commission, as he is said to have done—they would not be talking about inspiration in spots. Grant the history, and inspiration such as we have pointed out is a foregone conclusion. But these people fall into another dilemma. They quite generally admit that a revelation has come from God through Christ, and yet seem to deny that the Almighty has had either the wis-

dom, the will, or the ability to preserve to all ages a faithful record of that revelation.

Accepting the record then as true *history*, the question comes, *what does such particular inspiration as the record teaches imply?*

(1) It does not mean that the individuality of the Apostles was lost. I have heard men speak who were manifestly "full of the Holy Ghost and of power," but they never seemed to lose their individuality. They had the same mental characteristics, the same style of speech, the same peculiarities of disposition as before. So when the Holy Spirit is poured out in unusual measure upon a church or a community, I have never observed that any one lost in individuality. So although the Apostles were inspired for a particular purpose, Paul continues to have the style, the mental characteristics of Paul—Peter those of Peter—and John those belonging to John. The light of heaven comes through the stained glass of our churches. It is colored by the medium through which it passes, but for all that it is the light of heaven still. So in all inspiration there is both the *Human* and the *Divine* element. The Human is found in the coloring which the individuality of the writer gives. The Divine is the light which comes from heaven by the Spirit of God. It is a significant fact that the writers of the New Testament are all strongly contrasted in individuality. Compare Peter and Paul and John and Matthew. How marked the contrast is! But by the light from heaven shining through such varied media, our common humanity is touched at a greater number of points, and our needs are more fully met.

(2) Nor does this particular inspiration mean the Apostles wrote all they might have written; but that they wrote sufficient to accomplish the mission for

which God sent them, that is, in a way to communicate and preserve to us the revelation of God.

Matthew writes from the Jewish point of view, proclaiming the *Messianic Kingdom of God and Christ the King*. He groups the materials of Christ's life and works with reference to this truth. One should not expect, therefore, to find in Matthew the precise historical order of the events.

In Mark we have Peter's gospel. Christ is presented as the *Strong Son of God*. The Roman idea of power is the controlling one. It is written with the Roman empire in view.

In Luke you have Paul's gospel. He was Paul's companion. It is written more especially with the Greek or Gentile world in view. John's gospel is supplemental. It is written last. It speaks more fully of the person of Christ and records what the others had omitted. Now every one sees at once that this four-fold and varied presentation of Christ gives us a larger and more complete view of Christ as a whole than could be given in any single way. The way of the Spirit, therefore, as traced in the record, shows not only that a sufficient presentation of Christ and his revelation has been preserved to us, but a very full and composite presentation.

(3). Inspiration as applied to the Bible means in short, that a true and sufficient record of God's revelation to men has come down to us. The meaning of it is that we have here in the New Testament God's word, his revelation of himself, his teaching for you and me. The record is his own authorized record, made by men divinely called, trained and set apart for this work. The record, by the providence and grace of God, has been preserved to us. God in making a revelation in the person of Christ did not leave that revelation to

perish from the memory of men and so be lost to the world. Through men who were commissioned to this work, and by his providence in all time since, that revelation has been preserved. These are the simple facts which define and describe Bible Inspiration.

FOURTH: *Objections.*

First: It is said there are contradictions in the record.

Answer: (1). The majority of these discrepancies, so-called, are trivial, and affect in no way the substance of that revelation which it was the commission of the Apostles to transmit.

(2). A large number of the contradictions are only so in appearance. They yield readily to careful examination and study. Commonly the patient study of a contradiction leads to the discovery of a larger truth which lay concealed within, and then everything falls into harmony. Often such contradiction simply illustrates the individuality of the different writers, and serves to show the varied view-points of different minds when looking at one and the same truth. In short, the Bible student comes to look upon these contradictions as but the outcropping of rich veins of truth which, like gold in the mountains, await the discoverer.

(3) Some are merely errors in numbers or dates, and are fairly explained by the mistakes of copyists.

Second: But, says some one, there is considerable variation in the testimony itself. The story of the four evangelists, even when describing the same event, is not always exactly the same. This is true, for instance, of the crucifixion.

Answer: (1) It is just this variation in details, while there is general agreement, which convinces us that we have the testimony of *independent and honest witnesses*. If in a trial in one of our courts, four wit-

nesses testifying at great length, should agree not only in general but in all the minutest details, the suspicion would at once fasten upon them that they were fixed, or that there was a conspiracy. Counsel would at once try by cross-examination to prove collusion between the witnesses, and it would be hard to remove the suspicion of such collusion from the minds of the jury or the judge. So every one knows that the four evangelists agree as closely as is well for them. If the agreement was more minute, the cry of "collusion" or "conspiracy" would at once be raised.

(2) When Christ called the Apostles to be his witnesses, what he wanted, of course, was their independent testimony, not a conspiracy of testimony. All this variation, therefore, proves inspiration, rather than disproves it. Men led by the Spirit of God would certainly never testify in a way to spoil the force of their own evidence.

(3) With all the variation there is no evidence that one of the gospel witnesses ever tells a thing which is not true. One omits what another relates. One gives a more historical and detailed account, another a more graphic account; one names the most striking thing, where another gives more of the particulars. Yet taken together their stories appear to be supplementary, and like the independent testimony of honest witnesses, are easily woven into one seamless garment. The substantial agreement is out of all proportion to the minor points in variation.

Third: But, say some, there are trivial things occasionally put in the New Testament writings, which do not seem in keeping with the Spirit of God, but are purely human. For example take Paul's message to Timothy (2 Tim. 4:13) where he tells him to fetch his cloak. Was that inspired?

Answer: (1) This objection has force against some of the one-sided *theories* about inspiration. But,

(2) I do not see as it weighs anything against the historical fact of apostolic inspiration as we have described it. You and I, for instance, have some knowledge of persons full of the Spirit of God and of power. Is it your observation that a person moved by the Spirit of God will not take cold, shiver in the wind, or need an overcoat? I can readily understand, then, that Paul might be inspired and at the same time need his overcoat, especially as he was in prison at this time. Nor can I see any impropriety or think the Holy Spirit would object if the Apostle in writing to Timothy about some very important matters should venture to insert in the same letter that he needed his coat and his books. Only a very mistaken idea about inspiration can find any difficulty in such a thing.

Fourth: But, some will say, you have after all told us nothing about the inspiration of the Old Testament. So I have not by any direct reference. I have thought we should get a clearer idea of the nature of the question if we took the New Testament first. Settle the question of inspiration in your mind for the New Testament, and the difficulties which may trouble you about the Old Testament will not be such as to do you serious harm. Christ and the Apostles refer to the Old Testament scriptures repeatedly as inspired; and that settles the question as far as the general fact is concerned.

FAITH.

BY REV. OTIS A. SMITH, D. D.,*

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Text: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Heb. 11:1.

My subject this morning is faith. This subject is fundamental. It lies not only at the basis of all religion, but of all thought, all life, all activity and all human progress. It is not a subject of equal importance and interest to all minds. Some have faith and exercise faith, who do not know what it really is. There is nothing irrational in so doing, for we can have faith and reap the rewards of it, without knowing what it is in itself, just as we can think without knowing what thinking is. But there are some who will not rest satisfied unless they have some proof and explanation of faith.

What credentials does faith give? By what authority does faith proclaim herself mistress in the great realm of the unseen, revealing herself as the very foundation and substance of the elements of the soul, as the source from which spring our most sacred hopes,

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OTIS A. SMITH.

inciting the soul to a life which we cannot see, and to realities which triumph over reason, urging us on, undaunted by darkness or mystery? I shall hope this morning to show you that faith is its own best evidence; that its authority and evidence is unquestionable, though verification is incomplete; that it is just as trustworthy and reliable as reason. Away, then, with the foolish idea that faith belongs to the age of childhood, and must be cast aside by the mature and thoughtful mind!

I. Let us notice the processes of science in the discovery of any new truth and see how far they apply to that act of the soul which we call faith. You may think that faith will suffer by the comparison. But I am sure of the contrary. Every complete act of science involves three processes. These three processes are *observation*, *inference* and *verification*. To illustrate: Newton one day observed an apple fall from a tree to the ground. The thought, as a kind of revelation, flashed through his mind that the same force which caused that apple to fall to the ground, might bind together the atoms and control the movements of the spheres. By a long course of study and experiment he was able to verify this wild inference. The world accepted it as true, and so came to speak of the law of gravitation and to believe in it.

Galileo was one day in the temple of Pisa, watching the swinging of the beautiful chandeliers. He thought the oscillations were in unison. He acted upon this inference and as a result of his experiments gave to the world the laws of the pendulum. Hearing on another day a number of hammers striking successively a heated piece of iron, he remarked that they produced harmonious chords. He took the weights of the hammers and afterwards verified his inference and thus

produced the musical scale. In each of these discoveries you will find the three processes of science—observation, inference and verification.

Often a long time may elapse between the inference and the verification. In that interval the unbelieving world laughs at the suggestion and scoffs and ridicules its author. In 1776 a young Frenchman (Marquis de Jouffroy) was experimenting with a steamboat, upon the river Doubs. The invention was a poor success. When he walked through the public streets, a thousand jests greeted his ears. And when he sent a petition to the Academy of Sciences, they refused even to look at his invention. But in fifty years Robert Fulton gave his inferences a most complete and practical demonstration. In 1791 an Italian, Galvani, noticed some frogs in motion on a table, although they had been killed the night before, and that the maximum effect was produced when a metallic arc of tin and copper was brought in contact with the lumbar nerves and pedal extremities. He inferred the existence of a new force. Afterwards Volta gave his inference credence, and discovered electricity. Faraday said it was as absurd to think of lighting a city with artificial gas as to cut off "a slice of the moon." But the absurdity of Faraday's position is now known by every school boy. In all the inventions and discoveries of science, you will find these three processes—*observation, inference and verification.*

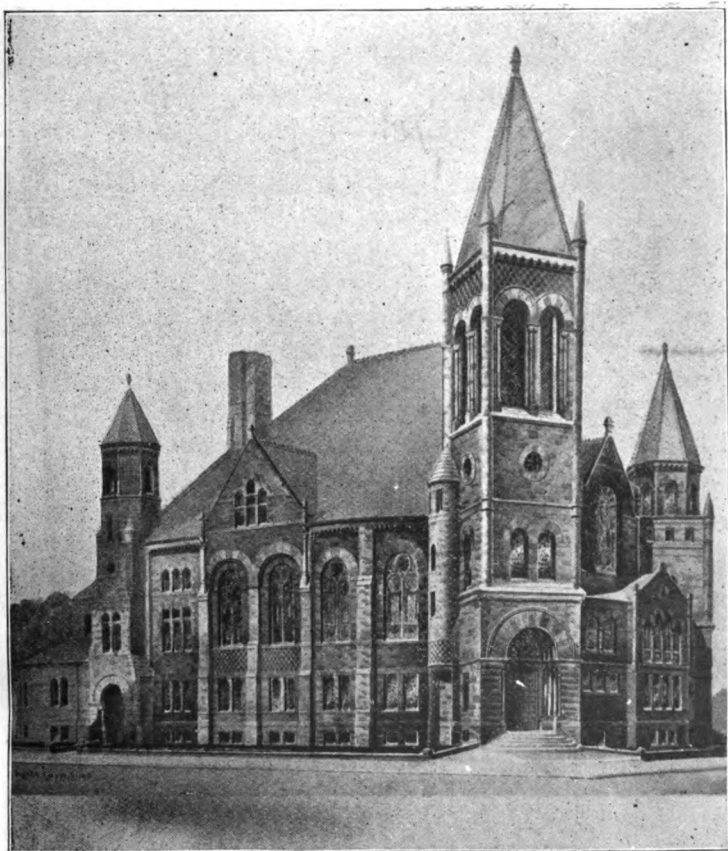
The champion in the field of science, flushed with victory, rejoicing over some new verification, calls to the man of faith and says, "Give us such demonstrations as these." "Draw out from the unknown and unseen something tangible. Let us get hold of something. We, too, will then believe and enter your sphere in the glad search of truth." And oftentimes the believer is cast down. He feels his supposed weakness. He

would, if he could, draw out hands and voices and signs, but alas, all is silent. Now we ought not to be discouraged or cast down on account of this. It is just as we should expect it to be. From the very nature of the case we cannot have complete verification for the acts of faith. We can have only two of the scientific processes, namely, observation and inference; the verification is in the far future. These two processes are, however, just as firm and valid in the exercise of faith as in the exercise of reason. But from the nature of the case we cannot expect a verification by the microscope or the surgeon's knife. Faith is an elemental energy of the soul exercising itself in the realm of the unseen, seeking to lay hold upon God and the eternal life. The whole of the eternal life, which cannot be cramped into the conditions of space and time, will be its verification. He would be a very rash investigator who would sweep aside all the greatest truths of the world, simply because they cannot be brought forth and laid down in his laboratory, and refuse to yield their secret to the test of hammer and fire and acid.

II. *What is faith? Faith is an elemental energy of the soul.* It lies at the foundation of all our faculties, right at the fountain head of our spiritual being, down deep in our being where the spiritual elements of the creature touch the Creator. Faith is that energy of the soul, which, kindling on the one side into consciousness, on the other touches God. It is a sort of sub-consciousness of God, a conviction too deep for proof. It is deep down in our being, at that point where the seemingly indivisible self divides and puts forth its energies in thought and love and will. As one has said, "A consciousness that we are another's creature. Below all thinking and feeling and willing, we are conscious of another. Every act and desire and motive is dependent

on this source out of sight. As we put forth our powers, we are conscious of drawing unseen resources. We are sons. And faith is the active principle of sonship, the disclosure to self of its own vital secret." God meant that every putting forth of energy should develop that inner consciousness of himself, that every thought springing up from this source should lead to a more intelligent knowledge of him, that every act of will should be subservient to the one greater will, that the intensity of love should not be spent upon outward and perishing forms, but reach satisfaction alone in his own changeless and lovable self. Thus should worship and service become intelligent and conscious and loving. This is the purpose and function of faith. It is the link that binds us to God, the means of the soul's perceptivity of God, of his riches and his love; the means, too, of the soul's activity toward what is highest and best, toward God and eternal life.

III. I would have you remember that when we ask you to recognize the validity of faith pertaining to the unseen God and the unseen soul, we do no more than the scientist does, if you would follow him in the search of the great secrets of the natural world. There used to be a great controversy among philosophers as to whether the external world was a reality, or whether the objects supposed to be real were not, after all, simply images on the eye and on the brain. The question has changed. No one now doubts the reality of trees and stars. But the question now is, to quote Dr. Bushnell, "How, having a tree picture or a star picture in the back of the eye, we make it to be a tree, really existing on some distant hill, or a real star many hundred miles distant? The best solution is, they conceive the soul to be such a creature that it takes them, as it were, instinctively, to be more than forms; which is the



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same as to say that we complete sensation itself by assigning reality to the distant object. And what is this but to say that we do it by a kind of sense-faith, contributed by ourselves? In our very seeing we see by faith, and without faith we should only take in impressions to remain as last things in the brain." Thus faith is really at the basis of all knowledge.

Again, the scientist who would push his investigations into the realm of nature must have faith. He must believe that nature is, and that it is a rational whole which reason can interpret. He must do so in the same way that we believe that "God is, and that he is the rewarder of such as diligently seek him." Huxley says (*Darwin's Life and Letters*), "The one act of faith in the convert to science is the confession of the universality of order and of absolute validity in all times and under all circumstances of the law of causation. This confession is an act of faith, because by the nature of the case the truth of such a proposition is not susceptible of proof." Thus we see all knowledge, from the lowest sense perception to the highest generalization of science, proceeds upon the basis of faith. It is just as rational and trustworthy to exercise faith in the realm of religion as it is in the realm of science. And after exercising faith in all departments of life, in the laws of nature, in historic evidence, in business integrity, in human love, why should man think it too much to ask of him to exercise faith in God and in Jesus Christ his son? Faith in Christ, what is it? "It is the act by which one being, a sinner, commits himself to another being, a Savior." That is faith, being committing itself to being. Elsewhere the ventures of faith have been rewarded. You trusted and acted. The venture has been justified. Be assured the venture will be

justified by the result here also, in that which comprises the supreme interests of the soul.

IV. If faith is what I have said it is, you would naturally look for some historical evidence of its existence and of the reward of its activity. This faith instinct was in the Pagan. With unspeakable longing he strove, if perchance he might find God. You may observe its evidence in the history of the countless millions of ancient Assyria and Egypt. Its evidence is seen in the ruins of their temples and in the remnants of their literature. You may read it in the Vedas and in the Koran, in the precepts of Buddha and the maxims of Confucius. It is seen in the religion of the Greeks and in the painting and sculpture of the great masters. It is sung in every line of genuine poetry from Homer to Tennyson, in the Valhalla of the wild Norsemen, and the Nirvana of the stolid Burmese. History is a living commentary on its persistence and power.

V. This faith, call it an instinct, or consciousness, or what you will, is but undeveloped reason. It teaches men to aspire, to worship. It lays hold upon eternal life. It anticipates its fulfillment. It infers, longs for, and struggles after the sublimest ends, and it tries to bring reason forward far enough to grasp and hold them. Observe the working of the human mind in gaining any new truth. Recall the examples cited of Newton and Galileo and Robert Fulton and Galvani. They observed facts. They inferred laws and truths. They verified them. The inference in each case was of the very nature of faith. Faith went out first into the forest, whether with much or little data to begin with matters not, and blazed the way and said to reason, "Come on and clear the road." I cannot make it any plainer than merely to say, faith was the substance of things hoped for. Faith was the soul's best evidence of

things unseen. Every great inventor, every great discoverer, before he has cast himself forth in the great venture after truth, has said to himself over and over again, "I believe this is so." "*I believe*" has launched every new enterprise on the untried sea. "*I believe*" has been the mainspring of progress, as well as the corner-stone of religion. Thank God for the "*I believes*" of human history, and for the dauntless souls, from Abraham to General Booth, who have been willing to put their faith into practice. As there are a great many truths which reason can never grasp, faith takes us out into the field and says, "Behold." "Behold the undiscovered, the unknown, the real." Reason is bewildered. Faith points ahead with a steady and unshaken hand. And as reason can follow faith to a certain distance on the road, and has done so, verifying its processes, justifying its ventures, and we have accepted them as true, why, I ask, may we not accept as true, though we may not understand, all these higher realities and prophecies of the soul? Now, if an idea flashes upon the mind of a Columbus and he finds it true, and if one comes to Galileo or Newton and he finds it true, why are not these ideas true that come instinctively into the minds of all men, ideas about God and self and immortality?

"These obstinate questionings
Of men and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanquishings,
Blank misgivings of a creature
Moving about in worlds not realized,
High instincts before which our mortal nature
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised."

Now not one man alone, not Columbus, nor Newton, but all men seem to have this faith instinct, and why is it not the very substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen?

“The things profound
 That here vouchsafe to me their apparition,
 From all eyes here below are so concealed
 That all their being is in faith alone;
 Upon the which high hope doth base itself,
 And, therefore, faith assumes the place of substance.”

The yielding of this instinct in peaceful surrender to the guidance of Christ has satisfied the best minds of our race. Even Plato confessed the inadequacy of reason and said, “We must wait for a man of God to teach us the way.” That man of God, the Christian world has found in Christ. One day, about the beginning of the Christian era, two men, Simon and Andrew, were casting their nets into the sea of Galilee. The man of God came along and said unto them, “Follow me.” The divine instinct prompted them and they dropped their nets and followed him. And the next day came James and John and Philip and Nathanael. And since then no man can number the souls who having followed the impulse of faith which is the evidence of its own fulfillment, have found their peace and joy of life in believing upon the Son of God. The greatest minds since Plato have not been satisfied with reason. And why should they, since faith is but the projecting of reason out into the field where now verification is impossible, where the mightiest realities lie not undiscovered, but unverified, and that because they are too great for proof? O men of reason, it is not a mark of strength to refuse to exercise faith! It is most rational, most satisfying and ennobling. What you need is God; God whom you have lost. Where will you find him? In reason? Ah, no. For who by searching can find out God? Nay,⁹ but you will find him down in the depths of your soul where still there is that sub-consciousness of God, where you left God when you began

to think and love and will for your sinful, wayward self. O man, gifted with reason, stoop thyself, become as a little child, enter into the secret chamber of your soul, that chamber where God and man may meet, and cry out to God, though it seem into darkness and vacancy. Cry out for him to point you the way. Verily he is nigh unto all that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will be found of them that seek him.

Here is the delight and worth of living. To exercise faith is to use the supreme energy of the soul. Faith is the principle and bond of sonship. By it we receive the blessings and riches of eternal life. Here, too, the humble Christian and the thoughtful inquirer who is open to conviction, come nearest together, worshipping around this universal altar of the human soul. Here, also, our different churches may be brought nearer together; for our differences are more those of reason than of faith. Here the true Christian may find within himself what the apostle calls the witness of the Spirit. The Spirit itself witnesseth with our spirit that we are the children of God. O Christians, O men of the world, men of reason, have this evidence in the depth of your own immortal being, down where the soul touches God, where the creature feels instinctively the Creator. That is faith. And this faith is final and unshaken. It fears not the changes of scientific thought. No new discoveries can sweep away its props, for it is itself the substance and proof of the highest realities. It is not weakened by the autumns of bereavement, nor the winters of sore distress. It grows and buds in perennial springtime. It is nurtured from on high, thither it aspires. It lives and grows with God. It is rewarded with the fairest fruits of heaven, with the very glory of the inimitable and adorable God.

CONTENTMENT.

BY REV. JOHN WOODS, D. D.,*

Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Ludington.

Text: "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Phil. 4:11.

Contentment is that disposition of mind in which our desires are confined to the things which we possess and enjoy, without complaining at our lot, or impatiently wishing that it were different from what it is. Contentment is the opposite of envy, of pride, of covetousness, and of undue anxiety. It does not imply indifference or unconcern in regard to temporal things. It does not forbid the use of lawful means to improve our circumstances. But it does imply moderation in our desires, and a disposition to make the best of our present condition, whatever that may be.

You will see from this definition that true contentment is not stoical apathy, nor sullen submission. It rests upon no such miserable maxims as "what is to be will be," or that "what can't be helped must be en-

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dured ;" but it has for its basis a firm belief in the providence of God and a sincere religious truth. It is distinctly a Christian virtue. The supreme virtue of the Stoic was resignation. Accepting a doctrine of fatalism, he submitted to the *inevitable*. The supreme virtue of a Christian is trust, acquiescence in the will of God and in the orderings of Providence. Hence it is a virtue that can be acquired. Notice Paul says, "I have learned, in whatever state I am, to be content." It seems to be implied that contentment was not his natural disposition. He had learned it partly in the school of Christ and partly by experience. It was one of those lessons which he had learned at the feet of the Master, and which long years of toil and suffering had deepened and confirmed. Saul the Pharisee, proud, ambitious, restless, indefatigable, intellectually alert, was not likely to possess a contented mind. Paul the Apostle, the Christian missionary, the martyr, consecrating soul, spirit and body to the service of Jesus Christ, had learned the secret of content, and amid all his trials and persecutions enjoyed a constant peace and tranquility, such as he had never known before. "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, to recognize it as God's will for me"—he would say—"and to acquiesce in the dispositions of Providence. I have learned to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. In every circumstance and in every event I have been initiated, [for such is the meaning of the word; Paul had taken all the degrees in this order of Masonry; he had learned the whole secret;] in everything and in all things I am initiated, I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry; both to abound and to be in want."

Now, what Paul had learned in the school of experience and at the feet of the great teacher, we may all learn in the same way if we set ourselves resolutely

down to the task. It may not be an easy lesson, but once mastered it will be worth to us far more than its cost. To learn contentment is to solve the problem of happiness, for contentment *is* happiness; it is another name for the same thing. To be contented is to be happy. When the apostle says, "I have learned how to be content under all circumstances," he means to say, "I have learned how to be happy; I have discovered the secret of true peace." How then shall we learn contentment? What are the motives to persuade us to exercise this grace?

First of all, is an *habitual recognition of a divine providence*. There can be no contentedness of mind without trust, and trust implies belief in a personal God and an overruling providence. We should accustom our minds, therefore, to revert often to this fundamental conviction, and form the habit of referring all events to him who is the sovereign ruler of the world, the almighty disposer of all events. The religious man is one whose watchword is God. He realizes his dependence upon a higher power, and takes God into his plans, and feels that whatever comes there is a wisdom that is higher than man's, an intelligence that sees the end from the beginning, a love that aims at the highest good and a power that is able to execute all its designs. The Psalmist looks up and says, "O God, my times are in thy hand." That is true of us all. Our times are in God's hand, in every sense of the word. He alone has determined the period of the world in which we should live. Our circumstances and the direction of our lives are in God's hand. The changes and the vicissitudes of life are all in his hand. We are not the victims of a blind chance or an inexorable fate, but are encompassed on every side by the power, wisdom and love of God. "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice."

I need not undertake to show how the Scriptures everywhere teach the doctrine of an overruling providence. The Bible asserts the omnipresence and omniscience of God ; it teaches that his care extends over all his works ; that he preserves and governs all his creatures and all their actions ; that nothing can happen without his knowledge and permission ; and that his plans and purposes are beneficent. God is love. He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. He is kind even to the unthankful and the evil, causing his sun to shine on the evil and the good, and sending rain upon the fields both of the just and of the unjust. With a holy abhorrence of all sin, he is infinitely patient towards the sinner, and sees the returning prodigal a great way off. But if all this is so, then discontent is rebellion against the good God. It is a refusal to acquiesce in the allotments of providence. It is an arraignment of the wisdom and justice of the divine dispensations. Men little think that their murmuring and complaining is a great and aggravated sin, but God so regards it. Let us learn the lesson of trust in the fatherly care of God. Let us cherish the thought that just so far as we accept the divine will, and come into sympathy with God, we shall have peace and all things will work together for our good. Contentment thus becomes a Christian grace. It is not simple resignation. It is not submission to something which we cannot help, and which we bear with some degree of fortitude only because we cannot help it, cannot escape from it. It is not founded, as I have said, upon such heathen maxims as that "what is to be will be," or that "we must take what comes" ; but it has its source in the conviction that God reigns, and that whatever he does or permits is best. Life will still have its lights and shadows. Trials will come and we cannot but know

that they are trials. There will be times of mental exhilaration and times of mental depression. No man can wholly free himself from his surroundings. No man can perfectly control his own bodily states. And yet withal there will be peace. We may feel that we are resting on the bosom of omnipotence. We may cherish the conviction that the evils which we experience, whatever may be their nature or source, have some beneficent design, some moral purpose; that they constitute a part of our earthly probation and must in some way work together for good.

Paul says in our text that he had learned to be content. He gives us in another letter a specific instance which illustrates the way, or at least one of the ways in which he had learned the lesson. I refer to that familiar passage in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, where he speaks of the "thorn in the flesh." What it was we know not; probably some form of bodily affliction, some painful infirmity that clung to him, weighed upon his mind and hindered his usefulness. "For this thing I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness." The answer to the apostle's prayer brought content. He was satisfied. He was more than satisfied, for he adds, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in mine infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." He does not say, "I will try to be resigned"; he does not say, "Since this trial must needs be, I will submit and bear it as best I may." No, he says, "If this is God's will for me, I will rejoice in it; I will make it an occasion for the exercise of patience, humility and trust; I will glory in it, and take pleasure in it, and make it a stepping stone to higher things." This then is the first and indispensable condition of attaining the

grace of contentedness, that we recognize the providence of God in our lives and commit ourselves unreservedly into his hands.

Another motive to contentment is found in the consideration that *every individual life has its own measure of blessing*, its own advantages, its own opportunities. There is no condition so poor, so narrow, so seemingly hedged about, but that it still possesses possibilities of great happiness and great usefulness. I wish I might impress that thought upon your minds indelibly—impress it in such a way that you could never forget it—that every condition in life has its own peculiar advantages, its own opportunities, and may be made to yield up its treasures of happiness and blessing. Here, for example, is one whose life has been a long conflict with disease and pain. Can a life-long invalid be contented and happy? Yes; you and I have known such. We have known those whose life was one of pain and infirmity, one of seclusion from the world, and from the pleasures of society. And yet, accepting this lot as the appointment of God for them, they have found that it was not a barren land; that there were in it some pleasant valleys, some green fields and springs of water and fair prospects; and so, restricted, narrow as their lives were, they seemed to them worth living. One of the most cheerful and contented men I ever knew was a man who had been blind from his birth. Life seemed to be sweet and pleasant to him, though he had never seen the light of the sun, nor the beauty of the flowers, nor the face of father or mother, or wife, or child, or friend.

As out of the rugged mountains men dig treasures of gold and silver, iron and coal, so out of the hardships of life, out of its most inhospitable regions, come some of the richest treasures of human experience and

human character. May we not find in this fact an explanation of what has been so often observed, that the world's greatest benefactors have been educated in the school of adversity? Take the history of our own country and count over her great leaders, her statesmen, her legislators, her generals, her best presidents—and you will find that the great majority of them came from the humbler walks of life. The struggle with poverty and hardship developed a strength of character they would not have found in any other way. It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. It is good to face difficulties and to overcome them. The struggle with the lion and the bear prepared the shepherd boy for the conflict with Goliath.

As a further motive and aid to contentment we may reflect that *things are never so bad as they might be*. Men are rarely overtaken by calamities so complete and hopeless as to admit of no remedy and no alleviation. There are trials, but are there no joys? There are losses, but are there no gains? Listen once more to the language of the apostle: "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." It is a very suggestive remark of Jeremy Taylor, that there is no wise or good man who would change places or conditions with any other man in the world. He may envy some things that other men have; he may desire one man's wealth, or another man's power; he may wish to possess the learning of this one, or the fame of that; but there is no human being with whom he would change persons or characters entirely, ceasing to be himself and becoming some one else. Every man would rather be what he is than to be any other man.

A fourth consideration that should beget a spirit of

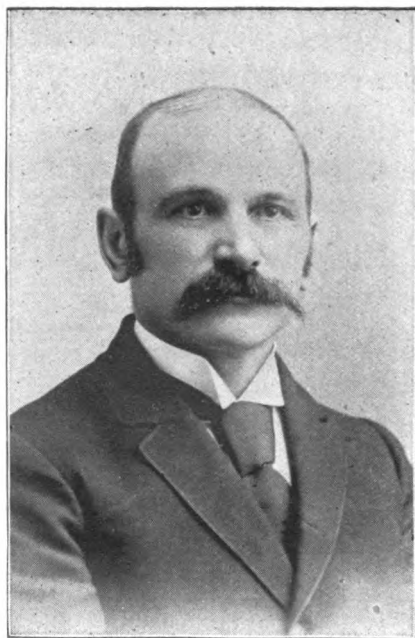
contentment is *the shortness of human life*. It is only a little while that we are here. We have here no continuing city, but are pilgrims and strangers on the earth, as were all our fathers. Neither the joys nor the sorrows of the world can be indefinitely prolonged, and it becomes those who weep to be as though they wept not, and those who rejoice as though they rejoiced not. As the passing traveler, hastening on his way, makes light of the inconveniences and discomforts of the journey, his mind filled with thoughts of home and rest, so the Christian may have such anticipations of heaven as shall make the light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. At the gate of the celestial city every burden will be laid down. Those who enter there will hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall lead them to living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. With such prospects as these, why should we murmur and complain here below? Why should we ever be discontented with our lot? If we know that God reigns; that the vicissitudes of life are ordered by him; that all things work together for good to those who trust in him; that the trials and sorrows of the world, sanctified to the soul, will issue in glory, honor and immortality—then surely the lesson of contentment ought not to be difficult, or at least impossible, for us to learn. If Paul achieved it we ought to, for none of us will be called to endure a hundredth part of what he endured in the service of Christ.

I may remark in closing, that there is one direction, and only one, in which we ought not to be content, and that is with respect to our own spiritual life and attain-

ments and progress. He who says, in the words of our text, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content," says in this same letter, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I am following on. Forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those which are before, I press toward the mark." We may not sit down at ease while the Canaanite and the Amorite are still in the land. The work of sanctification is still incomplete, even in the best. And so in our religious experience, in our spiritual life, there is room for a blessed discontent, for a feeling of regret and dissatisfaction, for a sense of deficiency, of shortcoming, and for the earnest prayer that the Searcher of hearts may search us, and know us, and see if there be any wicked way in us, and lead us in the way everlasting.

PRAYER.

Almighty God, the Creator and Sustainer of all mankind, the Giver of every good and perfect gift, we render thee humble and hearty thanks for thy great goodness. We desire to recognize thy fatherly providence over us; and although thy thoughts are not our thoughts, nor thy ways our ways, we beseech thee to give us such a sense of thy wisdom and love, that we shall accept every dispensation not only with meekness, but with cheerful acquiescence. Help us to learn the lesson of contentment; to lay up our treasures above, rather than on earth; and when heart and flesh fail, be thou the strength of our hearts, and our portion forever. Amen.



WILLIAM S. POTTER.

THE VOLUME OF LIFE.*

BY REV. W. S. POTTER, †

Pastor First Presbyterian Church, Battle Creek.

Text: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." Rev. 20:12.

We are all mourners here to-day. The hearts of these dear friends before us, visited by this sad and sudden providence, are heavy; but our hearts beat with theirs. Their sorrow is our sorrow. God's world is very fair to-day. His sky is bright above us. The earth is carpeted with green and the meadows with flowers. The birds are singing in the woodlands. I am not surprised that one should have said:

"Oh, I'd choose it were in summer,
Or the bright and joyous spring;
That no icy bands of winter
To my new-made grave may cling;
But low breezes whisper near me,
And the glad birds o'er me sing."

* A funeral sermon, June 13, 1897, on the death of Holland French, accidentally killed in Detroit and buried in Battle Creek. Mr. Potter being an extemporaneous speaker sends the above sermon as it was stenographically reported and published.

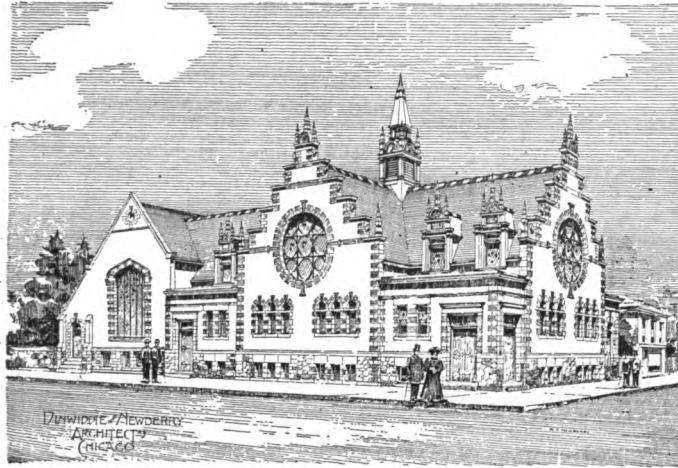
† Rev. W. S. Potter was born in Oneida County, N. Y., and is a graduate of Whitestown Academy, Hamilton College and Auburn Seminary. He was pastor at Petoskey 1878-84, at Ionia 1884-88, and at Battle Creek 1888-.

But it has been truly observed that "as we walk this green earth it sounds hollow to the tread—it is so full of graves. There are no family trees from which some goodly boughs have not been lopped. There are no gardens from which some of the fairest flowers have not been taken."

" There is no flock however watched and tended,
But one dead lamb is there.
There is no fireside howsoe'er defended,
But has one vacant chair."

On every hand, in the home, in the church, in the social circle, we see the sad devastation of death's work. But we are sure that our Heavenly Father who reveals his love in a world made so beautiful for us, who fills the night with stars, " who makes the flowers to bloom in the wilderness, and the springs to gush forth in the desert, and who paints the rainbow on the dark bosom of the cloud," will draw near to us in our sorrow. This crushing affliction, coming unannounced like a thunderbolt out of a clear sky, seems mysterious and unaccountable to our short sight. But perhaps we are looking on the back of the canvas, and only God sees the picture. "We are looking on the wrong side of the tapestry, while God sees the true and orderly design on the other side." We are perplexed by this strange providence,—the sad taking off of a young life like this, full of hope and promise, stalwart in his young manhood, with bright prospects suddenly blighted, with kind parents to guide him. But "he who doeth all things well" will some day make it plain. Rest assured there is a silver lining—nay, a golden lining to this cloud that overshadows us.

I have been thinking that human life is like a volume, a book which each one of us is writing. The text



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implies this idea. God keeps an accurate history of each life. Out of those things which are written in the books, our works, we shall be judged. But while God keeps the record, we are really furnishing the materials and writing the volume ourselves. What a great literature we have in the lives of mankind, what a vast library could be gathered there if we could bring together all the strange and wonderful histories of men!

I. Observe how at the different periods of our lives we are engaged in writing this volume. I see the little baby fingers, inexperienced and unskilled, writing in this book. And sometimes the volume closes just there. Some of the most precious memories of many households are these little volumes that ended at the beginning—at the title page. “The day our baby died” is a date full of meaning in many a home. Childhood also writes many beautiful chapters in this volume of life. Later we may write more wisely and thoughtfully, but never more artlessly and charmingly than in happy childhood. To these earlier pages memory often turns back with a fond delight. I see youth also writing in this book. And some fine sentiments and glowing periods appear now. The volume grows hopeful and optimistic in the introduction. Hope and aspiration lend color to this part of the volume. Our young friend was suddenly called away, the pen snatched from his fingers, in the morning of life. Writing with hope and bright prospects before him, the book unexpectedly closes with the introduction. And this admonishes me that I should speak to-day, not “to those whose locks are white with the frosts of the evening, but to those whose feet are wet with the dews of the morning.”

Of all the periods of the day none is more beautiful than the morning. How many artists have tried in

vain to depict its beauty—morning on the mountain,—morning in the valley,—morning in the forest,—morning on the sea. What could be more beautiful than Guthrie's word painting of the morning by the sea! "Is it the day? From the first faint streak of light that our eye catches in the eastern horizon, how steadily it grows? Hill and dale, town and hamlet, woods and winding river, shore and sea, becoming more and more distinct; one star disappearing after another in the grey sky; the fleecy clouds changing into opal, and amber, and purple, and burning gold, until the sun springs up, flaming from his ocean bed; and the daisies open their golden eyes, and the birds sing for joy, and the waves flash and dance in the light, and the earth rejoices in the perfect day." It was in this wonderful morning time that our young brother finished the history of his life. Here was one to whom St. Paul might have addressed the words, "I write unto you young men because you are strong." I see before me in this congregation an unusually large proportion of the young. You are strong in hope, in the unexpended possibilities of youth, in your very inexperience, for experience may chill your hope. You are just setting sail on the sea of life. The heavens are bright above you, the waves flash in the sunlight, the winds are favorable. The great wide sea invites you. But some of us can tell you that there are tempests and head winds to be encountered. There are dangers and sorrows in the sea.

I look again and I see manhood continuing the history with strong and steady hand. The life history grows more serious. It is mid-day now. The heat and burden of the day are great. You men of business, you men weighted down with responsibilities, you men of toil are writing now. I look over your shoulder and I see that what you are writing is very practical and mat-

ter of fact. Columns of figures crowd the pages, business memoranda, profit and loss accounts, the stirring history of the struggle for power and place and wealth, or perhaps for very existence—these things are fast filling the volume now. The man is writing now, not the boy. Would that he could keep on the page a little more of the freshness and brightness of the boy. I look once more and I see the pen in the hand of age. The writing is a little unsteady. The volume is fast nearing the end. The view is backward now rather than forward. The aged live in the memory of bygone days. The narrative is quiet and rather uneventful. Happy is he in the evening of life who can look forward still with hope, and rejoice in the promise of that great glad future of which this life is only the preface.

II. Again I am lost in wonder when I look at the contents of the human book. The most startling variety of material is contained in this volume. Is there prose? Yes, for life is for the most part common-place. And yet there is poetry, for every life has some bright days and vivid colorings. And there is romance, and there is tragedy. Ah, yes, tragedy! And how sadly is it exemplified in the cutting down of this young friend. Among the garlands and floral emblems which hundreds of loving hands have brought here to-day to "bandage the wound of death," I see the broken wheel and the shattered column, the fitting symbols of the tragedy of life. You who are sitting here to-day will hardly be persuaded that death may be very near you even now. You think of it as something far away. Sometime you will give it attention, sometime you say you will prepare for it. You say the precipice is yet far distant. But this sad accident proves that the precipice is not a long way distant before us, the preci-

pice lies along by the side of our pathway, and we may fall over at any moment.

Many pages in the volume of our life are blotted with failures and sins. We shall blush with shame when the "books are opened." But our failures may make us wiser and more cautious in the future, and God in his mercy will pardon the sins of the penitent. It is never too late to mend. The past indeed is irreparable, but it is encouraging to remember that a clean white page is always before us. What we are writing is also important to others. Some one may be looking over our shoulder. The world reads our life better than we think. Ours may be the volume that some one is copying.

Many lose heart because the contents of their volume seem commonplace and unimportant. But God deems every life important. The world measures men chiefly by their success; God by their faithfulness. The world honors those who distinguish themselves in great things; God honors equally those who are faithful in little things. To most men the opportunities for doing great things never come. The lives of most men are crowded with a host of minor duties, tedious details and wearisome drudgeries. The spheres of most men are humble and the drama of their life is played to small audiences. But let no one for these reasons undervalue his life. It is natural that human eyes should be taken with glitter and pomp, but God's eyes are not. His praises are for such unpretentious virtues as humility, patience, forbearance, forgiveness, resignation, endurance and charity. The best definition for heroism that I can find is this: "If you can live gently, patiently, uncomplainingly amid all your frets and irritations day after day—that is heroism. That is your task. You are to resolve to do it."

III. Let me now offer some more special words of comfort to these surviving friends. Let us rejoice that the volume of life is to be continued hereafter. This is not the end. Everything that God has made tends toward completeness, the seed, the bud, the tree, the grain ripening to the harvest. Death does not end all. Death begins all. This life history is only the preface to the volume of the future. Benjamin Franklin, whose deep, philosophic mind often pondered death's mysteries, prepared an epitaph for his own tomb. Here it is:—

“THE BODY

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,

PRINTER,

(LIKE THE COVER OF AN OLD BOOK, ITS CONTENTS TORN
OUT AND STRIPT OF ITS LETTERING AND GILDING)

LIES HERE FOOD FOR WORMS ;

YET THE WORK ITSELF SHALL NOT BE LOST,

FOR IT WILL (AS HE BELIEVED) APPEAR ONCE MORE

IN A NEW AND MORE BEAUTIFUL EDITION,

CORRECTED AND AMENDED BY

THE AUTHOR.”

So also the volume of life of our young friend shall be continued. The hopes of his young life shall not be shattered forever.

It was said long ago by Job, who had learned wisdom and patience from great affliction : “To him that is afflicted, pity should be showed from his friend.” These words precisely fit this occasion. The condi-

tions are the same. This father and mother, this family, are deeply afflicted. All here are their friends. We long to show them the sympathy that is their due. We cannot do less, and I am sorry, Oh, so sorry, we cannot do more. I saw the other day in yonder city, where our friends have recently established their home—and what a sad home-making it was—the new friends gathered about them; I saw a spontaneous exhibition of love and neighborly kindness in their home in the great city, that blessed my heart with the sight of it. And though it is often said that the world is cold and unfeeling, I saw that it is such a sorrow as this that makes all mankind akin. I should do less than my duty did I not speak of the wonderful kindness shown to you there; but you are now back at the old home, you are seated among the old friends. Yes, to the old home that this dear boy loved so well, the home he could not quite forget in the beautiful city yonder, have you come. This large gathering, surrounding you on every side, contains your friends—only friends, with hearts overflowing with sympathy for you. Would that I could more fittingly speak for this great congregation to-day, and express their interest and sympathy. Human sympathy is not to be despised. My friend comes in the hour of deep affliction and looks the words of love he cannot speak. I feel the heart throbs in the silent pressure of his hand. But there is One whose sympathy is more adequate to the occasion than the sympathy of any human friend. There is One of whom it was said that he came down and stood with humanity on the plain. There is One who bore our griefs and carried our sorrows, who himself went down to the grave, who rose again and is now gone to explore for us the unknown country to which we are traveling. Oh, the sympathy of him who said, "I will not leave you

comfortless, I will come to you!" To the all-sufficient sympathy of Christ do I commend you. And then I beg you to remember the use of sorrow. That man is unfortunate who never has any trouble. Such an one is surely disqualified from comforting others. Our sorrows touch the best elements in our natures, and when our eyes are filled with tears, we may know that the purest fountains are welling up in our hearts.

But no human soul, however gentle and kind, can rightly touch the sorrowing heart. There was an old harp that had hung on the wall of an old castle for generations. Curious in form and construction, no one knew how to awaken its music. Its melody slept, its voice was silent. But one day a strange pilgrim came to the castle and after he had been refreshed and rested he took down the old harp, adjusted its strings, and made it to breathe forth wonderful strains of melody again. It was the master. So only our Master can evoke joy and gladness again from a heart that is broken. It is not my hand that can do it, it is not another man's hand, it is only the hand of Christ.

But the sorrow is not his who has gone; it is all ours, and there is comfort in that thought. He was a good boy, quiet and unassuming and thoughtful. He was a boy of character. Before him was an honorable future. He had been faithful in the Sunday School here of which he was an officer. He was connected with the Y. M. C. A. and the Y. P. S. C. E., and the other day in that brief hour, between the accident and his death, an hour unspeakably sad to his parents, and yet an hour for which they might well ever be thankful, when he was able to converse with them, he expressed his hope in Christ, and almost the last words he uttered were a prayer. Oh, may these facts, upon which I must touch so lightly, for I would not reopen the wounds

of these broken hearts, convey great comfort to these parents. My heart goes out to them and theirs. I feel deeply for this strong man stunned by this awful blow. I feel more deeply, if possible, for this poor heart-broken mother. She is bravely trying to bear the burden, but Oh, how heavy that burden! She is a bruised reed, but the Lord hath said, "A bruised reed I will not break." Oh, the infinite tenderness of God's touch on a broken heart!

We recognize the remarkable kindness shown this family on every side, by the father's associates in the railroad company, by these young men of the military escort, the church and sabbath school, and in short, by the whole community. May God do so to you and more in the hour of your affliction.

I beg leave in closing to read these lines for the comfort of this sorrowing group:—

“ Deem not that they are blest alone,
 Whose lives an even tenor keep;
 The anointed Son of God makes known
 A blessing for the eyes that weep.
 The light of smiles shall fill again
 The lids that overflow with tears;
 And weary hours of woe and pain
 Are promises of happier years.
 Oh, there are days of sunny rest
 For every dark and troubled night;
 And grief may come an evening guest,
 But joy shall come with early light.
 For God has marked each sorrowing day,
 And numbered every secret tear,
 And heaven's long age of bliss shall pay
 For all his children suffer here.”



CHARLES D. JACOBS.

POPULARITY.

BY REV. C. D. JACOBS,*

Pastor First Presbyterian Church, Hillsdale.

Text: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Matt. 16:24.

The voice of the people is not always the voice of God. The verdict of the people is not always true and righteous. Popularity is not necessarily a mark of righteousness. It may indicate a lack of stamina and of character. It may be the reward of unrighteousness. On the other hand, unpopularity is not indicative of sin. It may be the mark of character, and the reward of opposing sin. Dr. Robertson said: "Unpopularity or popularity is utterly worthless as a test of manhood's worth; and yet a great many people seem to test manhood, and likewise the worth of an individual, according to his popularity or unpopularity in the community." Of popularity it might be said as of notoriety: "Notoriety is no proof of merit. A thousand dollars' worth of roses will only scent up a few yards, while a hundred dollars' worth of fried onions will scent up a whole town."

Again, popularity or unpopularity is no sure test of

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usefulness. A man pre-eminently unpopular may be pre-eminently useful. His unpopularity may be the reward of his usefulness; that which he has won because he was useful. Popularity is not indicative of a man's Christianity. Christ did not, and does not promise this to his followers. Popularity is thus neither the test of righteousness, of manhood's worth, of usefulness, or of following Christ. Therefore it is not a worthy aim of any true soul, and certainly not of a soul redeemed by the blood of Christ, and claiming to follow Christ in all things.

Here are definite propositions, of which we readily may see the truth or falsity. Christ's call is: "Follow me." Christians, the followers of Christ, ought to study his life from every standpoint; to determine the principles underlying and controlling that life; to build their own lives upon those principles. This morning we study Christ's life to see its bearing upon the thought of popularity.

No thoughtful person can read the gospels without finding, as authorities tell us, the three-fold periods, the three divisions or years of Christ's ministry. These periods are characterized by the names obscurity, public favor, opposition. In the second period, the year of public favor, Jesus has his headquarters at Capernaum. From this central point he makes tours round about through the country and through the villages of Galilee. As he journeys from place to place, more and more are the miracles wrought by him; wider and wider spreads his reputation; larger and larger are the crowds flocking to hear him, until they even press upon him. The whole province from end to end is ringing with that wonderful name, Jesus—Jesus everywhere—Jesus upon every lip. All the people are anxious to see and to hear him. This great popularity was won by two marvelous

powers. As the sick, the lame, the blind, the deaf and the dumb came to him it was within his power to heal them by the touch of his hand or the word of his lips. "Without money and without price," freely, he healed them. Of course, multitudes seized this opportunity, and went away to proclaim to others the power of Jesus. The other power was of speech, as recorded: "And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth." (Luke 4:22.) "He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." (Matt. 7:29.) "Never man spake like this man." (John 7:46.) Because of his miracles and his wonderful words his reputation spread over the land. It seemed as though all Galilee would flock to him, proclaim him king and bear him in triumph to Jerusalem to be crowned.

A change takes place inside of a year. Those ringing shouts of adoration and praise are turned to sullen mutterings against him. There are bitter scowls upon the faces of those who follow to see what he may still do and teach. Six more months are spent in Galilee. Southward he turns and for six months ministers in Judea and Perea. All this time his popularity is waning, misrepresentations accumulating, opposition increasing, enemies multiplying. At last there comes suffering and death. That cruel death on the cross is the result of his unpopularity. With that fact in mind it is natural to ask: Wherein was the cause of the loss of that wonderful popular favor? Many may wonder why Jesus the Nazarene, with the power of blessing and teaching, could not retain that hold upon the people and continue to be applauded by them. In reply there may be suggested certain facts from Jesus' life which will reveal principles leading to his unpopularity.

First. Sooner or later there comes a crisis to every

man. To Jesus it came, when, on the eastern shore of the lake of Galilee, five thousand men, besides women and children, sit and partake of the five loaves and the few tiny fishes. Beholding the wonderful power of Jesus they arise and would take him by force and make him king. The record states that Jesus, knowing that desire and purpose, sends the Apostles across the sea, quietly disperses the people, and then betakes himself to the mountain to pray. Jesus Christ there stands at the parting in the way. From that hour he teaches more clearly the spiritual truth of the Messiahship. On the next day he proclaims himself as the bread of life sent down from God, and that all who would have life must eat his body. He reveals the true mysteries of his mission. It was an hard saying, and "from that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. (John 6:66.) So great was the turning away that in sorrow he said to the twelve: "Will ye also go away?" The people were disappointed. He was not to be crowned as a king; he was not to lead them against the Roman power. "There is something wrong," they say.

Another fact to be noted is his choice of associates. The publican was despised by the strict Jew, and none was so contemptible as the tax gatherer. When Jesus called Matthew and afterward went and sat at meat in his house, the people complained, saying: "He eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners." Still further. The law had been covered with traditions. These traditions were considered as sacred as the law, and a man's religion was judged by his observance of traditions. Jesus Christ sought to separate these traditions from the law, and allow the law to stand forth in its purity. He sought to teach men that they were to please God not by the observance of traditions, but

by honest and sincere worship of the heart. This is revealed in his teaching concerning the Sabbath day. When they grumble: "He healeth on the Sabbath day," he replies that the Sabbath was not made to be a burden, but that man might worship and also minister to the needs and sufferings of those about him. Again, scathing denunciations fall from the lips of the humble Nazarene. These denunciations are against those who would seem to be very righteous, very observant of the law, and yet, down deep in their hearts were not sincere in their worship of God. Jesus Christ said: "Woe unto you, hypocrites! You are not real; you are not honest; you are not true; you are not sincere; and what difference does it make if you come into the temple of God with worship, praise and offerings, when it is simply that you may be seen of men?"

Another fact. Jesus speaks a parable of the wicked husbandmen. A man plants his vineyard and arranges everything in order and rents it. In due season he sends servants to collect the rent due. The husbandmen abuse these servants. Other servants are sent and they are destroyed. At last he sends his son. Instead of reverencing the son the husbandmen say: "This is the heir; come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance." What is the result of this parable? The Pharisees and Scribes, knowing that the parable was spoken against them, would have laid hands on him, but they feared the people. One more illustration. Jesus' spirit is revealed on that day when the Master took a scourge of cords and drove from the courts of the temple those who were making the house of prayer a place of trade and a den of thieves.

All of these facts from Jesus' life reveal certain principles controlling him. First of all there was in the Master's soul a loyalty to the truth, a loyalty to

God, a loyalty to his God-given mission. That day on the eastern shore of Galilee, when all those Galileans would have made him king, he held to the one great truth; God did not send him to be an earthly king—to wear a crown of gold and of jewels. God sent him to establish a spiritual kingdom. Regardless of the popular desire, he said: “No! I simply walk in loyalty to the truth, in the pathway marked out for me of my Father who sent me into the world.”

A second principle revealed by the illustrations is this. He was not content, as somebody has said, “to whisper sweet remonstrances over rosewater.” He was never content to declare unmeaning sentences and proclaim beautiful sentimentalities. Jesus was never content to breathe words of flattery and of soothing thoughts to the leaders of Israel; to speak of the sins of Israel in Egyptian bondage; to proclaim doom to the heathen of the foreign lands of that day.

Jesus Christ did not look upon sinful practices and then, as Pilate, wash his hands and say: “I am free from the whole matter; I have no responsibility in reference to it.” Looking upon sinful practices he did not say: “This is a dreadful state of affairs, but it would not do for me to take any steps against these things; I must not stir up feelings; I must not endanger the friendship of the world; I might lose comfort and ease; and hardship and affliction might come to me.” Jesus Christ never came into the world for the love of ease. He did not come to hold himself aloof from needed reforms. He did not come to live a life of so-called popularity. Jesus Christ came into this world to grapple with sin, to denounce, to uproot and overthrow sin. And to that end he took that position fairly and squarely with reference to all the sins, even of the

chosen people of God. And this fact brought unpopularity.

Certain persons may judge his course but little short of madness. Is it not time, as some one has suggested, that some people, while they congratulate themselves on having a Savior, feel that Jesus acted like a madman? The fame, glory and wealth of the earth were before him, and yet simply for truth and righteousness he gave up his popularity and came to suffering and to death. While contemplating these principles of Jesus' life we hear his voice: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Glance at the working out of this principle among the early disciples. First, note those who follow Jesus in his earthly ministry. Jesus is dead. There is hope for peace among the people. "We rooted out this religion when we crucified Jesus," say the rulers. The day of Pentecost comes, and with it the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Even then all might have continued in peace and the disciples walked in comfort if they had been worldly-wise enough to understand what was best for them. But no! Under the influence of the spirit of God it was not beautiful sentimentalities that they proclaimed, but the story of Jesus and of his death by their hands. In that proclamation was the death blow to every hope, if they ever had one, of a life of ease and of popularity. Again, as they stood before the Sanhedrim, instead of making or hinting at any apology, they proclaimed, "You have slain the Prince of Peace. It is our business to obey God, not you." Paul the Apostle is another example. Wonderful possibilities were before him. He had been educated in their best schools, and had sat at the feet of their most learned teachers. Something of wealth was his. He held a good position among the people. He sacrificed it

all and every chance of popularity that he might stand for truth and righteousness. Paul's intense sufferings came because he accepted God's verdict rather than that of man. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." And therein is the man for the nineteenth century as well as the first. And therein is an abiding principle both of the words and life of Jesus. And yet it does sometimes seem as if multitudes had forgotten, or had never learned, this truth. Have we not all been a little forgetful of it? To-day is there not too much of the spirit, "Oh, well, I'll go through the world in ease; I do not desire to receive any blows; I would not lose the friendship of the world; I would not like to meet unpleasant things?" That feeling determines our words and position toward many things in the world. Apparently popularity is a great aim with many people, and there must be nothing said or done that will interfere with that popularity. No one will question the presence of this aim in the political world. Many understanding the truth and having knowledge in reference to righteousness will attempt to shirk all responsibility. They say: "It is none of my affairs, and, if I take this or that position, I may endanger friendships, I may lose political favor." We read of an effort "to speak to the galleries." It is seeking the applause of the people rather than the approval of God. In society the same principle is revealed. I venture to say that you and I have seen persons of whom we have at least suspected this, viz., that down deep in their hearts there is disapproval and condemnation of certain customs and practices. They recognize these things as evil, but are silent. The thought is, if I say what I believe I'll lose prestige; I'll lose social standing; I'll become unpopular. Conscience is being quieted by the words, "It is

none of my affair ; it is not my lookout. There is no need for me to say or do anything that may seem to condemn this practice." The same is true in society in the broader sense of the community. Many people understand that there are practices in the community which ought not to be. Perchance they voice this belief in the home circle. But as to public condemnation and actions they virtually say : "I am in no way responsible for these things. It might cause a little unpleasantness, I might lose the good will of certain persons, I might lose trade, if I took a decided stand, and openly condemned and worked against these evils."

The church is the visible body of the Lord Jesus Christ in the world. Yet persons have denounced the church for having this same spirit ; for seeking to be on good terms with the world by being silent as to its faults and conforming to the world's life. Is it true that there is, even in the church of Christ, a fear of unpopularity ? Have we not yet learned that the church is not fed and nourished by worldly popularity ? Christ's work in the world was to grapple with sin ; and if the church is the visible body of the Lord, the only excuse for the existence of the church is to live his life. The church is to grapple with sin, denounce, uproot and overthrow sin. The Master said : "The servant is not above his master." And, friends, if Christ lost his popularity because of his words and works, the church, his body, can not exist in the same sinful world, denounce the sins he denounced, live the life he lived, and then expect a constant ovation of popular approval and applause. Moreover the individual Christian sometimes seems to have this desire for popularity. Words and actions in the world are determined thereby. Christ became unpopular. He was denounced even by the churchmen of his day. And that Christian whose

aim in this life is popular applause, has not yet learned the truth of the gospel. He does not know the first principles of the life of his Savior, Teacher and Example. He sought to walk in the pathway marked out by God. He sought the approval of God, not of the people.

Remember, popularity or unpopularity is not necessarily a test of righteousness, of manhood or of usefulness. As one has said: "And the truth to follow, regardless of cost, is the measure of manhood." True, strong manhood does not bend and waver before every breeze of popular sentiment; does not seek to be with the crowd; does not long for ease and comfort at any cost; is not afraid, and does not shrink for fear of a hard blow; does not look upon suffering, woe and sorrow, and pass by on the other side with the words: "It is none of my affair; I'll keep quiet lest I become unpopular." Manhood lies across a battle field. Manhood is to be loyal to the truth and to the convictions of the soul regardless of popular approval or disapproval.

If this be true of manhood simply, what shall we say of Christianity? What shall we say of those seeking the highest manhood, viz., a life modeled after the Christ? He *lived* the truth. And fellowship with him demands self-sacrifice, a cross-bearing, a following in his footsteps. The Christian must rise above every personal consideration. To the Christian the divine will alone is sovereign. The Christian should never raise the question, "I wonder what people will say?" His only question should be, "What does Jesus Christ think about it?" A few weeks ago I presented thoughts upon Paul's declaration: "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." I wonder if I might not add: "We have not yet resisted unto unpopularity, striving against the sins of the world." "If any man

will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." This is as true to-day as when first spoken by the Master. Accepting this truth, purposing to follow it, may we not say :

- " If Jesus Christ is a man,
And only a man, I say
That of all mankind I will cleave to him,
And to him will I cleave alway.
- " If Jesus Christ is a God,
And the only God, I swear
I will follow him through heaven and hell,
The earth, the sea, the air."

GOD BUILDING THE HOUSE.*

BY REV. J. GIBSON LOWRIE, D. D.,†

Pastor First Presbyterian Church, Niles.

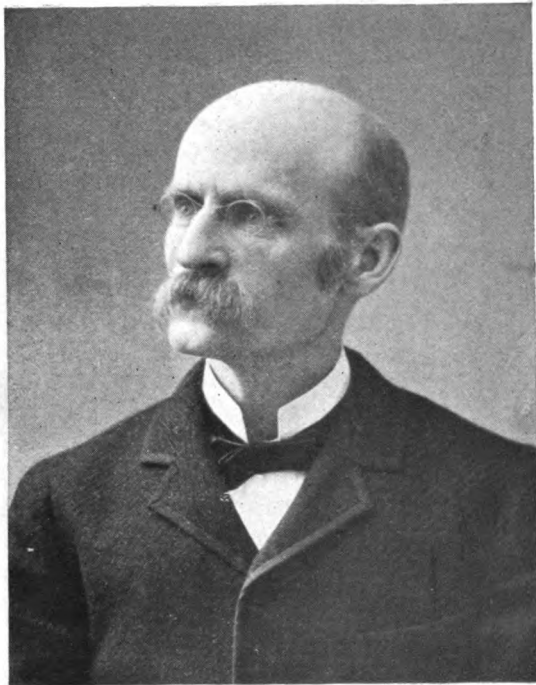
* Preached in the First Presbyterian Church, Niles, Mich., Nov. 1, 1896.

Text: "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Psalm 127:1.

Building a house is always a matter of interest, especially to those who expect to live in it. There is a great difference in houses. Between the log cabin of the frontiersman and the Kremlin; between the hut of the Patagonian and Windsor Castle, may be found great variety in buildings and much diversity as to stability and style of architecture, but no house goes up without somebody's enterprise behind it, or without awakening hope in some human heart.

The children of the new settler, as they gather the fresh chips that fly from their father's keen axe, or play at evening in the unfinished structure, build air-castles as busily as do the members of an aristocratic

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J. GIBSON LOWRIE.

family, when the plans and specifications of the architect are discussed in the parlor, and the costly stones and the ornamented pillars and arches begin to take their places in the growing pile. In either case, it is "our house" that is going up, and imagination paints the future in rosy colors, peoples the home with new inmates, fills it with plenty of luxury, and makes it the center of life and happiness. And it is well that hope thus stimulates the enterprise of home-makers. Thank God for the builders of this busy world! Thank God for houses that are homes! Thank God for labor and toil and all that promotes the improvement of mankind! This world is no place for idlers. It is right for man to seek to better his condition. He was made for activity and his God-given powers are best employed when they are enlisted in building of some kind, and building in expectation of occupancy and of enjoyment and success.

The Scriptures enjoin contentment with such things as we have; but we do not understand this spirit to be incompatible with the use of the things given to us; and whatever ability we may possess, to build better houses for ourselves than those we occupy, to build ourselves up in fortune, in influence, in character, in mental and spiritual acquisition. This ability, of whatever sort it is, is the capital entrusted to us by the Creator that we should expend it wisely. We are not to repine that providence has not set us to building other houses than those we find ourselves fitted to build. We are to be content with such endowments as we have and with such houses as we are able to build, but we are not carrying out the designs of providence if we are not actively and patiently building the best homes we can secure for our bodies, our minds and our souls.

The word house is used to designate other things

than a place to dwell in. It sometimes signifies a household or the persons dwelling in the house. Cornelius "feared God with all his house," and Noah "prepared an ark to the saving of his house." Then it has the more extended meaning of kindred, stock or lineage. So the Bible speaks of the house of Eli, the house of Saul, the house of David. Ancestral pride is handed down to succeeding generations, as the members of a clan or family seek to perpetuate the family name. The house thus founded by some illustrious person comes to have its traditions, its customs, its reputation, all which things are zealously guarded. It may be a bloody house like that of Saul, or a house characterized by hospitality like that of Onesiphorus. It acquires its name and lives long in the memory of men, in honor or in shame. Sometimes it means the fortune or wealth a person or a family has accumulated. So our Savior condemned the Pharisees because they devoured widow's houses, meaning that they ate up the substance of the defenseless by extortion and oppression. Then the business by which wealth comes is often called a house. "Set thine house in order for thou shalt die," said the prophet to Hezekiah. The multiplied business affairs which have been built into his life is the only house many a worldly minded man lives in. For a man really lives only where his thoughts are.

The history of a nation is the history of the leading house, or houses, in that nation. Thus historians speak of the house of Tudor, the house of Stuart, the house of Hapsburg. National life is built up. So we cannot do without this term to designate it. In England they have the House of Lords and the House of Bishops. In the United States we have the Senate and the House of Representatives. Finally, the church of God is called a house, by which we mean, not the ma-

terial buildings in which the people are gathered for worship, but the institution or organization, with its laws, its ordinances, its services, its members and its influence and power in the world. I have thus specified at length the meaning of the word house, that it may be borne in mind that the Psalmist had no narrow conception before him when he said, "Except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."

This Psalm is entitled, "A Song of Degrees for Solomon." Whether David wrote it for his royal son, or Solomon is himself the author, it is especially appropriate for the builder of the holy temple, who was also the builder of so large a part of Jerusalem and of the kingdom of Israel. The grand truth here taught is that there is no success in any enterprise in life without God's blessing. Builders of houses and cities, of families and of fortunes, of systems, of institutions, of nations, and of churches, must recognize that God rules and that without his presence and help both labor and vigilance are in vain. Let us ask then in what sense we may expect God to build the house when we have any enterprise in view. It is not meant that he will build for us without our toil and effort, but that he imparts to us the wisdom and the strength necessary for the work, that when we work under his direction and guidance, and recognize his presence with us, our work is his work, for "we are laborers together with God." If we seek God's blessing, we are as truly laboring with him when, by his blessing on our toil, he builds us a house to dwell in, as when, in answer to our prayer and effort he builds the walls of Zion.

There is great comfort in the thought that God builds us up in all the material increase that comes to us, and that in the common and prosaic business of life

he is ever present as a Master-builder of our homes and fortunes. But before you can be sure that the Lord is building for you, you must seriously ask yourself what is your motive and aim in building this house of yours. Do you mean to enthrone him there as the God of the household? Is it to be a place where kindness and love shall rule, where Christian hospitality shall be ungrudgingly dispensed, where the beauty of holiness in Christian character shall be developed, and whence the blessings of religion, pure and undefiled, shall flow forth to the widow and the fatherless in their affliction. Then be assured the Lord will build your house, and he will be your keeper and defense. On the lintel of the door of many an old house in England these words may still be deciphered, "Nisi Dominus Frustra," being the Latin version of the opening words of this psalm. Would that they might be written over the portal of every home in our land, not literally but in spirit, and that they might be inscribed upon every enterprise upon which we engage while in the house of our pilgrimage. Especially appropriate are they for those who join hands to make a new home.

" O fortunate, O happy day
 When a new household finds its place
 Among the myriad homes of earth,
 Like a new star just sprung to birth,
 And rolled on its harmonious way
 Into the boundless realms of space."

Happy indeed, if every new home-builder remembers the words of the text, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it."

The history of the world is a striking commentary upon these words. In its earliest annals we read of those who said, "Go to, let us build us a city and a

tower, and let us make us a name!" And they have been Babel builders in every age who have sought, in like spirit, to perpetuate their own fame. How many great houses, erected by ambitious men, have disappeared! How many ruined castles and abbeys still stand in moss-covered desolation to remind us of the wrongs perpetrated and the crimes committed by those who builded without the Lord! Against how many massive walls of ancient architecture has the doom been pronounced that caused the knees of Belshazzar to smite each other, and that caused the heart of Nebuchadnezzar to tremble, while the proud boast was on his lips, "Is not this the house that I have built?" God was with Solomon and blessed him both in building his own house and the House of the Lord. David says, "Thou hast spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come." "For thou, O my God, hast told thy servant that thou wilt build him an house."

When we consider how many agencies must combine in order to the successful establishment of any work of man's hands, and how many hindrances and dangers against which he must vigilantly watch, and how absolutely beyond his control are these agencies of helpfulness and of peril, we may well marvel that any thoughtful mind should imagine that man can prosper without the divine blessing. Except the Lord keep the city, though the watchman is awake, flames may engulf it, the cyclone may smite it, an army may assail it, a mob crazed with socialistic frenzy, or disappointed in the promises of demagogues, may lay it low. The Lord is the only defense from the pestilence that walketh in darkness and the destruction that wasteth at noonday. And all these things are true of the nation, which is a house embracing many houses and in whose prosperity is so largely wrapped up the prosperity of our homes,

our cities and our churches. We need more than ever, at this period in our national history, to lay to heart the lessons of the text, inasmuch as we have more than ever to lose by national disintegration and dishonor, and inasmuch as we have graver perils to face than any that nerved our fathers to patriotic endeavor.

There are problems in our national life not easy to be solved. There are foes to be met with stronger weapons than bullets or ballots. There are tides of sentiment that cannot be stemmed by counter intellectual currents. And on the other hand there are silently and steadily at work, in this land of ours, forces that make for righteousness, and which by the blessing of God will prove our national regeneration and salvation. Politicians may ignore the moral element, or they may seek to manipulate it in the interest of vote gaining, but as well might King Canute command the tides of the ocean to retire, as any mortal man seek to reverse the sentence of inspired wisdom, "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people." The physical geography of the sea teaches us that beneath the storm-tossed waves there are silent but powerful currents moving steadily on, oftentimes running exactly opposite to the currents on the surface created by temporary conditions. So all history shows of the progress of human opinions. Underneath the stormy debates and conflicting assertions of men who claim to know just what is coming, there are silent forces moving on the hearts of the people, whose influence will be felt far off upon some distant shore of time.

For myself, I have but one well grounded hope for ultimate America, and that is in the progress of the Gospel in the hearts of the people. This is the one thing that will unify us, the one thing that will enable us to see eye to eye, the one thing that will bring the

people to desire and finally to adopt that national policy that an enlightened wisdom teaches us is good for the whole people, and not for this class or that class among us. And the only hand that can send these mighty under-currents through the nation is that hand that turneth the hearts of men, as the rivers of waters, where he will.

The memorable words of Benjamin Franklin in the convention for forming a constitution of the United States in 1787, are words we may well call to mind at this time. "I have lived a long time (81 years), and the longer I live the more convincing proofs I see of this truth, that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire will rise without his aid? We have been assured, sir, in the sacred writings, that 'Except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it.' I firmly believe this; and believe also that without his concurring aid we shall proceed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel. * * * I therefore beg leave to move that henceforth prayers be held in this assembly every morning before we proceed to business." Let us pray for our country. Let us pray for our rulers. Let us pray that divine providence may smile on the building of this nation. Let us not give up our confidence in God if our fondest hopes for an immediate return of prosperity and contentment are not gratified. The waves have been running too high to be spoken into an immediate calm by any other than the divine voice. And that voice may not, at once, be heard unless—which God forbid!—it speak by terrible judgments. The calm will not come at once; but whatever be the immediate result, let us have faith. Our house shall not fall. It will rise in greater magnificence than ever when in the heart of the

American people, as well as upon the coin of the nation, is inscribed the sentiment, "In God we trust."

But more important than the building of a house, a home or a nation, is the building of the church of God. We are told, "Moses was faithful as a servant in all his house." (Heb. 3:2.) That is, in the dispensation committed to him. And Judaism stood until the fullness of the time, when God sent forth his Son. No labor or watchfulness over rites or ceremonies could make it stand one hour longer. And all systems of religious thought built up by man shall perish. Heathen and civilized cults shall alike go down into oblivion. But the church of God is safe. Happy are they who are laborers together with God in building up Zion.

"On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake her sure repose!"

Now, let us observe that if we would have the Lord build the house, whatever form of building we may have in hand, we must respect his righteous laws. God has not more certainly established physical laws to which the builder of a house of wood and stone must conform, if his house is to stand, than he has established laws in the social world, laws of intercourse among men, and laws that regulate man's life as a moral being. The architect who thinks crooked lines are as good as straight, who draws his plans in defiance of the law of gravitation, or who cares nothing about the relative strength of materials, or the danger his building may be in through exposure to the weather, need not be surprised when his pretentious edifice tumbles to the dust. No less certainly will disaster overtake that house that is built in defiance of God's righteous laws, whether it be a great name that has drawn the admiration of the

world to a dynasty, a family or an individual, or whether it be a long established business firm, or a corporation, or an institution, or a nation, or a church. "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth." (Is. 5:8.) "And they covet fields and take them by violence; and houses and take them away; so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage." (Mic. 2:2.) The man of Uz has declared the end of such a workman: "He buildeth his house as a moth." (Job 27:18.)

Finally, we may be assured that the Lord will build the house when we choose imperishable materials. Our Savior has drawn a vivid picture of the houses built upon the rock and upon the sand, the one standing through all the storms of life, of death and of judgment, and the other going down before the tempest and the floods of great waters, with the significant verdict ringing in our ears, "the ruin of that house was great." But we are likewise warned that on the rock itself we may build with wood and hay and stubble, or with gold and silver and with precious stones. Men who violate not the laws of righteousness and justice, who aim to be honorable and upright in their dealings with their fellow men, may yet fail of the highest success because their minds are fixed upon the lower values of life, and they have not learned that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth." There has recently passed out of existence a great commercial house. Its founder prided himself on his business sagacity and integrity. There has been no mercantile establishment in this country apparently on a sounder financial basis, nor one conducted more explicitly on sound business principles. But it was all business. Mr. A. T. Stewart sacrificed everything to the

one great aim of building a house that should stand, and that should bear his name long after he had passed away. But his judgment, his foresight, his energy, his devotion to the lower ends of business success, have not availed to build him an imperishable house. Truly, "he builds too low who builds beneath the skies." If we would have the Lord build the house, we must see to it that we are working into our plans, into our life's endeavor, into our characters, into our fortunes those durable materials that shall remain when

"The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yes, all which it inherits, shall dissolve ;
And, like an insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind."

"Every house is builded by some man, but he that built all things is God." Let us commit our building to his care, who is the great Master-builder. Then we need not fear. Then laborer and watchman shall not toil and watch in vain. Then we may work by day in confident hope, and sleep at night the sweet sleep he giveth his beloved, free from anxiety and alarms, until we are called to enter the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.



JAMES M. BELDING.

THE DAY OF SMALL THINGS.

BY REV. JAMES M. BELDING,*

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Text: "Who hath despised the day of small things?" Zach. 4:10.

These words fell from the lips of the prophet as a reminder to Israel that the Lord dealt with his people in divers ways, but ways that greatly differed from the wisdom of men. When he would lead his people from the thralldom of slavery and the house of Egyptian bondage, he chooses Moses, the ex-Egyptian prince, an exile from Pharaoh's court, now roaming a distant land with a price upon his head. He makes the rod of Moses more powerful than the sceptre of the great king. He leads the struggling crowd through the wilderness, and when at the Red Sea, hemmed in with mountain and desert, the advancing hosts of Egypt in hot pursuit, and the way to the throne of grace the only avenue open for escape, then he piles in diamond masonry those mighty walls of wave and tide. He paves with coral and shell an highway from the shores of slavery to

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the shores of freedom. He opens a pathway from the starvation of the brick kilns to the country overflowing with milk and honey. That was God's way. So dramatically thrilling is the story, so replete with the studgings of Jehovah's solicitude, so brilliant under the generalship of both Moses and his splendid successor, General Joshua, and so full of the flashings and out-breakings of a supernatural presence, that some of the higher critics as well as infidel readers are prone to write above the whole marvelous tale the word Fiction. It is wonderful how God carved from the crude block of humanity a people whose name should go down through history to the end of time; how his hand wrought that mighty transition which witnesses the converting of the nationless Hebrews into a people with a grand central government; with a throne magnificent for glory and power; and with kings and prophets the lustre of whose name has become the heritage of the ages.

But this is the way in which God works. He takes the things that are despised and with them works his righteous pleasure. With the weakest instruments he can accomplish the grandest ends. We see this illustrated all through the Bible. This is declared in emphatic words by Paul as one of the laws of the divine government. A shepherd's rod—what could be weaker than that—and yet he makes it mightier than the sceptre of Pharaoh; ram's horns—when pressed to the lips of priests, through their shrill scream and the cry of faith rising from the lips of forty thousand veterans of the wilderness—they make the walls of the stronghold Jericho fall flat; a cake of barley meal—and yet it is sufficient to keep a family for many days and never grow less; earthen pitchers with clay lamps in them—and yet when those pitchers are broken they scatter the hosts of the Midianites; a boy's sling and five smooth

stones from the brookside—and the boasting giant lies low in death. But of all weak things which God uses and makes mighty by his indwelling, a poor redeemed sinner is the weakest ; still God can make even his foolishness as a hammer and fire to break the hardest rock of stubbornness and consume the dross of selfishness. He converted Saul of Tarsus, the mad persecutor, into Paul the Apostle ; the heady, impulsive Simon into the trusting, patient Peter. He has all these years been converting the tear, the word, the smile, into mighty powers by which he has delivered souls from the bondage of sin. No wonder he says, “Despise not the day of small things.”

You remember how the enemies of God despised the work of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem ; they derided the building and the builders, yet Nehemiah and his fifty thousand warrior-workmen kept to the work, while amid cries of derision and the songs of Israel's trusting ones the walls were completed. The Jews laughed at and despised the walls of the second temple because they were likely to be so inferior to the royal beauty of the first. God would show them that in his work the day of small things is not to be despised. In the kingdom he has taught us that the grain of mustard seed will become the great tree, in whose shadow the fowls of heaven shall find shelter. In fact there are no small things with God. He counts the very atoms. He presides over the birth of the fire-fly, and sits at the death-bed of the sparrow with as much concern as when he watches the rise of an empire, or lights the astral lamps in the great chandelier of night. Some time ago I stood before a rare bit of decoration in whose manufacture years had been consumed. It was a bit of graceful mosaic done by the hand of one of the greatest mosaicists of the last century. You will recall the

splendid specimens of buhl and pietre-dure of Florentine mosaic; the tessellated pavement and marquetry and encaustic tiles at the World's Fair. All these were but so many applications of little bits—bits of enamel, bits of glass, bits of gems, bits of wood, bits of clay, bits of cement, bits of marble. Marked development of skill and patience are connected with the working up of these little bits, and you know what productions of beauty are the result.

Some one has said happiness is made up of so many bits that there are always some missing. It is certainly true life is composed of many littles, so many of them the sheerest bits we are inclined to despise them. But God would have us know how foolish it is to despise the bits, and asks, "Who hath despised the day of small things?" Life's lesson is that all great and lasting impressions are made and momentous results accomplished by bits. Habit, which is the strongest thing in nature, is thus produced. The largest cable is formed of threads a child may snap asunder, and yet when put together the strain of the largest ship may not break them; the weight of the heaviest trains passing over the spans they hold aloft, may not rive them; so it is with the formation of character, the fixedness of habit for time and eternity—for no truer sentence ever came from the pen of great Gladstone, than: "Destinies are the result of characters." Characters are the result of little things, the bits of daily experience that make up the mosaic of each life.

This law of the littles runs through all nature. Changes great and small are not of sudden outburst, but rather the gradual course of preparation. The most beautiful processes of nature are gradual, so are the works of grace; the beginnings of some of the mightiest works are so small and from such minute

causes, it is difficult to believe any work at all of permanence is possible, yet the work goes on. How wonderfully this fact is shown in lime formations in caves. The water percolating through the seams of rock forms graceful and beautiful rock-flowers, which vie with the rarest stone carvings, whether from the chisels of Michael Angelo or Harriet Hosmer. The pendent stalactite in its growth is like the forming of character. Whatever may come to us through transmission, character does not; it is not inherited. We slowly manufacture it after birth. It is not a massive unit, but it is a fabric woven by ten thousand threads, and these threads are not woven directly by outward circumstances, but by our thoughts. We are sculptors of our own character, like the artist at work fashioning a human countenance; he does not mould it at once. "It is painfully and laboriously wrought. A thousand blows rough cast it, ten thousand chisels polish and perfect it, put on the fine touches and bring out the features and expression." The icicle is formed one drop at a time, until the glistening pendent is a foot long or more. If the drops are of fresh, clean water, then the icicle is clear and sparkles in beauty; but if the water is dirty and foul, the icicle is muddy and has no attractiveness. Now the chisels that sculpture our characters are our thoughts. If the thoughts are pure and sweet the character will be beautiful and sparkle with happiness. If the thoughts are foul and impure the character will be unattractive and ignoble. Habits are only thoughts crystalized; words and acts are our thoughts put in outward shape.

It seems a very little thing to live near God for one day; it is a very great thing. But still to do it for one day does not seem so great a task; not so great a thing but that the Christian by the help of God may

easily accomplish it for one day. But if this little thing were accomplished *every day* in the year, then the whole would be infinitely glorious. On the other hand a man is forgetful of God ; it seems but a very little evil which is wrought with the character in one day—perhaps none at all—if there be no marked crime. A man does not ordinarily feel worse to-day than he did yesterday. There is no self-recording log-book in the conscience, or calculation of the latitude and longitude, or moral barometer to tell him what the weather is, or how far he has gone. And yet he has gone on ; he may have gone but a little further ; nevertheless a certain number of these imperceptible advancements bring him to his character, his destiny, his eternity. All the steps successively that lead to heaven or hell are small, one by one, except in great crimes, and even then there has been a gradual preparation for them, a great many unobserved steps towards them. Now, after the first coming to God, the Christian life is step by step. A little spring lost among the marshes, sleeping in the shadows of fern and the heaven-blue iris, is a helpless little thing ; but let some hand recover it, wall it in, and hang a ladle at the brim, then thousands of thirsty wayfarers may be refreshed. A little thing, yet full of life and refreshment. The greatest promises from God take into consideration the truth that you must be faithful over a few things and thus prepare yourself for greater. Not a spring and then the grand attainment ; a single leap and then great usefulness and influence ; you have not wings to lift you over intervening obstacles ; you must grapple with them, overcome them step by step. Water wears stones. But what can a single drop do ? It falls and is gone. There is no trace. The most perfect microscope cannot detect the impression made by that one drop. And yet the permanence,

the incessant repetition of this feeble thing at length furrows and seams the flint rock and crushes the very granite.

“Beginnings are alike, it is ends that differ ;
One drop falls, lasts, and dries up—but a drop ;
Another begins a river.”

Beginnings are interesting to trace. A soft mazarine sky ; blue waters rippling back in pearly kisses the blue reflection of the upper dome, or the dull gray tinge of pacing cloud ; distant hills, tapestried with green and starred like a firmament with wild flowers, that shake their fragrant censers in the passing breeze and nod familiarly to every scurrying shadow ; a beach of white-ribbed sand ; a cluster of fishing smacks, lying “idle as a painted ship upon a painted ocean ;” fishermen mending their nets ; sun dipping low over the western crest of hills ; sudden appearance of the Nazarine who as he looks upon the rude toilers of the sea in their greasy, tar-begrimed clothes commands them ; “straightway they forsook their nets and followed him.” Christ and four young men—this is the beginning of the Apostolic church. Here is the laying of its corner stone in the gray and crimson twilight of the dying day. This is the planting of the mustard seed. And from that small beginning has grown the church of to-day with its millions of devout worshipers. “Who hath despised the day of small things ?”

Go back three hundred years and see the church in the days of her trial, when it was only a small despised band, that had separated themselves from the English Established Church, of which Queen Elizabeth was the earthly head. In 1574 they organized their first church on the banks of the Thames four miles from London, but Elizabeth, although we call her the Protestant

Queen, had compromised with the papal priests, thereby driving from the fold of the English Church numbers of heroic men and women who would come into *no* alliance with the Roman church. And these separatists were persecuted with untiring bitterness by Elizabeth and her hard-hearted tools; they were thrown into dark and filthy dungeons; they were banished from the realm; tortured and put to death, all for non-conformity with the Papal ritualism, established by the Queen. For a time they struggled bravely, but it was a hard battle. One by one their leaders were silenced by death, or banished, and their followers were shunned as "the filth and offscouring of all things;" they were both friendless and poor; yet God was with them. Amid the thick forests which then surrounded London they met for secret prayer and praise, and never in their extremest poverty did they forget to take up a collection for their suffering brethren in bonds. What a thrilling meeting that was at the house of one Mr. Lee near Smithfield in 1592, held with closed doors for fear of surprise by Elizabeth's troops. Greenwood is there, out on bail for a few hours. The effects of his long imprisonment are seen in his wasted form and pallid face, but they choose him as their religious teacher, though only by secret messages from his dungeon can he communicate with his flock. Perry is there with a price set on his head by Elizabeth, who, hearing that he is hiding in the glens of Scotland, compelled King James to issue a decree forbidding any of his subjects to harbor him on pain of death. But Perry is with God's suffering ones this night. He has come from the extreme north that he may identify himself with this little band of confessors, and counsel them from his own rich experience. With prayer they choose their officers, two elders and two deacons. Seven little ones are presented

for baptism. They celebrate the Lord's supper, laying five small loaves and a cup of wine on the white cloth, and when all have remembered the Lord's death they sing the sacramental hymn, interrupted with tears. Then follows the collection for the poor, and quickly and silently they go out into the darkness of the night, go out to torture, and many of them to death, never to meet again until the eternal reunion at the marriage supper of the Lamb. In six months, April 6, 1593, their pastor Greenwood was hanged in London, and on the 25th of May Perry from the gallows in Southwark pointed his dying hand to the western hemisphere as the future home of the pilgrims. He was but thirty-four years of age and a wife and four helpless children clung to him as their only earthly friend, but the love of Christ outweighed all else, as he said boldly to his tormentors at his mock trial, "If my blood were an ocean sea, and every drop were a life unto me, I would give them all, by the help of the Lord, for the maintenance of the same, my confession." These separatists, these inmates of filthy prisons, these martyrs of three hundred years ago, were few in number, but they were not only the pioneers of our religious liberty, but the seed of our religious greatness. From their ranks came the Pilgrim fathers, and to them we owe most of the peculiar and grand characteristics of this Republic, which have made our political and religious institutions what they are to-day.

Our national life has been the emphasis of this law of littles. Yesterday a handful of colonists, to-day a powerful nation defending her own rights as well as protecting the rights of her weaker neighbor. God has been in every step of our national progress, and his purpose concerning us as a people is large with mercy, as it is ripe with glory. When our fathers fought the

war of independence the whole heathen world was shut in by ancient customs and laws, idolatry and superstitions; but God awaited his moment. Again he called for young men, not from their fishing smacks, as long centuries before, but from a New England college. Follow me, he said. Those young men, in prayer and consecration, as they worshiped God beneath the shadow of a hay-cock, answered, "We will, Lord." Leaving all, they set their faces toward the world-field lying in darkness; fired with a passion of love—a love for souls lit from the side of their Savior, and that flame of love spreading during this passing century till to-day all the world is rolling in the sunshine of his love. "Who hath despised the day of small things?"

Another fact lies in the shadow of this truth; the holy results of a simple text from the Word in the lives of men. Such for instance as in the case of Luther when that sentence, "The just shall live by faith," was burned into his very heart. It is said that Harlan Page once went through his Sunday School to get some spiritual census in regard to its condition. Coming to one of his teachers he said, "Shall I put you down as having a hope in Christ?" The teacher replied, "No." "Then," said Mr. Page, very tenderly, "I will put you down as having no hope." He closed his little book and left him; but that single remark was blessed of God, and proved enough to give that young man no rest till he found it in Christ. A single remark of Rev. Charles Simeon, in regard to the blessings which had resulted from the labors of Dr. Cary in India, arrested the attention of Henry Martin to the cause of missions and led him to consecrate his life to God and to the telling of the old sweet story to the dying heathen. After a communion service in the Scotch church at Inverkeithing, Fifeshire, some one asked the minister who the little

boy was who that morning had confessed his faith in the Christ. "Only little Robert Moffat," was the reply. But little Robert Moffat became the great pioneer missionary in Africa, opening the way for devoted men and women who with the word of God penetrated the forests and mountains of the sun-bathed land. He was followed by his son-in-law, that great explorer and Christian man, Dr. David Livingstone, who flung wide open the doors of the dark continent and in the name of Christ invited the whole world to pour its best civilization in upon unknown Africa. See how God can make little things divinely powerful. "Hast thou despised the day of small things?"

Christ commands us to follow him. It is step by step that we are to take in the divine life. Our growth in grace often means suffering. It is the philosophy of the higher life that to reach perfection we must have tears and shadows, trials and broken hopes. The soul can not be sanctified without discipline, and discipline comes through suffering. The life of faith grows by trials of faith. Our Master explains this "needs be," for he says: "Every branch in me that bringeth forth fruit, he pruneth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." The pruning process is a sorrowful one indeed, and for the present time most grievous, but it is working out in us the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Read the 11th chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews and learn how those "of whom the world was not worthy" were perfected through suffering. Abraham must offer up his son. Joseph must be hated and sold by his brethren, cast into prison and degraded before his elevation. Moses must fly from the luxuries of the court of Pharaoh and wander in the wilderness. Daniel must enter the den of lions, and the three Hebrew children must pass through the fiery furnace. So

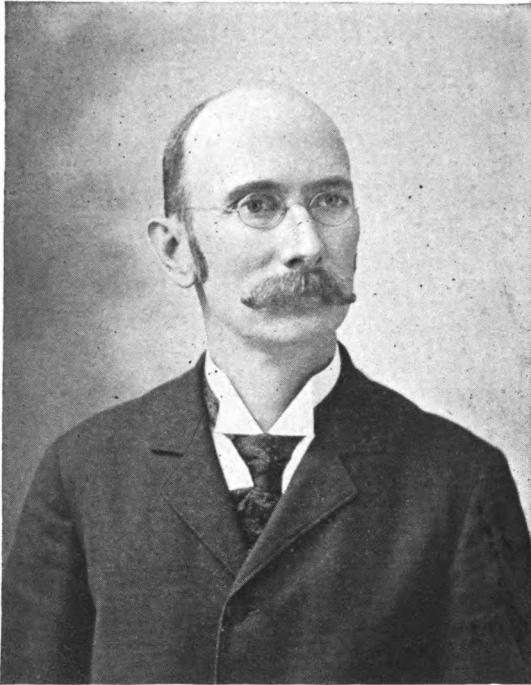
with David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Paul, Peter, John, Polycarp, Huss, Baxter, Bunyan and many of God's little ones whom we know. But this service of perfection in growth—or growth in perfection—comes only as we are brought in nearness to the Master. We cannot live a life of consecration unless we know him in the fellowship of his sufferings. And this life can be lived anywhere, whether we have the appointments of God's house and all these rich opportunities, or not: as you see the flower flourishing right by the edge of the glacier, without apparent footage in earth. Fenelon, Madam Guion, Thomas a' Kempis lived the life of God surrounded by the corrupting forms of the Roman church. The earnest follower of the Master will find nutriment for his faith anywhere and under all circumstances. He despises not the day of small things. He finds his highest joy to live a Christly life.

And what the world needs to-day is not theology, not creeds, nor entertaining sermons. No! No! It needs downright Christian living—lives that shed a fragrance such as fills the divine tropics; lives full of those gentle words and deeds that, put together, spell out Christ's divine love for men; lives full of sacrifice for others, that feel for others' sorrows and weep for others' woes; lives that reflect, not the starlight of a cold theoretical profession, but the warm glow of the Sun of Righteousness. This is the gospel of a happy trust, of a clean, pure life; it is the gospel of helpfulness and of an every day up-lift. It is one thing to pray "Thy will be done," and "Lord, show me thy will, that I may walk in the path of duty that leads to thy glory." If the latter be our prayer, we will pass out from the closet with firm and joyful step to *do* that will in the busy, sinful world. Here is where success lies and here is where we too often fail. It is easy and

simple to see the quivering wires connecting our lives with the infinite plans of God ; easy to see and acknowledge the righteousness of that plan God has, and to pray that it may be consummated in our lives. But it is quite another thing to stand amid the whirling duties of our life and to *do* God's will—to do his will at any cost, at any sacrifice ; to do his will in the face of fashion or custom, or public opinion ; rejoicing to be peculiar and to suffer persecution if only God will whisper, " Well done " ; to do that will day by day, though it antagonize the individual will in the home life, and the world life, and down in the silent chambers of thought and affection—always and everywhere to be learning to unlearn our own wills, and to do only as God wills. This is living the prayer, " Thy will be done " ; this is spiritual royalty, and in this Christ-like obedience the believer is a conqueror and more than a conqueror, for he is hastening on the coronation day.

In the museum at Rotterdam is a rough, uninteresting painting—it is more of a daub than a painting, and the keenest eye of the observer cannot discover any mark in it of genius or skill. By its side hangs a masterpiece, whose value is almost beyond calculation. The artist of the two is the same—the renowned Rembrandt—and years of patient, earnest study and toil intervene between the two paintings. It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know if we toil on we can at least make daubs, and the touch of Jesus' hand will transform our daubs into masterpieces. Little by little we will grow up into him. And in this divinely established law of littles we see the hope of the church. Her future is gilded with a glory as bright as the promises of God. The work begun on the brow of Calvary will one day be consummated. Then from the rising of the sun even to the place of its going down,

there will stretch one vast empire, one throne, one King and one people, for it is written : " The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ ; and he shall reign forever and forever."



WILEY K. WRIGHT.

OUR HOPE.

BY REV. WILEY K. WRIGHT,*

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Text: "Our hope." 1 Tim. 1:1.

In this verse Paul is writing to Timothy. They were both Christians, believers in Jesus. One of them, the older Christian and the older man, writes to the other a letter in which he says, at the very beginning of it, "The Lord Jesus Christ is our hope." He does not say that any man is our hope, or anything that any man can do or say or think; but he makes it plain when he says, "God our Savior, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope." It is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who is God our Savior and our hope. There can be no question about the meaning of the language employed here. There is no hope for us in man. The greatest men the world has ever known cannot help us; they cannot make us live, or stay the sure approach of death, or give us hope in view of what lies beyond.

We know as much to-day, naturally, of what lies beyond death as Socrates did 2400 years ago; and we do not know any more than he did. He knew as much

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as we do. After 6000 years men have found out absolutely nothing beyond this world. It does not lie in the power of man to tell us, but God can tell us, and he does in the Word his son Jesus Christ brought from heaven when he came into this world 1900 years ago. I should think men would give it up. But to-day there are the old attempts made over again to pass the border-land which lies between the world of the flesh or matter and the world of spirit. Researches are made in what is called telepathy, and in forms of spiritualism to which different names are given; but absolutely no progress is made into that unknown world which lies just ahead of every one of us. Scientists try to discover what life is. But the dissecting knife has never yet reached in the body the seat of life, and it never will. No man on earth can tell us what life is, but God can and does. How helpless is the most eminent physician that ever lived. Death comes in spite of his utmost endeavors to push it away. "Millions of money for a few moments of time," a sick man cried, but he could not buy time with money. But God can give us time, yes, and eternity too.

The text does not say that any man or anything that man can do is our hope. But it says that "God our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ is our hope." It says: "He is *our* hope." He is the hope of the Christian. Of course he could not be the hope of the one who does not believe in him; who does not accept him; who does not trust in his infinite power and wisdom. If you do not believe that there is anything supernatural, then, of course, you do not believe in God, for surely he is above nature, supernatural. But if you do believe in God, what is there more natural than that he should reveal himself to beings whom he has created capable of knowing and loving him? And how could he

reveal himself to men, except by speaking to them in their own language through other men whom he has inspired, as he has in the Bible? And what human mind could conceive of a better way for God to speak to us than by sending his Son into the world to take upon himself our human nature, to become one with us, to become flesh, and to dwell among us that we might behold his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth?

I. "God our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ is our hope," because he was born of a woman. He came into the world as we do. In no other way could the Son of God have so identified himself with us. He took upon himself our nature when he, though conceived by the Holy Ghost, was born of the virgin Mary. If we say that is unnatural and mysterious, then we ought to make plain first our own existence, to strip our own coming into life of mystery, to explain, without God, if we can the union of spirit and body which makes each one of us what he is. We cannot explain the existence of a single human soul without divine intervention. Why should we marvel and refuse to believe it, when God intervenes to bring his own Son into this world by the only gate-way through which it was possible for him to come and have our nature? The Lord Jesus Christ is our hope because he was born of a woman, of one of our race, and thus he became our kinsman. He identified himself with the race and with the world which one day he is to redeem.

II. But again, he is our hope because of the kind of life he lived here on the earth. "He was tempted in all points like as we are, and yet without sin." He lived a perfect life. He was tempted, but he did not sin in act, or word, or thought. Of him it could be said, but not of any other man or woman, that he touched the earth,

wherever he came in contact with it, only to bless it. For holiness and power go together. No wonder he could perform miracles. No wonder he spake as never man spake. No wonder the multitudes hung on his words. Wherever he went, blessing and healing and help went out from him to others. It was an utterly unselfish life. If we will think of it, the lives which are most remembered among men are the unselfish ones. He is not our hope because of the money he made. Following him will lead us to give up some of our money, perhaps all of it. He gave that all up. Being engrossed in money-making may cause us to give him up! It is certain that being engrossed in him will cause us to give up money-making as the pursuit of our lives. He will give us something better to live for. That is why his life is our hope. The simple fact that he lived here in the midst of the allurements of the world, the flesh, and the devil, untouched by it all, is one reason why he is our hope. We have a *perfect* Savior. The world has no power over him. The devil has no power over him. We are sometimes disheartened at the way things are going in this life. The world does not seem to be growing any better. Our own surroundings are such as to discourage us; and we are continually confronted by revelations of iniquity in the most unexpected places. But the Son of God lived a sinless life in this lost world, in just such circumstances as those in which we are placed. His coming into the world, his blessed contact with it, his sinless life here, mean something. The simple fact that the Son of God lived our life sinlessly, unselfishly, is enough to give us hope.

III. And then he is our hope because of his death. He died for our sins. "He bore our sins in his own body on the tree." "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." And now, if we have accepted him,

our sins are not on us any longer; they are on him. There will be no judgment day for us, for the judgment, the condemnation for our sins was visited upon *him* on Calvary. And "there is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." That is why it is said: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "I am the good shepherd," Jesus said, and then he said: "The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." "This is my blood," he said, "which is shed for the remission of sins." Oh, if we have accepted him we have reason for hope, because he died for our sins. We have hope which will not put us to shame or disappoint us in the Day of Judgment, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts; that is, the consciousness that God loves us so much that when we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

IV. But once more. Christ is our hope, not only because of his birth and life and death, but also because of his resurrection. If he had remained in the grave, then would we be indeed without hope. But he is declared to be the Son of God with power, "by the resurrection from the dead." "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you (not that the dead should be raised; that bare statement might be incredible,—but) that God should raise the dead?" *That* is not incredible. He who formed the lily in its matchless beauty and perfection, and caused it to grow in snowy whiteness out of the death of a seed in black mud, can anything be impossible with him? He who put life into grains of wheat in Egypt 3500 years ago, so

that the life has remained until to-day and the seeds when planted live and grow to-day, why should it be thought incredible that he should raise the dead? There is nothing that God cannot do, the God who raised up our Lord Jesus from the dead. He died on the cross. He was buried in Joseph's tomb; "he rose again the third day."

And now he is indeed our hope. Because he lives we shall live also. "If the spirit of him that raiseth up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you." He is not dead; he is risen as he said. Ours is a *living* redeemer, and we say as Job said by faith so long ago, "I know that my redeemer liveth." Job stood looking into the open grave, as we stood yesterday, as we shall stand to-morrow. He said: "Oh, that my words were now written! Oh, that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever." Printed in a book! He had his desire. The Book of Books embalm the words of Job. Graven on a stone with pen of iron, inlaid with lead! He has had his desire in this regard also. For if not on his own tomb, yet on the tombs of multitudes of believers in Jesus Christ since have the immortal words, "I know that my redeemer liveth," been written. Job was looking into the tomb. He saw there the fearful ruin of the body wrought by death. "Though after my skin worms destroy this body!" The skin is gone; and now what an army of invaders enters the citadel of man's soul! Pitilessly they attack the veins and arteries, those mighty channels through which the blood coursed to and from the heart. Cruelly they bite into the muscles which, with marvelous mechanism, held together the mighty frame. And the nerves, those tele-

graph lines which so wonderfully conveyed messages to the soul, these too are cut by the invading army of worms! But why should we have it otherwise, dear friends, for the spirit has gone and is beyond the reach of the enemy? Yet oh, how we love the body in which the soul has dwelt! And there is unutterable comfort and hope in the truth of God that these bodies of ours shall be raised. "Though after my skin worms destroy this body," Job said, "yet in my flesh shall I see God." And no matter how destroyed, or how widely scattered the atoms of our bodies shall be, God will raise them up, just as from seed planted in the ground, and apparently disintegrated and destroyed, God raises up a new and wonderful body in the blooming plant, which lives a glorious resurrection life where death has seemed to take place. Like his resurrection body, so shall ours be; for there is the same quickening spirit in us if we are his. So, as we stand and look into the grave, it will give us hope to remember that Christ was there. "Come, see the place where the Lord lay." Any grave will answer; and we stand by enough of them, God knows.

Mr. Spurgeon was once traveling in Italy and came to an open gate over which was written in Latin, "And there was a garden." He entered through the open gate and saw a finger board on which was written, "And in the garden was a new tomb." He followed the path pointed out and came to a tomb, over which was written, "A new tomb, wherein never man was laid." He looked in and saw on the steps leading down into the tomb these words: "And stooping down, he looked, yet entered he not in." But just beyond were these words: "Come, see the place where the Lord lay." He went in, and there carved in marble were the napkin and the linen clothes lying, and these words:

“He is not here, for he is risen, as he said.” Christ is our hope because he arose from the dead, because of his birth, life, death and resurrection.

V. But more than that, he is our hope because he ascended up into heaven. “And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands (those pierced hands!) and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them and carried up into heaven.” There Stephen saw him standing on the right hand of God. There “he ever liveth to make intercession for us.” And now “if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” He carried our nature with him into heaven, our human nature, which he took upon himself when he became flesh. In his resurrection body he went back to glory. This is why he is our hope.

VI. But more than that, he is our hope because he is coming again. “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”

And now we may say, each one of us for himself, if indeed we have accepted him as our Savior, “I know that my redeemer liveth.” “My redeemer!” Literally, “my goel, my kinsman.” It was the right of the kinsman to buy back an estate which had become forfeited. So it is the right of our kinsman to buy back for us the estate, the body, which death takes away from us. But the redeemer was also an avenger. What horrible injury death has done us! But the avenger is on his track. And see! Death is fleeing away! But he is sure to be overtaken. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. “I know that my redeemer liveth.” How many are there who do not dare to say “I know.” They say “I hope so,” or “I trust so.” But these

things are "written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may *know* that ye have eternal life." "I know that *my* redeemer liveth." Oh, can you say it? You may not be able to say that much else is yours, but you may say, "My redeemer is mine." He is the only piece of property, one has said, which is really ours. We borrow all else, the house, the children, nay, our very body we must return to the great lender. But Jesus we can never leave; for even when we are absent from the body we are present with the Lord; even death cannot separate us from him.

Beloved, have you Christ? It may be you hold him with a feeble hand; you half think it is presumption to say, "He is my redeemer." Yet remember, if you have but faith as a grain of mustard seed, that little faith entitles you to say, "I know that my redeemer liveth."

THE PALM TREE CHRISTIAN.

BY REV. WILLIAM BRYANT,*

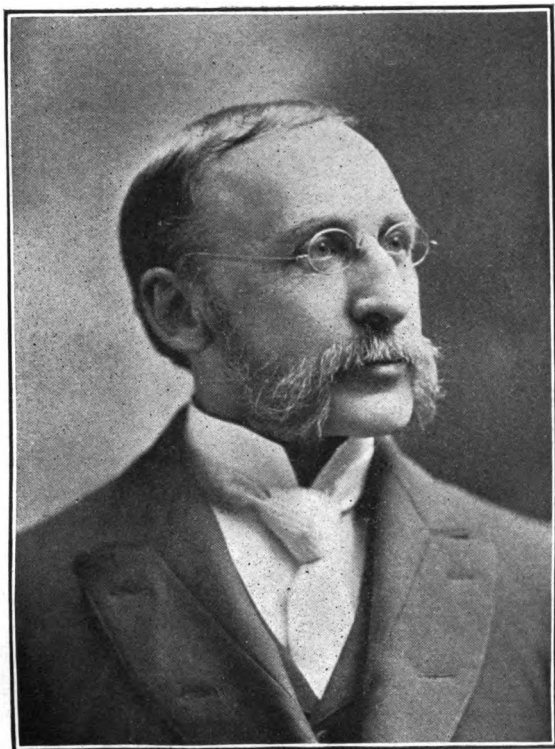
Pastor First Presbyterian Church, Mt. Clemens.

Text: "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree." Ps. 92:12.

A traveler in Africa has given us this picture:—
"On the northern border of the Great Desert, at the foot of the Atlas Mountains, the groves of date palms form the great feature of that parched region, and few trees besides can maintain an existence. The excessive dryness of this arid tract, where rain seldom falls, is such that wheat refuses to grow, and even barley, maize and caffre corn afford the husbandman only a scanty and uncertain crop. The hot blasts from the south are scarcely supportable even by the native himself, and yet here forests of date palms flourish and form a screen impervious to the rays of the sun, beneath the shade of which the orange, the lemon and the pomegranate are cherished, and the vine climbs up by means of its twisted tendrils; and although reared in constant shade, all these fruits acquire a more delicious flavor than in what would seem a more favorable climate."

The Psalmist, writing in the land of Judea in its

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WILLIAM BRYANT.

golden age, spoke, no doubt, from actual observation of groves of beautiful palm trees, which then flourished near by. The beauty of that land has long since been marred by neglect and Moslem misrule. Only here and there are palm trees found, and they not like those growing under beneficent conditions. Jericho, the city of palm trees, was once one of the fairest garden spots of earth; but its glory departed many centuries ago. Tadmor or Tamar in the desert, the more modern Palmyra, is now only a ruin; but enough remains to show what the beautiful Palm City of ancient days was.

Only those who have seen the great lordly palms in their beauty in their native climate can appreciate the appropriateness of the Psalmist's description, and the apt comparison to a life of righteousness. He saw the great trees in all their pristine glory and gave us this symbolism: "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree." We seem to see, not a forest, but a single tree boldly outlined upon the horizon. Its tall trunk rises perhaps 150 feet above the level ground, straight as an arrow. It is crowned with broad leaves falling in feathery gracefulness in all directions. Clustered under their ample shelter are the great bunches of dates, so high above the ground that no matter how fiercely the sun may strike upon the burning sand beneath, no heat is reflected high enough to mar the rich fruitage. Its fruit is too high for mere earthly influences to affect it. We can hardly imagine a more beautiful object lesson of Christian uprightness and beauty than the palm tree. Their lofty figures and stately crowns have given them the well deserved title of "the princess of the vegetable kingdom." The Arabs regard the date palms not simply with admiration, but with deepest love. Mohammed said, "Honor your maternal aunt, the date palm; for she was created

in Paradise of the same earth from which Adam was made." An old Moslem tradition says that Adam was allowed to bring three things out of Paradise; "the myrtle as the fairest of flowers; the wheat as the most necessary of grains; and the date as the most delightful of fruits."

Very profitably we may study this comparison with some definiteness.

I. *The palm tree is a good type of the righteous man, because it grows and flourishes in a desert region.* It seems to draw its nourishment from the very sand itself; but it only seems so to those who are ignorant of its source of supply. It grows upwards from the sand; but the sand is not its life. The traveler through the desert who sees the waving palm tree in the distance rejoices, not simply because he expects from that palm tree to obtain food, but because he knows that it indicates the presence of water not far beneath the surface. The tree is beautiful in itself, but it is even more beautiful in its environments of barren sand; and yet more so because it indicates the presence of something more needed even than itself. There is always something better than human goodness; its indication of a higher goodness, from which it draws its very life. The Christian must grow and flourish in what we call sometimes a desert region, because it is often so uncongenial and so unlike the spirit of a Christian's life. We need not partake of the desert character. We are *in* the world, but not *of* the world.

In no morbid or gloomy mood, do we call this world a desert. It is a beautiful world. God, the great Creator, took pleasure in its creation, and in the different stages of its completion he proclaimed it very good. We need not go mourning through it, and calling it a waste and howling wilderness. Christianity is intended

to make the wilderness blossom as the rose. The world is full of beauty, natural and moral, even now. In spite of sin it is even full of love, the highest moral beauty. And yet while sin is in the world and so far governs the world, it is natural to think of it sometimes as a desert region, and there is a sad truthfulness in the thought. For to-day it is, alas! painfully true that the service of self is far more evident than the service of God; and sin flourishes with far less cultivation than does righteousness. It is the duty and privilege of the Christian to live a vigorous, earnest life for God, in spite of all unfavorable surroundings. As the palm tree does, so must the Christian live in the desert, not to be influenced by it, but to influence it; not to derive nourishment from it, but to give nourishment to it. There would seem to be no merit in a tree's growing luxuriantly in the Garden of Eden, but when it grows in the Sahara all honor to it.

It is easy for a Christian to live nobly where all surroundings are holy and pure and helpful; but in the world of sin and selfishness it takes both grit and grace. If we, as Christians, live where true religion is neither the fashion nor the rule of the majority, so much the greater is the opportunity to honor the Lord whose we are and whom we serve.

Christ expects from his followers that, like palm trees, they flourish in the desert of a sinful world, and draw their supplies not from it, but from him.

II. *The palm tree is notable for its symmetry and beauty.* It was always a type of beauty in Oriental lands. Solomon copied the date palm trunk in ornamenting the temple. He carved on the walls, probably in relief, figures of palm trees. On the beautiful doors were also carvings of palm trees, and other ornaments, open flowers and cherubim. And upon the brazen laver

were carved figures of palm trees, as well as of lions and cherubim. In Ezekiel's vision of the temple, he saw pillars like to palm trees. In fact architecture owes to the palm tree some of its most exquisite columns. In the Song of Songs the beloved is represented as of stately figure in the expression: "Thy stature is like to a palm tree." It was a common thing for the Jews to call their daughters who were of unusual beauty, Tamar, the palm tree. David and Absalom each had a daughter Tamar, both spoken of as very beautiful.

The leaves and their position as regards the fruit are of wonderful beauty. The leaf, pinnated, the midrib with its taper, sharp-pointed leaflets, alternately diverging and forming a long and glossy plume of polished verdure, is beautiful in itself, and especially in its graceful covering of the fruit beneath.

The righteous man is beautiful in God's sight, and should study to mature those qualities that make him, and so his religion, attractive to his fellow men. Alas! that some good people fail to make religion seem a beautiful thing. Alas for that sternness that seems to hide Christian love! The palm tree is not less strong because it is beautiful. Religion need never be less firm because it is gentle and kindly. The true Christian is in sympathy with all humanity. He loves men not only for his Master's sake, but for their own sakes; not so much because they are lovable as because they are men. Those who look at him unconsciously say, "How beautiful a thing the religion of Christ must be that makes such beautiful lives on the part of his followers!" Are we good? That is a most important question. Are we attractively good? That is a question that we are less likely to ask.

III. *That suggests the loftiness of character symbolized by the palm.* We have already noticed that it bears

its fruit as near heaven as possible. You cannot keep the palm tree from growing upward. It is a common saying in the East that if you put weights upon it when it is growing it will only press upward all the harder. It can neither be kept down nor diverted from the straight, upward way. St. Gregory says that the bark binds the lower life as if straightened by innumerable afflictions, while the higher life spreads out its beautiful verdure and rich fruitage. Other trees have an inclination to branch out upon the upward way. The palm is striving straight heavenward. It has neither leisure nor taste for diversion upon the journey. It swerves neither to the right nor to the left. The winds do not bend it. The sun does not draw it from the perpendicular. It is constant in its uprightness. Thus it is a beautiful type of the Christian. He is continually growing heavenward and Godward. Trials like weights may be put upon him. But they do not keep him down; they only urge him to a larger effort. Winds of trial and subtle allurements of temptation are constantly present to divert his course from this upward growth. But he grows on in the same way of uprightness. As the palm tree bears its fruit just as near heaven as it can grow, so the fruitage of a true Christian life is seen in the highest characteristics of human life. Only God can see the best of a man, as only God really knows the worst of a man. The world sees mostly his hours of mediocrity. The nearer he gets to God the riper and richer will be the fruitage of his life.

IV. *That leads to more definite thought of the fruitage and usefulness of the palm tree.* This is, perhaps, the most easily impressed and most remarkable fact about it.

Whole books have been written about the multitudinous uses of the many parts of the palm tree. The

Arabs have 360 names and 360 uses for it. Every part of it is valuable. It produces food, shelter, clothing, timber, fuel, building material, fences, walking canes, fibre, fans, paper, starch, sugar, oil, wax, wine, medicine, tonics, tannin, dyeing material, resin, ropes, rigging, sails, fishing lines, masts, and innumerable other things. From the fibrous webs all sorts of cordage are made. The leaves can be used in hundreds of ways after they are dried. In a green state, they are even edible when boiled. From the flowers sugar or syrup, in the East sometimes called honey, is extracted. The wood has many uses. The fruit is almost the only food of many people in the eastern lands. Even the date stones are ground up into flour for the camels, and are very nourishing. Boats can be fitted up complete with masts, sails, cordage and everything, all from the palm tree. Palm oil supplies light to nearly all Africa, and is exported to this country and much of it used in toilet soaps. An intoxicating wine is made from the sap, which in an unfermented and uncorrupted condition is valuable for medicine and as a tonic. The farinaceous pith is full of nourishment. The palm tree is a heavy producer of fruit. Some trees will produce annually 300 or 400 pounds. Some trees have been known to yield 600 pounds in a year. The leaves form coverings for roofs and sides of houses, and for frame work, fences, mats, baskets and bags.

They represent so much of real value as well as beauty, that it is not strange that they are found so often in the court-yards of palaces and mosques. Did not the Psalmist have in mind the varied products of the palm tree when he said, "The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree." He was not thinking simply of the beauty of the tree, but of its manifold usefulness. How many thoughts come to our minds here as to fruit-

bearing Christians, and Christian activity! We think of the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Are we possessed of these fruits of the Spirit?

That suggests the blessed activities of the Christian life. The Christian must not simply be good; he must be good for something. Without torturing the analogy it would be easy to show how the varied excellences of the palm tree have their counterpart in the Christian life. He must feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, minister to the sick, and in every way carry out the beautiful activities of Christian service. Nor does this mean simply the giving of one's substance. It may be done by those who have very little substance to bestow. Kind words are as precious as kind deeds, when they are the true measure of our ability; not when they are the veilings of hypocritical selfishness. But kind deeds are costly in other ways than pecuniarily. They often demand personal sacrifice of time and comfort and ease that are valued far more than money. As the palm tree is fruitful and useful, perhaps far beyond all other trees, so the Christian ought to fill his life with blessed ministries toward those needing our help.

V. *The palm tree is a symbol, too, of the evergreen life of the righteous.* Through summer and winter alike the palm tree wears its beautiful crown of verdure; and it does this to old age. The life of the palm tree is not prolonged like that of many less useful trees, but the whole of its life is spent in doing good.

“ We live in deeds, not years.”

Our life counts not so much for the number of years spent upon earth as for what is accomplished by

it. We read that Methuselah lived 969 years; and that is absolutely all that we know about him. But his father Enoch, whose life seemed to end upon earth prematurely for that period of the world's history, left the record, "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." John the Baptist lived upon earth fewer years than Herod; but his life accomplished vastly more for humanity. Long life is a blessing only as it gives opportunities for a beneficent use of its years. The palm tree is fruitful as long as it lives. Unmoved by winter's rain or summer's heat, enjoying both in their season, but not showing any appreciable effects from the changes, the palm tree grows on. Under the quickening influence of rain the surrounding herbage puts on new life, only to die, perhaps, when the sun comes out with a fervent heat. The palm tree calmly grows on regardless of these changes. So the Christian in evergreen verdure should grow on until earthly life has fulfilled its mission.

The average fruit-bearing age of the palm tree is about one century; not a great age perhaps for a tree, but a great age for a tree that bears such splendid fruit. The Christian should live on in evergreen cheerfulness. Even-mindedness, equality of temper, self-restraint under provocation; these are admirable qualities for a Christian. They keep him young as the years roll on. Have you not seen some aged Christian whose heart is as young as a boy's? He is in full sympathy with youthful aspirations. His heart never grows old. The feet may totter, the eyes may grow dim, the hands may tremble, the hearing may become dull, and those who do not know him call him old and feeble. Those who know him best realize that he never can grow old; for his heart enjoys perennial youth. As old age comes on and the day fades into the evening, and the shadows are

lengthening, the spiritual powers ripen ; for it is such a little step from earth to heaven. The pearly gate stands open, and the eye so dimmed that it fails to recognize old friends and comrades near at hand sees through earthly clouds and vapors, above stars and constellations, the throne of God and the face of the Master. "He brings forth fruit in old age ;" fruit of faith and patience ; and those last years of earthly life are a heavenly embassy to the weary, wandering hearts of men. Oh, that all of us, if long life shall be graciously given to us may, like the palm tree, have evergreen beauty of character, and keep on bringing forth fruit to the very close of our days on earth !

VI. *Then naturally comes the thought of the palm tree as an emblem of victory.* So the Jewish multitude regarded it when on that Palm Sunday or Monday so memorable in Christ's life they spread palm branches in the path that Christ was traveling. That was no new idea. It was inwrought into Hebrew history. In the books of the Maccabees we read constantly of the triumphant patriotic processions led by that heroic family, and always with palm branches in their hands. So firmly was this incorporated into Jewish life that the inspired apocalyptic writer, true to his origin, uttered it in the record of the vision which he saw of heaven. He writes, "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." The sacred writers were not mere amanuenses. They wrote as they felt and as they were trained, only guided by the Holy Spirit ; and the experiences of their lives were recorded upon the inspired pages.

The palm tree means usefulness here ; it means

triumph in heaven. Yet the two thoughts are blended, for there are triumphs which begin here; and there must be a very consummation of usefulness reached in glory. The heavenly entrance is a triumphal one. Palms for victory. The church sings of it, because the church believes in it. What a glorious home-coming that will be for the Christian! And especially for those who have gone through great tribulations on their way to glory. In the catacombs are many pictures of palms, and they are always accepted as symbolic of two things which in those days of persecution were generally linked together, martyrdom and victory; martyrdom first and victory afterwards; the cross and then the crown. What a joy there is amid life's sorrows in thinking of the land of the palm branches!

To Christ the palm branches were but as a brief interlude of comfort between a ministry of suffering and its culmination in Gethsemane and Calvary. He who knew all about human sorrow wept over Jerusalem in spite of a brief period of popular jubilation and apparent triumph. He had only a little longer to wait for the land of the palm branches. We shall reach that land, too, some day through his merits, to go no more out; for the palm branches of heaven are not only fadeless, they are eternal; and no "Halls of Judgment" with their gross injustice from earth's Caiaphas and Herod and Pilate can ever mar the home of peace. Victory, endless victory, with no after pangs of possible defeat is heaven's portion. It is the land of the palm branches.

VII. And now what is left to say in closing? Just one thing; but it must be said, for it is the most vitally important thought of the whole theme.

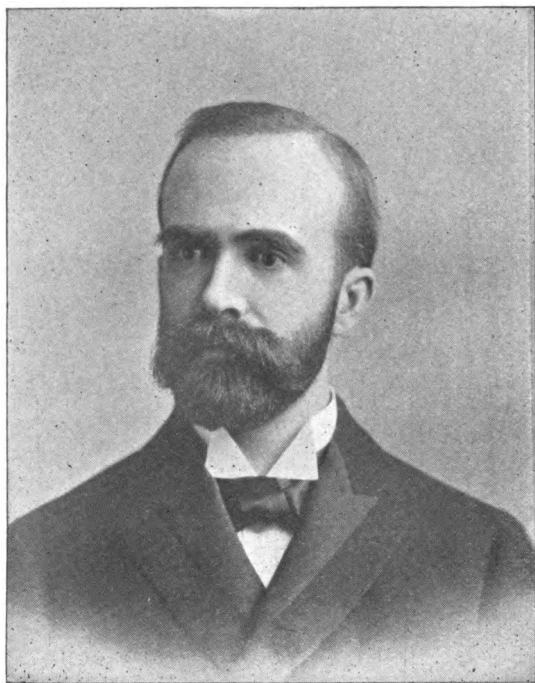
What is the palm tree's life secret? Whence does this tree, growing often in a desert region, having no

refreshing rain to fall upon it, and under the scorching sun, derive its strength, its freshness, its beauty, its fame for usefulness? Deep down beneath what men see of it its roots reach out and find the perpetual springs of water. Rain may or may not fall. It needs not this. It is drawing sustenance from hidden sources. There is a living spring, and the roots are there, and through the long drought they are drawing up the refreshing, life-giving moisture that finds expression in trunk, and leaves, and flowers, and fruit. Such a flourishing life would be impossible but for these springs unseen by human eyes. The Christian is to flourish like the palm tree. He is to be beautiful and useful. He is to live in perennial freshness. He is to bear fruit in old age. But all this is impossible unless, looking into the face of Christ, he can truthfully declare, "All my springs are in thee."

And now, brethren, are we longing for this fullness of life? What did Christ say to such an eager heart? "I am come that ye might have life; and that ye might have it abundantly." That abundant life is only possible in him. But it *is* possible in him. It is intended for us if we will take it. We live in him, and in him alone. What a beautiful life is that of a Christian who is illustrating, every day, palm tree vigor, and beauty, and usefulness, and continuance! It is after all the only life worthy of the ambition of an immortal soul. It is the very life that God would have us live. How earnestly do we desire it? Earnestly enough to make us willing to comply with the divine conditions? If men do not come to Christ it is only as he himself said to them: "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life."

On that first Palm Sunday, forever sacred to the Christian, men cried hosanna. We have made it a

cry of exultation. It is really a prayer: "Save Lord, we beseech thee." We must pray it, also, if we want salvation. Then, saved, we want the abundant life, the Christ-filled life, the life flourishing like the palm tree. It may be ours if, having found in Christ salvation, we will henceforth constantly draw our life and strength from him.



LEONIDAS H. DAVIS.

PHILEMON, OR THE TRANSFORMING POWER OF THE SPIRIT OF JESUS CHRIST.

BY REV. LEONIDAS H. DAVIS,*

Pastor First Presbyterian Church, Grand Rapids.

Text: The Epistle to Philemon.

The letter to Philemon holds a solitary place among the extant writings of St. Paul. It is the shortest of his epistles, and is the only strictly personal and private letter that has been preserved to us. The letters to Timothy and Titus, while addressed to individuals, deal with doctrines and questions of church government which would cause them to be read by many beside Timothy and Titus.

Paul's natural ability and acquirements, his miraculous call, his divine appointment as a chosen vessel of Jesus Christ, his missionary journeys, his founding of churches in almost all parts of the Roman Empire, made him easily the first of the Apostles, and one to whom many questions of private and public nature would be appealed. Most, if not all, of his public letters have been preserved, but it is strange to say that of all the private letters that he must have written to individ-

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uals, this letter to Philemon is the only one that has come down to us. It deals wholly with an incident in domestic life and seemingly an incident of little importance, but we shall see, as Sabatier has so beautifully said, "that it is full of grace, of salt, of serious and trustful affection, and that it gleams like a pearl of the most exquisite purity in the rich treasure of the New Testament."

It is interesting to know in passing that this letter has been variously estimated in the history of the church. In the fourth century when men were so engrossed with questions of ecclesiastical discipline, questions of theological interest, when the "Battle of the Creeds" was raging fiercely, it was asked with considerable presumption, of what interest could an insignificant slave be, a slave long since dead; forgetting the principles and teachings involved. But these men, given over to dry, scholastic, theological discussions of no importance to men, either dead or living, were so enamored of their own narrowness that they had no time for such trivialities as they thought Philemon dealt with. But Jerome and Chrysostom felt differently and they defended the epistle against its assailants. Luther and Calvin, though given much to doctrine, show a true appreciation of its beauty and its truth. And from the fourth century on it has held a high place among those who are searching for principles rather than rules, and shows in a remarkable way the tenderness and the delicacy of St. Paul's character. Dr. Davidson has written concerning the letter, "Dignity, generosity, prudence, friendship, affection, politeness, skillful address, purity, are apparent. Hence it has been called with great propriety the polite epistle. The delicacy, fine address, consummate courtesy, nice

strokes of rhetoric, render it an unique specimen of the epistolary style."

The letter to Philemon was written in Rome by the Apostle in the year 61 or 62. The letter was written to Philemon, a native or at least a resident of Colosse, a small Phrygian town in Asia Minor. He is addressed as one dearly beloved and as a fellow worker of the Apostle. He was doubtless a convert of the Apostle and one who was known for his zeal and generous in his hospitalities. Like Nymphas in the neighboring church of Laodicea, Philemon had placed his own house at the disposal of the Christians in Colosse for their religious and social gatherings. The leading teacher of the church in Colosse was doubtless Epaphras, and he was well seconded in his work by Philemon. Take Philemon, all in all, he was a man of such worth of character as to draw forth the kind regard, even the affection of the apostle Paul. Closely connected with Philemon in his work was doubtless his wife Appia, and Archippus, who with reasonable probability is supposed to have been the son of Philemon.

But the one who is really the center of the letter, and on behalf of whom the letter was written, was Onesimus, the slave of Philemon. Onesimus was "the least respectable type of the least respectable class" in the social scale. As a slave he was simply a live chattel. According to law he had no rights whatsoever, and his master had the power of life and death over him. But however the law read and whatever society thought, did not affect Onesimus. He was after all a human soul, and as such doubtless longed for liberty, and to secure that he stole goods from his master and ran away. He fled to Rome. There Onesimus met Paul. How, we do not know, for Paul was now in prison. There have been several conjectures. It may be that Onesimus

had stolen again when he came to Rome and was incarcerated and in that way met the Apostle; or Onesimus may have met Paul in Colosse, and knowing Paul was in Rome sought him out, as such a class usually do, knowing that if men are true to their religion they will help the needy, and so he comes to Paul; or having found himself in a strange city and remembering the searching words of Paul, which he had heard him speak in Philemon's house, he decided to go to him and tell him his condition and yearning. Anyway Onesimus finds Paul and Paul finds Onesimus, and Onesimus the slave, through the influence of Paul, becomes Onesimus the free man.

The question now comes, What shall Onesimus do? What must he do? Paul tells him that he must return to Philemon his master, and to this end Paul writes this letter which we read this morning as our morning lesson. The letter is so warm, so tender, so courteous and yet withal so firm, that it could not fail to bring to Onesimus a much better condition, if not his complete liberty, even though he had been a thief and a runaway. And perhaps no letter was ever written with more consummate skill and tact. In it, after the introduction of seven verses, in which Paul speaks of their fellowship, his own remembrance of Philemon daily in his prayers, of the joy which Philemon's love and faith had given him, Paul presents the case of Onesimus in a gentle, persuasive way, one argument following another, fourteen in all. One argument follows another, sometimes in words, sometimes in sentences, but none the less arguments and none the less weighty. Paul appeals to Philemon—by what Philemon had done for others. By reason of Paul's power and position to command. By Paul's love for Philemon. By reason of the Apostle's present position. By the spiritual relation existing be-

tween Onesimus and Paul. By the new interest Philemon will have in Onesimus. Again, because Paul denies himself. Because Onesimus is now changed and will abide. Because Onesimus is now Philemon's brother. Because of the communion of saints. Because Paul will pay all Onesimus owes. Because the reception of Onesimus will give Paul joy. And lastly, because of the confidence Paul has in Philemon, "knowing that thou wilt do more than I say." These arguments, their arrangement, their skill, their beauty and their power can all be studied by yourselves, but the letter itself has a higher interest for us this morning, in that it brings before us this great truth, namely, "The transforming power of the spirit of Jesus Christ." The transforming power of the spirit of Jesus Christ we see in the three men mentioned in this letter: in Paul, in Onesimus, and in Philemon.

First, in Paul. Paul was transformed by the very spirit and power of Christ himself, and a more conspicuous example is not to be found in all the word of God. His birth, his nationality, his sect, his training in Tarsus, his education in Jerusalem, all tended to make his outlook narrow, his thought limited, his life self-centered.

Not that he was not a man of pre-eminent ability, trained and learned, but that the tendency of all things around him was not to largeness, fullness and richness of life, but to the opposite, and the result of all his training was, that he knew that he was a Jew and belongs to a privileged nation. He knew that he was a Pharisee and that there were publicans and harlots and sinners below him; he knew that he was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, and that he was exceedingly zealous of the traditions of his fathers. But there came a day and an hour when Paul was transformed, and he was trans-

formed by the power of the spirit of Jesus Christ. And the new Paul was as different from the old Saul as light differs from darkness. Paul was a new creation. Old things had passed away. In name only he was a Jew. In fact he was a *man*, in the largest and best sense of that word. All things had become new, the man himself, his thought, his affections, his will. He was no longer self-centered. He was Christ-centered, for something of the mind and heart and spirit of Christ were his. Nation, sect, self, position, power, preferment, were as nothing to him,—“What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and do count them but refuse, that I may win Christ.”

When a man can write truly such words as Paul could, we realize something of the transforming power of the spirit of Jesus Christ. Transform the man and all will be transformed. Transform him and his thoughts will be clean, his affections will be rightly placed. Transform him and his will will be divinely directed, and there will enter into all his words and works a charitable spirit. Transform him and with the transformation will come a new purpose and the sweet spirit of the Master.

This letter reveals Paul's transformation, in this, that we see the same man, the same character, the same spirit in this letter, this personal letter that was intended for no eye save that of Philemon, the same mind, spirit and character that we discover in the great letter to the Romans. The true man is always true. The truly great man is always great. True in the unseen as the seen. Great in private as in public. Darkness never unmans him. Privacy never reveals duplici-

ty. It is the little and the seemingly insignificant that declare the tone and the tendency of character. We are afraid of men who are one thing to the poor and another thing to the rich ; who are one thing in public and quite another in private ; who are one thing in the light and another in the darkness. Paul was as noble and pure and fearless before Onesimus in prison as he was before Felix or Agrippa. And so I think that we may conclude that the man who has been transformed by the spirit of Christ, and has the unchanging Christ as a present and a living reality, will be the same man in all places, in all things and to all men.

In another respect we see that Paul was changed by the power of Christ. In this—that he took a tender, sympathetic, personal interest in Onesimus, the slave, the thief, the runaway,—the slave that before the law had no personality. Contrast Paul at the stoning of Stephen, and Paul before Onesimus, the slave. He was a Jew there, narrow, bigoted, exclusive. He is a Christian here, large-hearted, liberal, and loving all men. Who has unshackled his mind ? Who or what has unmanacled his heart ? It was the spirit of Christ at the gate of Damascus. The mind and spirit of Christ had become in a measure the mind and spirit of Paul, and Paul could as easily and spontaneously take a tender, sympathetic and personal interest in a slave, even though Onesimus was a thief and a runaway. And wherever you find men taking a tender, sympathetic interest in man *as such*, regardless of place, position or condition, there you may be sure is one whom the larger spirit of the loving Christ has found and changed. Christ changes us ; we do not change ourselves in the depth of our being. That is why Christ took as much kindly interest in the woman taken in sin, in Mary out of whom he cast the seven devils, and the woman at the

well, as he did in Nicodemus, Zaccheus, or the rich young man. It was of small matter to the Christ whether there was purple and fine linen, or only filthy rags without, so long as there was a lost soul within. It was the *man* Christ saw. It was the *man* Paul saw. And it is the *man* we see if we are transformed by the Christ, so that we have his spirit.

Second, the transforming power of the spirit of Christ was seen also in Onesimus. It is wonderful the transformation that took place in Onesimus. He had come to Rome a miserable, fugitive, Phrygian slave, as society looked upon him, the lowest of the low, and the law considered him without personality. Worse even than a slave, he had come to Rome a thief and a runaway. But Onesimus comes to Paul and the spirit of Christ comes to Onesimus and he is transformed, and the slave who, according to Aristotle, could not be the friend of any one, immediately becomes the bosom companion and friend of Paul. And so endeared did Onesimus become to Paul, that Paul writes to Philemon, "Onesimus, whom I have sent back to thee in his own person, that is, my very heart." Again, Paul says, but "more than a servant, a brother beloved especially to me." When we remember the largeness and the richness of Paul's nature, by nature and by grace, we feel that the transformation was truly very great. But surely not greater than has come to many a man since. I recall the name of a man who broke almost every known law of man and God, who became the worst of river pirates, and through the power of the spirit of Christ was changed in prison, and on his release was the means of winning hundreds for Christ. Think of the changes which have come to the cannibal tribes of the Pacific Islands. Think of the changes that will take place in the savage tribes of Africa. As Paul said,

“Onesimus in times past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable.” Onesimus means profitable. Think of the good Onesimus would render to his master in Christian work among his own class.

And is it not true of every man, that he becomes profitable in the highest and truest sense to his day and generation, to those nearest and dearest to him, as he is changed by the Divine Spirit and he lives not in his lowest, but in his highest nature? This thought is beautifully illustrated by Mr. Ruskin in his “Modern Painters.” He tells us that the black mud or slime from the footpath in the outskirts of a certain manufacturing town—the absolute type of impurity—is composed of four elements, clay mixed with soot, a little sand and water. These four may be separated each from the other. The clay particles, left to follow their own instinct of unity, become a clear, hard substance so set that it can deal with light in a wonderful way, and gather out of it the loveliest blue rays only, refusing the rest. We call it then sapphire. The sand arranges itself in mysterious, parallel lines, which reflect the blue, green, purple and red rays in the greatest beauty. We call it then opal. The soot becomes the hardest thing in the world and for the blackness it had it obtains the power of reflecting all the rays of the sun at once in the vividest blaze that any solid thing can shoot. We call it then a diamond. Last of all, the water becomes a dew drop or crystalline star of snow. Thus God can and thus God does transform the imperfect and impure characters of men into a pure and shining jewel fit for his heavenly home.

And again: Third, the transforming power of the spirit of Christ is seen also in Philemon. For Paul writes Philemon as one dearly beloved, as a fellow-worker, also as one who had befriended the saints.

Christ had entered into Philemon and he had come under his power, and he had come out of himself and he had taken a kindly interest in men on his own plane who were in Colosse. But Philemon was to be changed still more. Philemon was to see in Onesimus, and *such* an Onesimus, whom he had regarded simply as a slave, he was to see in him a man, even a brother. The Christian life and the divine truth is progressive. The lower precedes the higher. We grow in grace. We grow in the knowledge of his spirit. Perhaps Philemon, like many a man to-day, had heard much about the true spirit of forgiveness, the spirit of self-denial, the spirit that suffers long and is kind. Philemon knew much about these things, but he did not, after all, know the spirit of forgiveness, self-denial, love for his slave. That was to come now by this same spirit of Jesus. It is easy to love the beautiful, the refined, the clever—that is human. But it takes the power of the living, loving Christ within to cause us to love easily and spontaneously the mean, the unrefined and the stupid. The trouble is that the natural man sees only the natural, the external. Our need is the spiritual, the internal, the eternal, the soul.

Paul does not ask Philemon to free Onesimus, and hence this letter has often been quoted as sanctioning slavery, but Paul asks Philemon to do infinitely more; he asks him to receive Onesimus not as a slave, but as a brother beloved, especially to me, but how much more to thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord. If Philemon received Onesimus as a brother, Onesimus could no longer be a slave. "In Christ there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all and in all." The greater always includes the less. Christianity, instead of attacking special abuses, lays down universal principles, which shall

undermine all evil, social, political and moral. When Christianity has touched and transformed the individual heart, slavery of all kinds, social, political, industrial and moral will go from the world. The slave becomes a man, a brother, as soon as his master is transformed. Before God, whether before the law or society, we are all men. In Christ there is neither bond nor free. And it deepens and dignifies and endears our faith, when we see that it had in the beginning the same power to change men as it has to-day, and it will as truly transform them to-day as then. Would that we all would become like Paul, like Onesimus, like Philemon !

“ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

WELL-DOING.*

BY REV. DANIEL STALKER,†

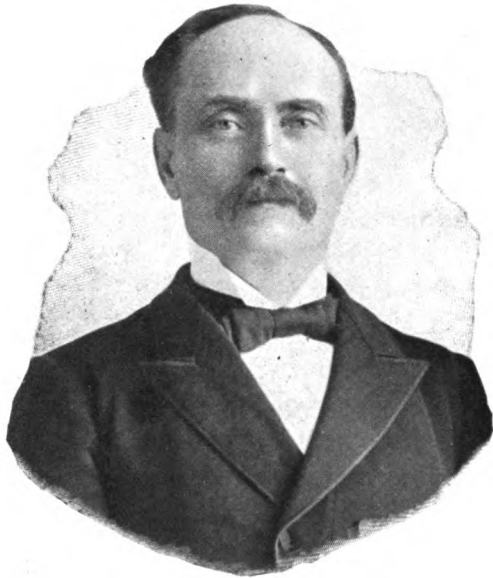
Pastor First Presbyterian Church, Calumet.

Text: "Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Gal. 6:9.

Well-doing is the purpose of our creation, the end of being, and God has endowed us with faculties and given us facilities for the discharge of the duty. For it we have been redeemed, that we might not only live well, but do well. There is a holy pleasure, an inexpressible delight in doing good. Then we are in the line of duty and have the satisfaction that our conduct is well-pleasing to God as well as profitable to man. While engaged in it, we are associated with the best of our race and the highest order of intelligences. Angels are continually engaged in it, and Jesus is our highest example in this respect. His whole life, which John says if written out in full would fill so many volumes that the world itself could not contain them, might be epitomized in the one sentence, "He went about doing good." In this work he lived, for this end he died, this

* Preached before the Presbytery of Lake Superior, April 12, 1898.

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DANIEL STALKER.

drew him down from heaven, this was the joy set before him, and for this he wore the thorny crown and bore his heavy cross. Well-doing will therefore be the supreme business of every faithful Christian, of every true follower of the loving Jesus. It is possible for everyone, however small his talents or limited his opportunities. See the coral reef yonder, encircling the fair isles that lie like bright gems on the bosom of the great Pacific. How contemptible the architects, yet their aggregate labors, how colossal. The ruined walls of Jerusalem were restored by each man, whether his house was a rich palace or a modest cabin, building the portion opposite his own door. The world-renowned pyramids were erected by placing one stone on another. The forests of our country gave way to cornfields and green pasture lands by the toil of our fathers, who felled one tree after another. The great battles which have been fought and won, were won not by the generals alone, but by every soldier in the ranks doing his duty. And if this world is to be won for Christ, it will not be through the efforts of ministers and office-bearers of the church alone, not by the great and noble of earth, but by every member of the church becoming a working member and saying to Jesus, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

Well-doing refers to ourselves and our neighbor, our church and country. It refers to temporal as well as spiritual matters. To-night we will emphasize well-doing with reference to the church, with reference to our duties as ministers, office-bearers and members. We must first make our own calling and election sure, and see to it that our lives harmonize with that of Jesus Christ; for there can be no true service, acceptable to God, while we live in an unregenerate state. We must live near to our Master ere we can influence favorably

the lives of others and render true and loving service. Our fellow-men have claims upon us. We are to promote their highest interests and say to them, "Come thou with us and we will do thee good." The state has likewise claims on our regard, and we should take a deep interest in everything pertaining to its material, social and moral well-being. But our chief concern must be the church of our blessed Redeemer. Its interests must be our interests, its work must be our work, its battles our battles, its achievements our achievements, and its glories will then be our glories. For the church we live, for the church we labor, and God has made contingent on our efforts the progress of the church in the world and its ultimate triumph over every opposing force.

Ours is therefore a most responsible position, and the work the most onerous yet the most glorious in which mortal man can engage. Indeed in extent and boldness of design it has no parallel among all the enterprises of earth. The changes and revolutions it contemplates surpass in importance and grandeur everything within the range of human conception. It aims, and that, too, by the humblest of instrumentalities, by the foolishness of preaching, to change darkness to light, to bring good out of evil, to overthrow the kingdom of Satan and every false system of religion, and substitute therefor the spiritual worship and service of Jehovah. In fact our aim is to conquer this world for Christ. If we only sought to save a single soul, it were a higher and worthier object than any exclusively worldly enterprise engaged in since the creation of this world; but our aim is to save millions of our race, all that countless throng given to Christ in the covenant of redemption. Considering the magnitude of the work, its infinite importance, and our responsibilities, it is

enough to make us tremble, and our text presupposes that there is a possibility, yea a serious danger, of our becoming weary in the work. "Let us not become weary in well-doing."

It is a work great in difficulties. Such mighty changes as have been alluded to are not easily wrought. To raise the dead to life, to bring people into harmony with truth and into subjection to God, so that their views and aims shall be shaped and controlled by the power of the gospel, is no easy matter. The moral renovation of this world is the most difficult task ever undertaken. It is difficult to impress the heart of the careless and awaken their interest. This is the first obstacle that presents itself to us. It meets us at the threshold of our work. The most cogent arguments do not convince, the most fervid appeals do not move, the law with its premonitions of wrath, and the cross with its utterances of mercy, heaven with its proffered joys and hell with its threatened woes do not seem to move or win their hearts.

Worldliness is another obstacle to the success of our work. There are so many whose sole aim in life seems to be the accumulation of wealth. People whose whole time and energy are thus devoted to the things of sense have no heart usually for spiritual matters. They will rise early and sit up late day after day, and when the Sabbath comes with its opportunities for spiritual refreshing and communion with the eternal, they want to rest their fatigued bodies and weary minds to prepare for a continuance of their worldly pursuits. If they come to church, they come as to their bodies, but their hearts and minds, the very things we have to deal with, they leave behind. What an audience to preach to! You go into a court-room where a few dollars are at stake, and all is wakeful interest. You go to a polit-

ical gathering, and the same is true. The people take their hearts with them, and all is life and enthusiasm. But to the sanctuary of the Lord, whither men go up to worship and God comes down to bless; a place where heaven, Christ and the soul are the momentous themes, where one's destiny for eternity may be unalterably sealed; to a place like this many go apparently with little interest to spend a listless hour. Who does not see the preacher's difficulty to arouse such people and maintain their interest until his message is delivered. He dare not attempt it by tricks of oratory or by catering to a vitiated taste. His instructions are too clearly defined, his message too weighty and grave to admit of such expedients; and yet his auditors must be aroused or his work is useless. A deeper consecration and compassion for souls, a higher concern for God's glory may add pathos and power to our utterances and partially correct this evil, but will not entirely remove it. The holiest men that ever took part in this ministry, even he who spake as never man spake, had to contend with the same difficulty. When the world occupies the heart there is no room for Christ or his gospel of love and peace.

The mixed character of our congregations, their varied intelligence and tastes present another obstacle. We have individuals in our churches from almost every country in Christendom, trained in different schools of learning and religion. To meet their wants and mold them as one is no easy matter. Among the professors of religion there are the timid as well as the brave, those who are hopeful and see a bow in every cloud, and those who always look on the dark side and make their tears their meat day and night, and who are always going to destruction until they find themselves in heaven. Among the ranks of the careless there is equal

diversity. One will have no part with the people of God because they are so rigid and exclusive; another because they are so lax and latitudinarian. One calls for one kind of preaching, another for another; one for this kind of reform, another for that, while a third calls for the gospel, meaning by that some kind of general preaching that will meet no existing demand and do no execution.

But the greatest of all discouragements is, not seeing fruit resulting from the labors, so that one is often led to exclaim, "I have spent my strength for nought." He is willing to toil, but he wants to see fruit. He has to stand alone without a word of cheer to inspire him and hold him up, so that he is apt to become faint and weary and give up in despair. Then comes to his mind, through influence of the Holy Spirit, the soul-cheering words of our text, "Let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

Let us briefly reflect on this comforting promise. "In due season we shall reap if we faint not." The more perfect our assurance of ultimate success, the more ready are we to toil and continue steadfast in the face of the most discouraging circumstances. Here there is no room for doubt. Success will be ours in the due season if we only persevere. Jerusalem shall be built, the walls will continue to rise till the copingstone is brought forth and laid amid rejoicings. Only one thing can prevent our work being successful; if we grow weary and become discouraged. But if we persevere unto the end ours will be a glorious harvest. The word of God is full of promises assuring us of success. "Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labors will not be in vain in the Lord." "Every man shall receive

his own reward, according to his own labor." "God will render to every man according to his deeds." Such is the tenor of the whole scriptures. Even the laws which govern the physical world teach us the truth that no effort for God will be in vain. A weight falls to the ground and rests, but the energy of its fall is not terminated; it is merely changed. A drop of dew clings to a blade of grass; decompose it and electricity is freed; in the electricity are heat, motion and light. The drop of dew is not lost, nor is the energy required to decompose it lost, but transposed into new forms. Force may vary, but never diminishes and is never lost. So it is with man; no effort he ever puts forth is lost. Turn either to the physical, mental or moral world and you can never find the grave of energy, the place where the least human effort has been destroyed. Even the selfish deeds of sinful men have been made to praise God; how much more the earnest, loving deeds wrought for him by his children. Our work for God cannot fail.

There are, however, some conditions to be fulfilled to make our work successful. At the outset we must rule out some things frequently considered essential to success; viz., our talents, opportunities and fields of labor. These may make a difference as to the quantity of the harvest, but nothing as to its character; and God looks to quality rather than quantity. Our opportunities have nothing to do with the certainty that our efforts will be successful. For we are not responsible for the place in which we are to labor. We as God's servants are only stewards, sent to care for a certain field. We do not send ourselves. Therefore we are not responsible for the field nor for its productiveness. Again, the reward does not depend on the talents we possess. We are no more responsible for our talents than for our fields of labor. Every man shall receive

his own reward according to his own labor, according to the faithfulness with which he has wrought.

I mention these things because we are apt to let them into the question, and influence our actions. How apt we are to tell ourselves what we would do if we only had great opportunities; but because our field is small and our talents not great, there is no use in putting forth efforts to do much. What has this to do with the reward? Your brother may be more successful as the world considers success, but if you are as faithful and cultivate the field God has given you to the best of your ability, you will as surely receive your reward. God sees not as man sees; faithfulness is what tells with him. This is a thought that ought to be laden with comfort to us all; that the humblest servant of the Master can work on with the assurance of receiving as glorious a reward as the greatest and wisest of earth. Our labor only needs to be truly good to be lastingly great.

If there is encouragement in this thought for the humblest follower of Christ, is there not also for us who are called in a special manner to be ministers of the gospel? We see all this and feel it when we speak to our people, but are we not apt to think that the same truth does not apply to us? We look at the field of another and say, Oh, that I had such a field, how great would be the harvest! My brother, if God' wanted us in any other field he would get us there fast enough. Our work is in the place where we are. It cannot be lost. History may never know our names nor record our deeds. But what of that? They are not therefore lost. The undercurrents of influence will diffuse them and God's providence will send them to their goal.

There is only one condition therefore really necessary to make our work for the Master successful, that

is faithfulness. If we are faithful to our opportunities, small or great, faithful to our work in high or humble sphere of life, faithful to God in doing with our might what our hands find to do, we shall not fail. This is the only requisite to success that God requires in our work for him.

There are other conditions we might mention, viz., full consecration, diligence in the study of God's word, willingness to endure hardness as soldiers of Jesus Christ, and to make sacrifices of time, means and strength for the interests of the Kingdom. The minister of the gospel should never say that he is making sacrifices. He should consider it a privilege and a great honor to spend and be spent for Christ. Think of the sacrifices Christ made for us. Look to the manger in Bethlehem, the agonies of Gethsemane, the railings in Herod's judgment hall, the beloved Redeemer on the cross and his heart breaking for you and me, and then speak of sacrifice! No, we make no sacrifices. We are honored, fathers and brethren, in being privileged to take part in this ministry, to make known to our fellows the sweet story of redeeming love.

Another condition I would mention is sympathy. What the world needs to-day is warm sympathetic hearts. If there ever was a period in the world's history when the church has had a door of usefulness open for her and when the sympathetic, benevolent, loving character of her Master was necessary, now is the time. The church of Rome—full of wisdom—is taking advantage of the crisis. Even societies of infidels and skeptics are organizing for benevolent purposes. Will the Presbyterian church which we love, for which our fathers fought and martyrs shed their blood, be behind in her ministries of love, peace and good-will? It cannot be. Let us in our humble sphere go forth among our people

with full hearts and sympathetic feelings, and prepare for the coming changes. What we need is not more scholarship or refinement, but more heart. In the heart is power.

When shall we reap? Not necessarily now. It will come in the due season. That may be partially in this life, but the full fruition will be in the next. In a certain sense we enjoy the reward as we labor. Is it not a satisfaction that we are in the line of duty, living and acting in harmony with God's will and filling out the plan which he has laid out for us? Yes, we get some bunches of the grapes of Eshcol even as we travel through the wilderness of this life, but it is when we cross the Jordan of death and enter the promised land, and behold our loving Master face to face, and hear from his precious lips the cheering words, "Well done good and faithful servants, enter ye upon the joys of your Lord," that we shall receive the reward in full.

CHRIST'S APPEAL TO MEN.

BY REV. CHARLES E. BRONSON, D. D.,*

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Text: "And Jesus said unto them, come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." Mark 1:17.

I speak to men of the claims of Christ upon them. Our Lord came to save the world. If the world be saved the men in it must be reached. Christ's first disciples were business men. From their work he called them. A few days after the ascension we are told five thousand men believed. Then it was not an unusual thing for men to be converted.

Why is the church to-day everywhere more feminine than masculine? There are various reasons. In Europe the political complications arising from a union of church and state have alienated patriotic men who have been compelled to choose between church and country. Superstitious mummeries stamped with the name of religion have repelled thoughtful men. By these means, in Italy and France the church has largely lost her hold on the men. Everywhere the confessed moral superiority of women gives them more generally

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the necessary qualifications for consistent church membership. Their lives are more sheltered; they have not the temptations; their moral and spiritual elevation is higher. But in America there is quite another cause, incident to our unprecedented industrial development. Not only the church, but the State has suffered from the engrossing of the best manhood of the country in purely business pursuits. The curse of our politics has been that the best men have been unwilling to give time from all-absorbing business to public affairs. So, too, they have had too little time for religion. In these last fifty years in America there has been an unequal development between the religious and the material forces of society. In the unparalleled expansion of our railroads and manufactures, in the sudden peopling of this vast Western Empire business has simply out-paced religion and patriotism alike. This is a commercial age. If Christ were to come once more in the flesh I wonder if again from the holy temple of American men's souls he would not drive out the tables and the money-changers, saying, "My house shall be called a house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves?"

I offer these circumstances as explanation, not excuse. For God will not accept any such answer when a man brings his empty, wasted life to the judgment seat. I mention them singly and show that men have no less respect for religion than of old, nor less conviction that it is their duty to serve Christ. They are absorbed, pre-occupied. It has been the woman's era in reading clubs, art culture, in high schools and churches. It has been in religious work the day of the woman's missionary societies, aid societies, temperance unions, king's daughters and so on. But the church of Christ is awakening. It is the era of men's clubs, boys' brigades, young men's christian associations, brotherhood

of Andrew and Philip. It is the dawn of a new day. Men can no longer claim that they are a neglected class. It is of this present demand of Christ for the lives of men that I speak to-day.

First, men, religion is adapted to you. God made you for himself and himself for you. Original Christianity was masculine. It is a significant fact that the men who through ancient ages stood for religion were not priests or ecclesiastics. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were husbandmen and stock raisers, Moses and David statesmen, Joshua a warrior, Joseph and Daniel great business men and politicians. These without exception were men of affairs, men of the world, dealing with its temptations, binding religion and business together. Neither religion nor humanity has changed; what men once could do, we can do. It is a libel both on religion and humanity to say that business men can not be Christians. Whoso says it, misunderstands both religion and himself.

Original, New Testament, Christ-like Christianity is adapted to men. It will convert men, and do it to-day. And if we are not reaching men it behooves us to ask if it be the true gospel which we preach. The two needs of the day are, first, more business in religion; more of the directness, energy, adaptation of means to definite ends, concentration of purpose in the Lord's business which we see in secular affairs. And second, more religion in business. More of that righteousness, truth and love one for another which our Lord meant should govern the transactions between man and man. We want the Cross in the market place. No earnest man can walk the crowded wharves of our seaport cities, view the many-windowed factories whose roar drowns the peal of the church bells, or see those tremendous sky-scraping business blocks which make

dark tunnels of our thoroughfares, or dwarf the church steeple into insignificance, without asking, "What is to become of this civilization? What is to be its effect on the character of men? Shall these many-cogged wheels, as in Ezekiel's vision, be filled with the spirit of God, and all this machinery with its vast power be servant unto Christ? Shall Christ lay his hand on these mighty forces of modern life?" The church is here to save in the name of her Lord, not a few survivors from a wreck, but to face an enemy which has invaded her native inheritance and bring this *world* to Christ. This world is God's.

Again, business men, you ought to be Christians because God has given you such magnificent opportunities. America to-day is the paradise of business men. Their opportunities here are unequaled in the history of the world. As Palestine is the holy land of religion, America is the holy land of commerce. Here it is worshiped. Here business men are honored. In society and in public life the leading men are our business men. England, the greatest rival we have, looks down upon trade. Her nobility do not touch it. But here we canonize our captains of industry. They are our patron saints. The brightest boys look to business. As in ancient Tyre, our merchants are our princes. Now, there is a religion of the office and store as well as of the pulpit. There is surely a religion of devotion and prayer, and there is a religion of action. By the definition of the founder of our faith, "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord (in prayer) shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that *doeth* the will of my Father which is in heaven."

You business men have a work to do for God which no minister, however eloquent, can do. Next to being a preacher of righteousness is the privilege of being a

Christian business man. You are out in the currents which are giving direction to modern life. You can turn them toward heaven. You can preach to hundreds of men who never darken a church door; and you can live so that men who distrust all professional heralds of salvation shall say, "There is something genuine in Christianity." In this community there are names of business men as fragrant and as saintly as any minister's who ever dwelt here.

Perhaps too much emphasis has been laid on the feminine elements in religion—on meekness, patience, charity. Perhaps the devotional side of faith has been italicized at the expense of the practical, what I may term the "italics" of religion rather than the "dynamics," which issue in deeds, and to-day I plead for a revival of the religion of action alongside of prayer; the faith which goes forth into the world and cuts timber, digs in mines, transacts business for the glory of God. I say it reverently, God is the Great Manufacturer, the great Business Manager of the universe. Men who speak for religion have too often disparaged commerce. The fate of the world's future is bound up with it. Business men, God has given you a great opportunity.

Another reason why you men should be Christians is because of the power of your example. The young man's ideal is not the minister nor the missionary, but the self-made, energetic, successful man of business. The boys point him out to each other on the streets. They discuss his history and successes. They are proud of him. They want to be like him. They copy him. I repeat, the ideal of the young men of America to-day is the successful man of business, and if you are careless and indifferent or hostile to the religion of Jesus Christ, they will probably be so, too. Your lives tell more than all our sermons. We may preach to

young men as often as we please and hold up to them the noblest ideals, but so long as they go out on the street and see the strongest men in the community denying the claims of God, they will deny them, too. I say it advisedly, you men are determining the character of the young men of this city. What the men of the twentieth century are to be you business men are now settling. God will hold you responsible for the future careers of these boys in our Sunday Schools, and these clerks in your stores, for you *are* responsible. It is a solemn thing to preach the gospel; God will hold us responsible for doing it. But you, too, are moulding character, and God will demand an accounting from you.

We cannot teach in the Sunday School or church one half so forcefully as you teach by your example, and if you are conducting that business of yours in defiance of the laws of God, do not be surprised if the young men who see in you habits of evil become evil themselves. The weak points of successful men are the most dangerous influence in any community. If the secrets of our insane asylums, poor houses, prisons and potters' fields could be disclosed, of how many a blasted, ruined life would it be said, "Ruined by the bad example of successful men." A strong man, nurtured in the school of adversity, who fights his way to success, has acquired a stability which resists his vice. But the young men, themselves weak, copying his weaknesses, soon make shipwreck. I thank God for the noble example of such men as General Howard, Benjamin Harrison, James A. Garfield, John Wanamaker and Chauncey Depew, showing our young men that it is possible to reach the highest posts in business and politics, and preserve the Christian character at the same time.

Once more, men. You need religion because you have peculiar temptations. The business world is full

of tricks and dishonesties. Every honest man has competitors who dwell in that shadowy borderland between knavery and honesty called "sharp practice." Shrewdness is the name with which the devil sometimes baptizes roguery. "So and so is a shrewd fellow" means, perhaps, that he is a rascal too clever to get into jail, and in order to secure that success for which you work, you are tempted to stoop and meet these men on their own ground. There is a constant tendency to crowd the commandments; to break the Sabbath; to state a fact a little one-sidedly; to take advantage of another's weakness or necessity; to falsify. "Do these goods wash?" enquired a woman of a Boston dry goods clerk. "They did before the Moody meetings," was the reply. Not a day of your lives but there comes a temptation to do something or say something wrong. "Business is business" is the motto wherewith you seek to justify it. But write on the top of every page of your ledger and day book, "Thou God seest me," and if out there in the business of life this religion you have does not keep you honest and truthful, over with it. It is a sham. Down on your knees and cry, God be merciful to me a sinner! If you cannot be a Christian and do the business in which you are engaged, get out of that business. In the presence of the great God your profession of faith will shrivel as tow in the furnace. It is not necessary to be a rogue to be rich. But if it were, I honor the man who has the courage to fail; for integrity and honor are above all price. And no man fails who keeps these. How God at last will write any man's epitaph with four letters, Fool! who buys wealth at the cost of character! It is idle to say that because I am a business man I cannot be a Christian. This world is God's world. Its business is his business, and business will never be rightly done till it is

done as he orders it. No man has a right to administer a bank, a railroad, a factory or a store save as Jesus bids. It is just as much your duty to arrange your business in conformity to the New Testament as it is for me to order this pulpit so. God will hold you to every variation from his holy law there, as he will me here.

Again, business men should be Christians because they have peculiar need of faith and courage. The difference between success and failure is oftentimes the ability to stand a strain; to be courageous and hopeful when everything looks dark; in the presence of unexpected danger to preserve the calm judgment, the serene balance, the quiet confidence which enables a man to use every resource there is in him. It is the ability to hold out and to hold on which every successful man needs. And it is because it is precisely these crowning elements of success which Christian faith gives us that men need personal religion. Then you can carry every burden to God and leave it with him; you can lie down at night and sleep sweetly, however stormy the financial sky. Your chiefest riches are not in the bank. Your best possessions are not the bonds and shares. It will not drive you to suicide if you lose these. It is the disheartened, discouraged man who fails. But if worst comes to worst the Christian can be happy.

Finally, men, you ought to be Christians because God has laid a mighty responsibility upon you. The battle of Christianity is not to be fought in the pulpit. The real question is, can we Christianize society, business and politics? Can we baptize the dynamo and the Cunarder? Can we make the great powers of modern industrial life subservient to the good of all men and the glory of God? Shall the steam engine be a servant of

Christ, or only a speedier vehicle to destruction? Can we make the factory Christian? Can men be foundrymen, railroad men, bankers, merchants, lawyers, and embody in their daily life the spirit and the commands of our Lord Jesus Christ? The one question, dominating all others is, can we translate the Sermon on the Mount and St. John xiv and xv into every-day life? If these are not practical, good for the battles of life, just what we want in its cares and evils—we want none of them. If religion is of no use in your office and store, it is of no use in your sick room and at your funeral. If the life which Jesus sets up can not be lived on Broadway and Wall St., it is of no use in this church. God makes not holiness and truth for Sundays; impurity and lies for Mondays. He has not enacted the decalogue for the sanctuary; knavery for the counters. The church is the armory, camp, hospital. Out there is the battle—the world. The real work of religion is to go forth from the church and plant the spirit and law of Christ in society, business, politics, and make this whole earth one vast cathedral whose streets shall be the aisles, and the hum of whose factories shall be hymns of praise to almighty God.

On you men depend the hospitals, libraries, colleges, the founding of missions at home and abroad. Yours are the resources on which all these uplifting agencies depend. Ask yourself honestly this question, not only "What am I making out of my business?" but "What sort of a man is my business making out of me?" For answer it to God one day you must. The old church of the Holy Ghost in Heidelberg pictures the first ideal society. Grouped beneath its broad eaves and supported by its massive granite walls are the shops of scores of traders, where year after year the hum of business and the voices of buyers and sellers

are heard. But within, the great heart of the whole, is the sanctuary and altar of God, with the spire over all pointing to heaven, whence come the voice of prayer and praise; these two in beautiful, blended harmony, mutually supporting, interacting one upon the other, religion and business, Christ and men; built together in loving unity, interpenetrating, together fashioning character, subduing the world, bringing men to God.

Do not live for money. You need Christ. "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or, what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

HUMILITY.

BY REV. DAVID M. COOPER, D. D.,*

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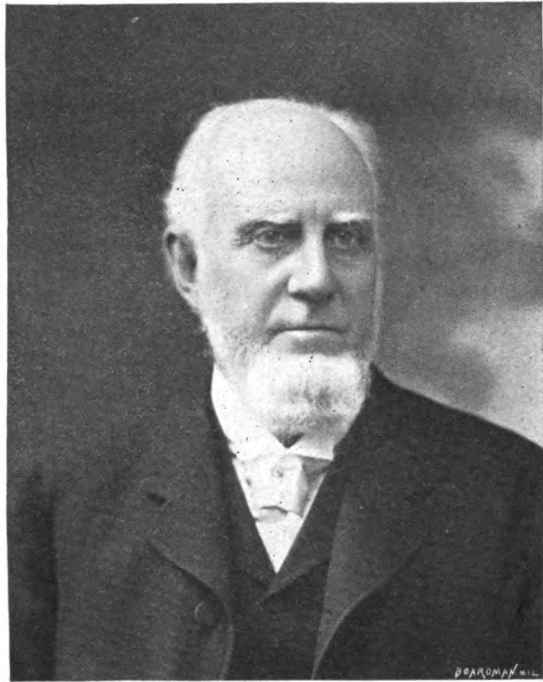
Text: "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." Luke 14:11.

Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, was once asked what was the first thing in religion. He replied, "The first thing is humility, the second is humility, the third is humility." This uniform answer to the thrice-repeated question would almost seem to have been suggested to Augustine by the fact that our Savior on three different occasions repeated our text, as if he, too, regarded humility as the first, second and third thing in religion.

I propose to speak of humility first, in a general way as a natural trait in a man's character, and then, second, of humility God-ward, or of evangelical humility, and its reward. Putting it in a negative way with a view to remove some popular misapprehensions concerning its nature, I remark :

1. Humility is not cringing, fawning sycophancy ;

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i. e., it is not ignoble self-abasement after the pattern of Uriah Heep. It is not synonymous with meanness of spirit. This is a mistake often made and is as old as the race. Celsus labored under this misconception. He describes the humble man as a creature ever on his knees or rolling in the dust—a man who dressed meanly and sprinkled himself with ashes. A certain station-master in England was noted for his conceit and flunkeyism. One day he descried a gentleman pacing the platform and smoking a cigar. As this was contrary to the regulations, he requested him to stop. The gentleman paid no attention to the order, but continued his walk. The station-master becoming irritated, his demand came more peremptory, and the walker correspondingly indifferent. A third time was the command made to halt, this time accompanied with the threat to turn him over to the porters. The gentleman paid no attention to the threat. The station-master then approached and pulled the cigar from his mouth and flung it away. The violent act had no more effect than the commands or threats. But presently a carriage and four appear—the equipage of the Duke of Beaufort. To his great dismay the refractory smoker entered the carriage. In tremulous tones the station-master inquires the name of the stranger. “Viscount Palmerston, K. C. B., First Lord of the Treasury.” Quickly he orders a chaise, drives post-haste to Barington, requests a private interview, abjectly apologizes for grossly insulting his lordship. The premier stood with his hands in his pockets and heard him patiently, but looking sternly all the while, and then replied, “Sir, I respected you because I thought you were doing your duty like a Briton, but now I see you are nothing but a snob.” Now, neither God nor the gospel require such obsequiousness as this. The station-

master doing his duty in his station was as much a man—every inch of him—as the premier doing his duty in his sphere as minister of state, and neither need apologize to the other for doing his duty, even if it involved the necessity of personal rebuke.

“Little Charlie,” you recollect, in “Sea Board Parish,” was not required to make a formal apology or to beg his parents’ pardon when he came looking both good and ashamed, confessing his wrong in the act of holding up his face for the good-night kiss—a kiss bestowed the more tenderly than usual that the dear child might understand that it was all right between them. “It is a terrible thing,” remarks McDonald, “to run the risk of changing humility into humiliation.”

2. It is not *self-depreciation*, which is often nothing more than “vexed pride.” The Apostle’s rule is a good one, Rom. 12:3: “I say to every man that is among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think;” which assumes that a man may form a just estimate of himself. The poet Burns showed practical wisdom, good sense and real humility when in a confidential letter to Dr. Moore he says of himself: “It was ever my opinion that the mistakes and blunders, both in a rational and religious point of view, of which we see thousands guilty, are owing to their ignorance of themselves. To know myself has been all along my constant study. I weighed myself alone. I balanced myself with others. I watched every means of information to see how much ground I occupied as a man and as a poet. I studied assiduously nature’s design in my formation—where the lights and shades in character were intended.” “I acknowledge,” remarks Horace Bushnell, “the difficulty of ascertaining one’s true valuation, but I believe no safer rule than this can be given: to take the good opinions of others for granted till we see

reasons for the contrary. It is folly to think of succeeding in life without some pretensions. A man must begin to hold up his own head or no one will see him to be worth the pains." The "honorable man" spoken of in the parable was one evidently deserving the appellation, and though he did not seek a higher place, yet when told by the master of the feast to ascend and take it, he did so promptly, and received worship in the presence of those who were at meat with him. Now had he refused the bidding of the master to ascend, or removed from a lower to the lowest room on the ground of personal unworthiness, he would have laid himself open to the suspicion of having done this in order to fix the gaze of the whole company upon himself as an example of extraordinary humility; whereas it would have been an act of the most intolerable and offensive pride, the grossest counterfeit of humility. Had George Washington, instead of accepting the position of commander-in-chief tendered him by the Continental Congress depreciated his military capacity and refused the honor—had Gen. Grant refused to obey the telegraphic summons to repair at once to Washington to receive his commission as Lieut. General, commanding all the forces of the Union—had Gen. Meade, though astounded at his promotion to the command of the army of the Potomac on the very brink of a great battle, done anything else than accept the trust in sincere, modest and fit words—had Morse declined the banquet tendered him by the nation in honor of his great invention—each and all of these honorable men, had they held back when told to go up higher and have worship in the presence of all the people, would not only have exhibited counterfeit humility, but would have ignominiously shirked a positive duty.

So far from its being right under the expectation of

humility to depreciate one's real worth, it is wrong not to desire the good opinion of others. The inspired injunction with reference even to a preacher of the Word is that he should be a workman that needeth not to be ashamed to be spoken well of "by those who are without." Canon Kingsley said: "When a man tells me that he does not care what people think of him, in the first place I do not quite believe that he is speaking truth; and in the next place I hope he is not speaking truth. I hope for his own sake that he does care what people think of him; or else I must suspect him of being very dull or very conceited. St. Paul was a man who was intensely sensitive of what men thought or said of him, yearning after the love and approbation of his fellow-men. And I say that of all men the Lord Jesus Christ, the son of man, had that feeling, that longing for the love and appreciation of men, and above all for the love and appreciation of his countrymen according to the flesh, the Jews. He had, (strange as it may seem, yet there it is in the gospels written forever and undeniable,) that capacity for shame which is the mark of true nobleness of soul."

3. Humility never forbids the firm maintenance of all our personal rights, although it may sometimes require us to waive conceded rights out of regard for our neighbor's good or the glory of God. This Paul did when he refused to accept compensation for ministerial service, while yet he claimed it as his lawful due. The primary rights of a human being as defined by reliable authorities are the rights, first, to personal security, second, to personal liberty, third, to private property—all admirably summed up in our Declaration of Independence, "the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Now, humility does not forbid the maintaining

all these rights before courts of law. Paul planted himself on his dignity and rights as a Roman citizen and appealed to the law. Our modern missionaries have been often forced to do the same. Jesus Christ when brutally struck on the face did not literally turn the other cheek, but in the dignity of his true manhood said, "If I have spoken evil bear witness of the evil, but if well, why smitest thou me?" Luther more frequently discouraged than stimulated the warlike zeal of his friends who after Zwingli's fashion would have appealed to arms. Yet on March 3, 1522, Luther escaped from his asylum and with a sword by his side and in Yunker George's doublet arrived at Wittenberg fully determined to oppose and put down those disturbers of the peace, the Wittenberg iconoclasts. "Luther," remarks Fisher, "never appeared more grand than at this moment."

I now proceed to consider humility God-ward, or evangelical humility and its reward.

1. Evangelical humility requires us to believe what God says about ourselves; i. e., about our moral condition, for this is about all the Bible undertakes to do. It does not undertake to satisfy our curiosity or to open up to us a way to wealth or to make us scholars. It simply announces to us that we are lost and tells us how we may be saved. God tells us we are condemned, that we need a pardon, that there is no escape from death save through the blood.

Now all this is repugnant to carnal human nature. The whole race is at war with this humiliating doctrine, and always has been. They are too proud and self-sufficient to accept it. Such a declaration is in direct opposition to all Carlyle-Emersonian twaddle about our being "part" and "particle" of God; about God's coming to self-consciousness in individual men—coming

to himself in the greatest men—heroes in whom all lesser men see and worship God. It is opposed to the notion of some hidden nobleness in the soul that only needs development by culture to make it God-like—opposed to the much lauded humanitarian gospel of the present day with its fundamental dogma about the dignity and perfectibility of human nature.

True humility accepts the situation, though it stains the pride of human reason. Humility in this sense is peculiarly a Christian virtue, as self-sufficiency was pre-eminently the characteristic of all ancient philosophies.

2. Evangelical humility requires us not only to believe what God says, but to do what God commands. We must obey, whether told to go up or come down. When God invites, we are to come, and come, too, in the way he tells us to come. Pride would plead unworthiness and frame its own way. Humility submits to his righteousness and goes in the revealed way. Even when summoned to a higher place we are to go, despite our conscious unworthiness. The Prodigal would fain have taken his place among the “hired servants,” but when told by a loving father to array himself in the “best robe,” and to put on the “ring” and the “shoes,” he must do it. If the father will place him among the “sons,” he can do no otherwise than accept the honor.

Obedience is humility, and sometimes the strongest evidence we can give of our humility. Like Mary of old we must receive the exceeding honor as meekly as the poverty, and say, “Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it unto me according to thy word.” When Louis xiv would put the politeness of Chesterfield to the test he stood at his carriage door and made a signal for the nobleman to enter before him, who at once obeyed. “That,” said the king, “is a more refined politeness

than most men would have shown." Dr. Johnson, when asked whether he made any reply to a high compliment paid him by the king, replied, "No, sir! When the king hath said it, it must be so. It was not for me to bandy civilities with my sovereign." It was when Thomas Wingford, curate, was meditating on the words, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say," that he made that fatal discovery of the hollowness of his preaching. "Good God," he exclaimed, "here am I bothering over words and questioning about this and that as if I were testing his fitness for a post I had to offer him, and he all the time claiming my obedience. I cannot even, on the spur of the moment at least, tell one thing he wants me to do; and as to doing anything because he told me—not once did I ever." And thus in that confession that so startled his congregation he proceeded to show that faith and obedience are one and the same spirit, passing, as it were, from room to room in the same heart; what in the heart we call faith, in the will we call obedience, and showed that the Lord absolutely refused the faith that found its vent at the lips in worshipping words, and not in the limbs in obedient action.

One of the most beautiful exemplifications of true gospel humility on record is that given by Archbishop Whately on his death bed. He was surrounded, so it appeared, by obsequious flatterers. Said one, "You are dying as you lived, great to the last." Repudiating such ill-timed flattery, and with that humility which always accompanies true greatness he replied, "I am dying as I have lived, in the faith of Jesus." Another in the same strain, making a covert appeal to his vanity, said, "What a blessing that your glorious intellect is unimpaired." "Do not call intellect glorious, there is nothing glorious out of Christ." By this time surely

the holy man must have been filled with inward disgust, but yet a third trial awaited him, for still another stupid flatterer said, "The great fortitude of your character now supports you." "No, it is not my fortitude of character that supports me, but my faith in Christ." Contrast with this the self-sufficiency of another man who lived, made himself a name in both hemispheres, and died boasting of his "Socratic brain." I mean Theodore Parker. What we have called his self-sufficiency his admirers euphonize into self-consciousness. Call it what you please. It was a blind pride of intellect that unlike Whately's humility would not believe himself to be the sinful creature God in his word declared him in common with us all to be, and disdainfully refused obedience to his revealed will. It was a pride of intellect that ignored a God he could not fathom with his logic, which led him to venerate Theodore Parker more than the prophets and apostles—to believe his own writings on the absolute religion to be incomparably ahead of the Bible. It was a pride of intellect which led him to set himself up as the critic and judge of Jesus Christ, and made him so envious of the exaltation of the Redeemer that he refused homage to that name which is above every other name.

We now pass to consider the reward our Savior attaches to humility. It is exaltation. But does not the expectation of a reward vitiate our humility and transform it into selfishness? Not at all, if God himself affix the reward. Christ was humble, yet for the suffering of death was crowned with glory and honor. Moses had respect to the recompense of reward. The prodigal did not return for the sake of the reward; yet if the father chose to exalt him to sonship, who was he in his rags and dirt that he should refuse? The Christian

is conscious that he does not serve God for the sake of the recompense, but if by a sublime necessity God has attached happiness to that service, who is he that he should reject the reward or find fault with the arrangement? If the Grand Master of the feast tells us to "come up higher," and bids us "Come! taste of my supper as a gracious reward for humble obedience and faithful service here," we will with rapturous joy do as we are bidden—for as we told you, obedience is the truest humility. As Celsus, already quoted, had no conception of true humility, so neither had he any just conception of true loftiness. How humility or self-abasement (in his view) could be the condition of man's exaltation was beyond his comprehension. No Greek ever could understand it, for the humility of Greek piety forbade man to entertain lofty views of his destiny. Hence, as is well known, the New Testament writers not finding a suitable word in the Greek language to express the idea of Christian humility, were obliged to coin one for their own especial use. But Christianity harmonizes these seeming contradictions. Christ solves the problem: "Whosoever will be great among you let him be your minister." Olshausen says, "The distinction between *great* and *small* which exists in the world is not abolished in the kingdom of God. But another and different rule prevails in regard to great and small, master and servant. In the world power and understanding are the measure of authority. In the kingdom it is *love*." This love the Lord, in the fourteenth chapter of Luke, now commends to his disciples in contrast with the self-exaltation of Pharisees. And to teach just this, viz., how to be truly great, Jesus came into the world—to teach us what the world never knew, and untaught can never learn. No man save Jesus Christ was ever truly great. True greatness

cannot be attained in that ascendancy acquired by transcendent power.

Splendid achievements, noble deeds, whether in the domain of worldly thought, art or action, will not secure it, but rather is it found in such touching instances of humble ministering love as is recorded of him who in the full consciousness of his divine origin condescended to wash his disciples' feet. Ullmann remarks: "By this consummating act of love he bore testimony to the truth that he regarded the perfection of life as consisting in the service of love."

" Jesus ! who deem'dst it not unmeet
To wash thine own disciples' feet,
Though thou wert Lord of all ;
Teach me thereby this wisdom meek,
That they who self-abasement seek
Alone shall never fall."

Now, very likely when we attempt to put all this into practice Satan will insinuate as he did to Christian in Pilgrim's Progress, when he went down into the valley of humiliation, that in going down so low we are going out of the way of influence and usefulness. That bold villain, *shame*, perhaps will haunt us and whisper continually vile things in our ears as, for instance, that nothing great can be accomplished for God in the valley; it is only going into darkness or out of the world—that but few of the mighty or rich or wise were ever of our opinion, nor any of them before were persuaded to be fools and venture the loss of all for nobody else knows what. And discontent will persuade us, if possible, to go back with him, for the valleys were altogether without *honor*—that there to go was the way to *disobey* all our friends, as pride, arrogancy, self-conceit

and worldly glory, with others whom he knew would be very much offended if we made such fools of ourselves—that such lights as ours ought to be set on a very tall candlestick. To all these solicitations our uniform reply should be: “Before honor is humility.” You recollect how once upon a time one of those pastors who thought he ought to be “set on a taller candlestick,” wrote a letter to the late Dr. Austin Phelps, complaining that he was “throwing himself away in a shoe-town.” Dr. Phelps remarks, “Very well; he could not probably make a better throw. If he saves a ‘shoe-town’ morally he lifts it up intellectually to an immense altitude. In the process of doing that he lifts his own mind to a level of culture and of power which no conservatism of refinement ever rises high enough to overlook. Do not the first ten inches of an oak from the ground measure as much in height as the last ten of its topmost branch? When will the ministry learn that the ‘place where’ has very little concern with the intellectual worth of the work done? The uplifting anywhere is essentially the same, but with the chances of success all in favor of lifting low down. To the mind of Christ the whole world is a ‘shoe-town’ intellectually. If a man is swaying a promiscuous assembly every week, albeit they have waxed and grimy hands; if he is really moving them, educating them by the eternal thoughts of God up to the level of those thoughts—he is doing a grander literary work, with more power at both ends of it, than if he were penned in and held down by the elite of a city or the clique of a university. He is plowing a deeper furrow and subsoiling the field of all culture. The reflex influence of his work upon his own development is more masculine. He is nobler for it in intellectual being. There is more of him in the end. He has more to show

for his life work and more of himself to carry into eternity."

And now again, if any, dissatisfied with the general declaration that the reward of humility is exaltation, long for a more minute detail of what goes to make up that exaltation, I can only respond as did the shining ones who escorted Christian and his companion over the river and up to the city, that the beauty of the place is inexpressible. With the immortal dreamer we watch the two men as they enter the gate. We behold them immediately transfigured and clothed with raiment that shines like gold. Hark! We hear all the bells of the city ring for joy and the royal salutation, "Enter ye into the joy of the Lord." We even hear the pilgrims themselves singing with a loud voice, "Blessing, honor, glory, power be to him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb forever." Eager to discover all we possibly can before those "portals thick with sparkling gems" swing to again and obstruct our vision, we bend forward and peer through the "gates ajar" and see a city that shines like the sun—streets also that are paved with gold and in them walking many men with crowns of gold on their heads—with palms in their hands and golden harps to sing withal. Those are also of them that have wings and they answer one another without intermission saying, Holy! Holy! is the Lord—and after that they shut the gates which, when we see, we wish ourselves among them and sigh, Oh, God! that we were there! "Then Peter said, Lo! We have left all and followed thee; what shall we have therefor?" What shall we have therefor? Ah, Peter! Peter! with thy lingering worldliness and visions of earthly pomp and glory! Thou shalt indeed be rewarded, but not in the way thy carnal heart doth expect. But not you disciples alone—not you disciples alone sitting upon your thrones judg-

ing the twelve tribes of Israel; for hearken to thy master: "Verily, verily! Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold and shall inherit everlasting life."

THE CENTRAL FIGURE OF HISTORY.

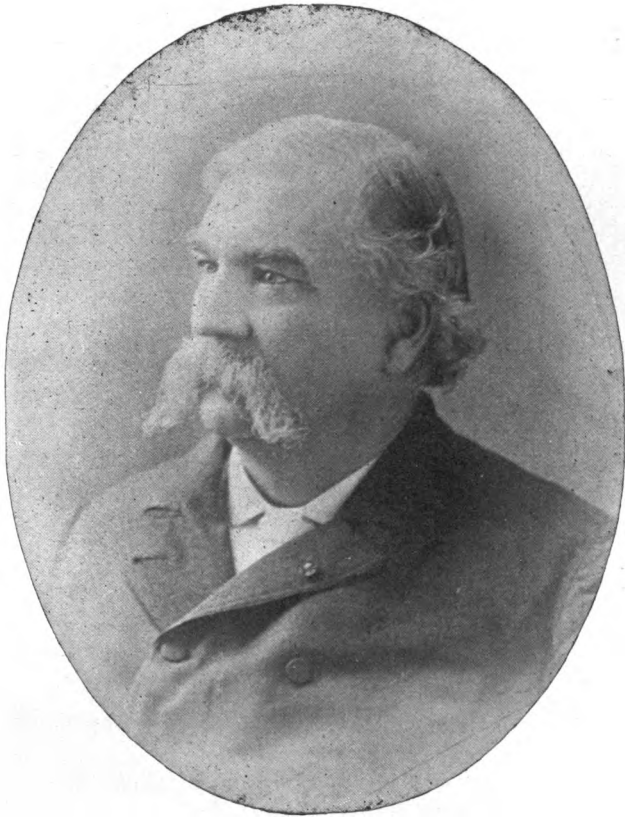
BY REV. GEORGE F. HUNTING, D. D.,*

Pastor First Presbyterian Church, Marshal, Mich.

Text: "And sitting down, they watched him there." Matt. 27:36.

The place is Golgotha, or Calvary, a bald, skull-shaped mound or hillock, a little outside the walls of Jerusalem. The persons brought into the foreground as the "they" of the text, are the four Roman soldiers who acted as the executioners on the occasion to which the text refers. Three crosses bear three dying victims. Two are barely noticed by the historian, though one of them in most significant words, and then both are lost sight of. The third, the "him" of the text, is the central figure of that group, and not less the central figure of the world's history. Let those four Roman soldiers represent the four quarters of the earth and the text is still true. "And sitting down, they watched him there." That chief sufferer had said but a little

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while before, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Let the words be used in the sense of attracting and holding the attention of the world and how thoroughly they have been fulfilled.

With an interest sometimes half careless, sometimes intense, the millions of Christendom are to-day watching that central figure on Calvary, and through well nigh nineteen centuries the gaze of the most enlightened peoples on earth has been fixed upon this one object. A cruel or a tearful fascination has held them to the sight. Derisive mocking and reverent worship, satanic hate and saintly love, have been called forth by the spectacle, but all alike, whether to vilify or adore, have been *held* by its power. Through all the ages each nation in its time has had its own heroes upon whom its eyes have been for a season fixed. Moses, Abraham and David, the Ptolemies, the Caesars and the Stuarts, the Bourbons and the Bonapartes, Wellington and Washington, are the names by which we recall a few of those who have in their time been lifted up above their fellows, and who have through love or fear made themselves illustrious or notorious and then passed away. Only two or three stars of the first magnitude have retained in any degree their original brightness in the great constellation—and this with all the telescopic power of history to magnify and bring them near us.

But while each of those named in turn has risen and shone, and set, and faded, the name and fame of him who hung upon that central cross has risen on the vision of far-sighted prophets, touched the earth with its glory, tempered and veiled that human eyes might bear its brightness, and now shines on from the zenith of its exaltation, a central sun, around which, held to their orbits by its attractive power, all worlds revolve.

My hearers, how do you form your judgment as to the character of men? You doubtless reply, "By long observation." And what does that word "long" mean, as you use it? At the very utmost stretch a hundred years, and your judgment is based, in all ordinary cases, upon less than half that period. For fifty years you have watched your neighbor and you think you know him well. You have watched him coolly and deliberately. You have noted the development of his character under all the varied circumstances of an eventful life. In sunshine and in storm you have studied the man's life, and you are to-day positive and pronounced touching that man's character. If any call your judgment in question you meet them with the reply, "I *know* that man." If the character has borne the test of fifty years' watching, if it has shone untarnished through all these years, you hold and assert, and all the world cannot shake your faith in your assertion, "That is a clean life."

Let us dare for a moment, as an accommodation to our weakness, to bring *him* down to this human test. "And sitting down, they watched him there." For almost nineteen hundred years we have been watching him. In all possible circumstances of life we have seen him. Nay, but we have not seen him, says one, we know of him only through history. Did you ever see Washington? Have you any doubt as to the excellence of his character, as to the purity of his life? How many of you ever saw Abraham Lincoln? Possibly a score, probably not half that number. Is there more than one voice among you touching his character? I repeat, in all possible circumstances of life we have *seen* him who hung upon that central cross, and have seen him for more than eighteen hundred years. Did you say you formed your judgment as to character by *long*

observation? Have you had time enough, my brother, to observe the God-man, Christ Jesus, and to form an opinion of his character? Have you had time enough?

We are all among the number who have been watching the Christ through the years that have passed since we began to think for ourselves. How have we watched him? That is, with what motive? Have we been through all these years looking only for the beauties and excellences of his character that we might imitate them and make our own lives like his; or have we been watching him to criticise, to find flaws and imperfections in his life, that we might belittle him, weaken his claims upon our affections, and so find an excuse for rejecting him? Somebody has discovered that in one of the beautiful engravings of Evangeline there are five fingers on one of the hands. I am sorry such a mistake should have marred the work of the artist, but with such a face before me as that which I associate with Longfellow's beautiful creation, I am so *held* that I cannot get away from that longing, loving, patient, sad face long enough ever to think about that possibly imperfect hand. I don't care what the hand is, so long as I have that face before me, and I am glad there is power even in a picture to lift one out of that lowest form of criticism which finds on every beautiful face a pimple, and in every landscape some microscopic mote to offend the eye.

The passion play is before me. The acting is perfection. The limbs writhe. The flesh of the sufferer quivers with agony. The blood drips from the cruel wounds. The moans and groans of the dying Christ pierce my ear. I am absorbed, fascinated, enraptured, held by the awful sight. But see! there is a flaw in that blood-stained wood, a crack in the timber just there, and by reason of that one flaw, through that

one little crack, my interest ~~comes~~ away and my memory of the wondrous play is only that of an imperfection in the upright of that cross! What is the spirit in which we are looking at the Crucified? The fair, broad, beautiful brow, the deep blue eyes, the golden hair, the finely rounded limbs, the delicate white hand with its taper fingers; are these the things we think of? Nay, verily. Were he only a man, these physical features might fill the mind, but he is God and our unutterable thought refuses to be analyzed or subdivided, but gathering in one all-comprehending glance the divine conception of the Messiah, we bear away that conception to the secret place and worship there the *whole* Christ. We have drawn our illustrations from man's imperfect work. There is a point where the illustrations do not touch. This God-man, Christ Jesus, whom we are watching, is absolute perfection. There is no flaw to divert the attention. Long years of watching have only intensified our admiration for that character, and the longer we look to-day the more eager we are to come again tomorrow and gaze until the soul is lost in wonder, love and praise.

Some of us are conscious that a refining, purifying, elevating influence has come to us as individuals through our long watching of him who hung upon that central cross. To some among us that watching has grown into an absorbing study. No hasty, casual glance at him who hangs there has satisfied the hunger of the soul, but we, like the Roman soldiers, are sitting down and so have sat these years with eager eyes and yet more eager thought fixed upon that face and form which embody our hope and the hope of the world. The nations are but an aggregation of individuals, and they, in something more than a figurative sense, are sitting down to-day to a deliberate study of that one chief figure

of history, and the story of our race is very largely a record of the changes wrought upon the life, external and internal, of those lookers-on. Here sit, a little withdrawn from the rest of the world, the group known as the enlightened nations of the earth. They are not a little exclusive in their relations to the surrounding peoples, but they are beginning, within this current century, to feel a little the binding force of that tie of brotherhood which is pushed to the front whenever and wherever the uplifted soul whispers, "Our Father." Long, persistent study of that face which shines out through the clouds of Calvary has tempered the selfishness which so long forgot the wants and claims of others, and see how they are melting into oneness of sympathy and effort to reclaim the lost ones of a weeping world. Watch the features of that group as they sit gazing upward and yielding their long-stubborn souls to the moulding power of that appealing, pleading face. Pride, avarice, self-indulgence were there but yesterday, cold and hard. To-day they are a little softened. Those tender, pitying eyes of the loving Christ have reached that hardness and it yields; the ice melts and one little drop of charity, warmed by that sun's bright beams, falls into God's treasury to relieve that heathen need away yonder. A new conception of duty has entered that nation's heart, and other kindred drops uniting with that first token of change, a stream of love goes out through a hundred channels to bless the sad millions. They have waited long to hear that which has reached them only to-day, the story of that central cross. These who have felt the softening touch of the sunbeam cannot but tell others the tale of that new, choice luxury they have found, the luxury of *giving* for God and for humanity. Some among that group of nations have learned, by looking into the face of Jesus, the

secret of joy in sorrow, peace in the midst of conflict, gladness amid tears, and they will never forget the lesson; nor will they fail to teach it in turn to all whom their words may reach.

And so the leading nations of the world to-day have caught the inspiration of that face, and how to win souls for him has become the controlling thought of thousands among their people. Hard greed and heartless selfishness are yet, alas, too sadly common. But thank God, there are many glorious exceptions, and the number grows larger and the souls grander every day. The germs of a new life fell into the heart of England and Germany two hundred years ago. They grew apace and on the wings of the west wind seed cells found their way over the Atlantic and lodged in our American soil, to grow and spread again, until to-day the fruitage is found in every Christian land, fruitage of consecrated men and women and faithful effort, and the work of missions has pushed out into the forefront of human enterprise. This, the result of the study of that cross and its lessons, by the thinkers of the world, in *enlightened* lands.

But nations unenlightened, pagan and heathen nations, and lands where falsehood in religion's name has usurped the place of truth, grouped by themselves in sad seclusion, have all been watching that cross. No words may tell what that sad, glad sight has been to them. Whole millions of sorrowing souls have been groping through dark centuries to find the longed-for light. They have tried in vain to fill the hunger of the heart with the husks of idolatry, or with the poor substitute of a religion of forms and rites and ceremonies; but that hunger could not be appeased, that longing would not be satisfied. Instinctively they seemed to feel that somewhere there was something better. The

questioning of Socrates, the theorizing of Plato, the feeling after God by those twin leaders of old time, were all a part of the desperate struggle of imprisoned souls to find the light—peering out into the darkness of the outer world from the dawning light of their own inner life, these lovers of their kind wished for and waited the coming of a brighter day for this world. Nay, more than this. The records of their thought, though they be the story of agonizing travail, bore yet the touch of a mother joy over that truth which something told them was about to be born into the world. Those two seers of the old time stood on the porch of life and caught on the far horizon the first glimpses of the coming dawn. From their tower of observation, builded of ashlers, newly hewn from the quarry of thought and overtopping all their surroundings, they looked through God's night glass, loaned to them for their special need, and far down among the centuries they caught sight of a token, dim indeed, but yet a token of what they hoped for. They did not know it, could not know it; but we think we know that the token they saw was the uplooming against the far-off cloud of that central cross on Calvary. But if these *few* only looked through a glass darkly, what of that many? As to their moral condition, that fearful description in the first chapter of Romans is no exaggeration, and their mental and physical characteristics and habits formed a fit setting and background for that moral degradation, and yet there was, we may believe, at times at least, a dim dream of higher and holier things. Even the beasts that perish may look upward; their very instinct teaches them to better their physical condition by a search for fresh feeding ground, and surely these, who are made in the image of God, albeit so depraved, must in some better hours turn their eyes and their thoughts

toward the paradise from which they are fallen. Even the effort to represent a supreme being by some crude image tells of a backward, upward look, and a recalling of what was in the long ago, and consequent upon this comes something akin to an aspiration toward a better beyond.

“Lo, the poor Indian, whose untutored mind
 Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind;
 His soul proud science never taught to stray
 Far as the solar walk or milky way.
 Yet simple nature to his hope has given
 Behind the cloud capped hill, an humbler heaven,
 Some safer world in depth of woods embraced,
 Some happier island in the watery waste,
 Where slaves once more their native land behold;
 No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold;
 To be, contents his natural desire,
 He asks no angel's wing, no seraph's fire;
 But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
 His faithful dog shall bear him company.”

The “Great Spirit” of the red man and that anticipation which at the hour of death looks over and on

“To the regions of the home-wind
 To the islands of the Blessed,
 To the kingdom of Ponemah
 To the land of the hereafter,”

are to him a substitute for God and heaven, and the hope which helps his ignorance up toward the heights of knowledge is but the outline of that same cross, which has simply become to our clearer sight a brighter, stronger hope. So the ugly, hideous, repulsive images which to our brothers in China, and India, and Africa represent God, are but a sad accommodation to a low grade of intellect and a lower conception of that which

is worthy of worship, yet even that superstition, even that ugliness looks toward the beauty of the Christ. It is indeed a look from far away, but that cross whereon life and death met and kissed each other in strange but real friendship, has power to attract, has attracted, is to-day attracting to itself from that low level every poor soul amongst all those millions. Will they all yield and come? Alas, we hope, but we do not know. This we *do* know, they *may* come. And it is for us to invite them, and plead with them, and help them to come. It is for us to carry to them this telescope. It is for us to hold the glass steady in their poor trembling hands until the longing eye shall catch a glimpse of our Jesus. Then shall their long-time hungry souls, fed upon that sight, nourished by a newly kindled faith and hope, cast behind them, at once and forever, the base things of that cruel past and press to their glad hearts and caressing lips the glorious things of our happy day. Do you ask scriptural foundation for this hope, this all-embracing faith? Listen, "The son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." "The spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that heareth say, come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." I can leave the heathen in the hands of such a God and have no anxiety lest he will not deal tenderly with every soul that turns its eyes toward the cross. That very creed which some men call cold and hard teaches the only way by which a holy God can save a sinful world.

We sometimes misinterpret our Father by our symbols and our dogmas. The symbols and the dogmas are human, but the truth upon which these are based is divine, and it is neither hard nor illogical nor unreasonable. The controversialists take their separate ground, sometimes as far apart as heaven and hell, but the truth is the mean between these extremes. God is infinite in justice and infinite in mercy. Between them stands that cross, and the two are reconciled into one glorious, divine harmony. To-day, when some shock comes to us, some hellish crime like the cruel torture of our own fellow-citizens over in the Sandwich Islands a few days ago, or that horrible butchery of Dr. Pope in Detroit, we find a welcome escape valve for our righteous indignation in those awful words, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God;" but to-morrow the cross comes in with its tender, loving, divine interference, and we softly sing, through our glad tears, that matchless hymn of Faber :

“ There's a wideness in God's mercy,
 Like the wideness of the sea ;
 There's a kindness in his justice,
 Which is more than liberty.

There is welcome for the sinner,
 And more graces for the good ;
 There is mercy with the Savior ;
 There is healing in his blood.

For the love of God is broader
 Than the measure of man's mind ;
 And the heart of the Eternal
 Is most wonderfully kind.

If our love were but more simple,
 We should take him at his word,
 And our lives would be all sunshine,
 In the sweetness of our Lord.”

Oh, yes, we want to keep the middle ground which lies upon the slopes of Calvary. Sinai, black and grim, stands just over yonder. Gethsemane lies here, and midway between them the law and the gospel join hands upon that central cross where Jesus died. Look, O friends! Look until you are filled with the sight, and then go out and everywhere tell men of Jesus. We have the border-land of a world of thought. Let us at some still hour, in some secret place, explore that which lies beyond our reach to-day, and feed meantime upon the manna that God measured up for us in this omer, "And sitting down they watched him there."

IS THE WORLD GROWING BETTER?

BY REV. WILLIAM F. JONES,*

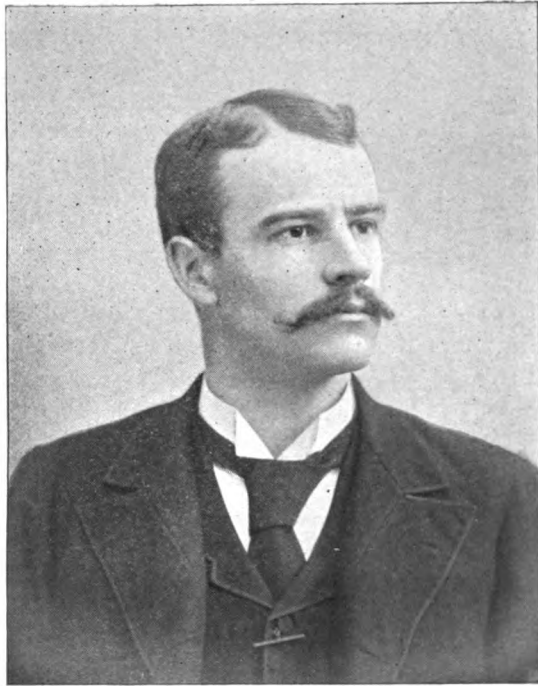
Pastor First Presbyterian Church, Tecumseh.

Text: "Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, the morning cometh." Is. 21:11-12.

"Is the world growing better?" is a question of perennial interest. In our day pessimism is waxing bold, and asserts with confidence that the world is growing worse, and multitudes live and die in the gloom of that cheerless creed. We hear men on every side affirming the degeneracy of the present in every department of thought and life. In literature, they say, the great poets and philosophers are all dead and have left no successors; in politics the leaders of to-day are mere pigmies beside the giants of yesterday; in economics the rich are growing richer and the poor poorer; in government fraud and corruption are so universally rife as to promise the destruction of our free institutions. Tolstoi expresses the fear that civilization is moving rapidly toward the final crash and collapse.

It must be confessed that the world of to-day is bad

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WILLIAM F. JONES.

enough, even after the lapse of nineteen Christian centuries. We are made painfully aware daily that it is full of vice and degradation. Judged by God's standard, it is a poor, dark world, selfish, false and cruel, its best light but half shadow. Arguments are not wanting to those pessimistically inclined which indicate a drift in human life from bad to worse. When our thought is centered on the dark page of the world's daily crime, it is natural and perhaps inevitable to conclude that the world is on the down-grade, that the present is worse than the past, and not so easy to prove the contrary.

It is significant, however, that in spite of pessimism's seeming basis in fact, the normal, healthy instincts of the unperverted man revolt against this creed of despair. Nor do man's instincts stand alone. History and revelation seem to go the same way, in spite of the apparent case made out for pessimism by centering the attention on all the existent forces and tendencies of evil. It can hardly be doubted by any one that optimism is the natural instinct of the healthy human mind. So we ask, is there any rational ground for optimism, assured that such there must be? Do the facts of life and history, looked at more broadly, confirm and establish this persistent and pervasive instinct of progressive betterment? We shall not expect to find the answer in any small section of history, in isolation from all the rest of history. The tendency and trend toward good or evil, toward improvement or deterioration, cannot be determined from a narrow or local survey. The problem of the world's betterment is worldwide and age-long in its sweep and issue. Centuries and millenniums must come within the range and sweep of thought in the determination of this question. No other age of the world's history is at all comparable to

the age in which we live. In more respects than one the singer's words are true :

“ We are living, we are dwelling,
In a grand and awful time,
In an age on ages telling ;
To be living is sublime.”

The most marked characteristic of the days now passing is the spirit of unrest pervading all classes. A spirit of expectancy is taking possession of the people, an expectation, a hope is abroad in the earth that the opening years of the twentieth century are to witness an improvement in the conditions of human life unparalleled in human history. What this may portend does not yet clearly appear. We can hardly help asking, is the present a false hope, doomed to bitter disappointment, or may we look with confidence for the fruition of all our glorious expectations? How is the battle going? Are the forces of animalism and ignorance, of vice, crime and cruelty waxing? Or are the nobler faculties and the superior manhood represented in institutions that make for the strengthening of home and school, of church and state, gaining the ascendancy?

In days of darkness and doubt, when men's hearts fail them for fear, and the foundations of the deep seem moved and broken up, it is not strange that even the stoutest hearts should be somewhat appalled. It is in such times as these, when prophets of evil are abroad and flourish, that we need to fortify our hearts and buttress our faith in the ultimate triumph of righteousness and the final perfection of the race, by recurring to our heavenly chart, God's book. In the very hour when chaos seems come again on earth and all seems gravitating toward the bad, we confidently open the Scriptures and say to the watchmen on heaven's watch-tower :

“ Watchman, what of the night ? ” And there comes to our distracted and tormented hearts these confident and reassuring words: “ The morning cometh. ” When to man’s short-sighted vision the end seems at hand, God speaks and assures us that “ the morning cometh. ” We may not chide for their seeming unfaith those timid believers who, like Eli of old, “ tremble for the ark of God, ” but it is surely incumbent upon us to fortify our desponding hearts against the discouraged, pessimistic view of human life, by referring to the teachings of history and Scripture, and by hopeful inferences from the nature of God.

Right and wrong are engaged in a world-wide struggle in our earth, which can end only when right triumphs. This is our unalterable conviction, resting on the triple basis of *Scripture*, *history* and *instinct*. In spite of all the evils of this present time and all the threatening shoals and dangers humanity has yet to steer past, I cannot for a moment believe but that the tendency is from existing conditions to better, and upward toward the best. Prophecy points that way. Faith in the Divine Man, and in the divine in man, confirms the conviction. History shows a great aggregate of advancement, which presses as resistlessly and inevitably onward as the glaciers of the Alps, following divine laws and purposes ; and with our eyes we are beholding the glory of this beneficent movement. This progress may not be uniform ; it may be undulating and variable ; it may be rapid in some eras and slow in others. It may be different in different parts of the world. There may be progress in some countries and less rapid progress in others ; yet even the retardation seems to be a retarded progress toward better things, and I believe the progress is sure and, on the whole, continuous. A mist may hang over the land for a time,

or showers of rain may follow each other, as they often do in the spring time, or north-east storms may set in and continue unabated for a week or more; yet the farmer never doubts that the air will be clear again and that the sun will sooner or later break forth in all his beauty and glory. So those who look for the world to grow better until the millennium are not blind to the drawbacks and discouragements—the hosts of indifferent folks, the clouds of unbelief, the wars and crimes which darken our earth, and iniquity rolling like a flood; but they never waver in their expectation that all these dreadful things will one day cease, and that the great Sun of Righteousness, with healing in his wings, will surely come forth; and at his coming every mist and every cloud will melt away from the Lord's moral and spiritual world—that peace and good-will among men will reign triumphant, and that all this predicted and expected joy and gladness will be right here upon this earth.

That we may be established in this conviction, let us review briefly some of the facts which indicate the ever-growing tendency in the currents of human history toward the betterment and final perfection of humanity. This survey may, and doubtless will, inspire in us an ever-increasing sense of God as immanent in the affairs of men.

Beginning on the lowest plane, in the realm of material things the progress made by man is easily seen. Science, patient, methodical and persevering, has at length penetrated into Nature's chamber of mysteries, mastered many of its laws and made them minister to human well-being. Science in our day has gone beyond anything ever dreamed of in past ages. It has greatly improved the conditions of life and vastly enhanced its comforts. Science, working in the realm of

matter, has made this world a far more desirable place to live in. But the advance wrought by inventive genius in the conditions of human life is too gross a criterion by which to estimate true human progress. The emphasis must not be put on the wonderful advance made in science, art and mechanical inventions. Brain culture does not mean heart culture, and steam engines and telegraphs are not in themselves spiritual agencies. Humanity can be said to be permanently bettered only when it is brought into more close conformity with the standard of God's word.

Again, let us view man on the higher plane of his *social* and *political relations*, and note the degree of their approximation to the divine principles. We can hardly conceive how the past could be worse than it has been; despotism, tyranny and oppression, grasping greed and heartless extortion, the many ground under the heels of the privileged few, and mutely suffering because there seemed no redress. This in briefest, barest outline is a sketch of the political relations of the masses of men in the past. Through revolution and bloody insurrection the masses have, by our day, climbed to the seat of at least nominal power. In no other department have men made greater advancement than in gaining their political rights. From being veritable serfs, men have become, almost universally, possessed of the prerogative of sovereignty through the extension of the franchise. Demos is king. The people are the source of power. Yet, strangely enough, social equality has by no means accompanied political equality. In spite of the equalization of political rights, class distinctions and restrictions are no less marked or galling. The poor seem to grow poorer and the rich richer. For the time being there seems to be retrogression instead of progress in this department of life.

It is therefore not surprising that the poor are restive under their burdens and magnify their grievances, or that socialism and communism and anarchy find so many willing advocates. Change and improvement in the matter of the more equitable division of the joint product of labor and capital *must come* if society is to be preserved, *will come* if the betterment seen in other departments of life is to be, as we believe, matched in this.

Judging men on the *moral* plane there can be no doubt that the world has made wonderful progress. The sentiment of the world as exemplified in its customs, institutions and laws makes it impossible to doubt that great advance has been made in morals in spite of widespread moral evils. But lest we be overwhelmed at the thought of the awful amount of vice and immorality actually existing in our day, and superficially conclude that all is going to the bad, we should bear in mind that such a state of things did not begin to exist in our time, but has its roots in former years. The intense and active opposition of vice does not prove that there is more of it than formerly, but that under the new light of knowledge, the elevation of moral character and the quickening of the moral sense, silence has become impossible and agitation must come. Evils seem greater because better known. "The greater the light, the greater the shadow." There is a growing sensitiveness in the public conscience as regards moral questions which augurs better things. The growing demand for social purity and political honesty are clearly in evidence, as are also the growing aversion to war, the destruction of slavery, the almost total suppression of duelling, the growing unpopularity of drunkenness, the driving to cover of lotteries and obscene literature, and above all the increasing power of philanthropy in human life.

Viewing man on the highest plane, the *religious*, his progress is no less marked. Never did religion, in its best sense, hold larger place in the thoughts of men than in our day. One of the truly remarkable phenomena of to-day is the silent but unmistakable revolt which has come to pass against the crass materialism of the last generation, against all merely destructive unbelief, and against all the high pretensions of learned and dogmatic agnosticism. In reaction against the intellectual extravagances of those hostile to all religion, the pendulum has swung back to the side of an intense and deep-lying religiousness. As never before, men are coming to recognize that Christianity is the sole hope of the world in the solution of its manifold and intricate moral and social problems. The most deservedly popular of recent books are those by Kidd, an extreme revolutionist, by Balfour, a politician, by Romanes, a one-time agnostic. Each lays special and distinct emphasis on the fact that Christianity is the only organized force capable of solving the present social problems. And further, progress is also making in respect to unifying the church, in purpose at least. One of the Bible tests and tide-marks of progress is the prevalence of brotherly love among those who are professed followers of Jesus Christ. That tide is steadily rising. Sectarian controversies and jealousies are dying out; the different denominations are drawing more closely together and co-operate more cordially in all enterprises of evangelization and Christian philanthropy.

Thus it will be seen that progress and betterment is the common law of every department of human life, *material, political, social, moral and religious*. Not only is this tendency toward better conditions visible in these United States and in England, but, in varying

degree, it is the universal law of all intelligent life. All lands and the peoples of all times are collectively drawn upward toward better things by a divine and irresistible impulse.

“ The whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.”

Isaiah, the inspired seer, proclaimed in his day: “The morning cometh.” In the darkest hours of the history of our race this voice of Scripture has been humanity’s inspiration, the ground of its hope. At the close of the first year of the war of the rebellion, Europe was convinced that the experiment of a republic was a demonstrated failure. The London Times gravely announced that “the bubble has burst.” At the same time, to the people of the North, their failure to put down the rebellion seemed a dreadful disaster. To-day we know that success that first year would have been the greatest disaster, since it would have meant the continuance of slavery. It was northern defeats which opened our eyes to the hellish institution which lay back of all, and which must be destroyed ere ever true peace could come.

Because the outcome is not as we expect, and when we expect, we are prone to despair of any righteous issue. We forget, seemingly, that God is behind all the movements of history, that he shifts the scenes, and that the outcome is unfailingly in his hand. We see only a small segment of the great circle of history. The larger part of God’s grand design is hidden from us, and so our judgment is partial and erroneous. To us

“ God’s ways seem dark, but soon or late
They touch the shining hills of day.”

It is our privilege to rest upon the sure conviction that

“ Behind the dim unknown
Standeth God within the shadow,
Keeping watch above his own.”

A brief glance over the past ought to satisfy us that the assurance of Scripture, “ The morning cometh,” is being progressively realized in our world. In spite of apparent reverses and temporary defeats, the cause of right has not gone backward. Slowly evolving out of the moral chaos caused by the Fall, retarded by human perversity and ignorance, a kingdom of righteousness has been and is being formed in the world, whose confines must at length be coterminous with the limits of the earth. The past is a voice of prophecy, pointing forward to this glorious consummation. This truth of the ultimate triumph and supremacy of righteousness shines out in all the dark movements of the world’s spiritual history.

When the Philistines captured the ark of God, the heart of the good old Eli broke for very despair. But, in God’s providence, that defeat issued in Israel’s purification and Philistia’s overthrow. When the artillery of the universal Roman empire was leveled against the Christian church, its destruction seemed assured. But Christianity came off scathless and in triumph, and the seeming disaster of the persecutions wrought out for the church a higher good, since it furnished just that bond of cohesiveness and unity needed to bind into one the diverse elements of the primitive church. Again, when the barbarian hordes of northern Europe came down upon Rome, the cry went up, “Christianity and civilization are lost.” When lo, behold! the captors of Rome were in turn made captives by the religion of the Man of Nazareth, and a nobler civilization was evolved.

Men doubted that all was over when a few centuries later the Saracens invaded Europe. But in the critical hour God interposed, and at the battle of Tours a panic fell upon the hitherto irresistible Moslem army, and their dread array melted away like Sennacherib's army from before Jerusalem. Men said that Charles Martel saved Europe, but we know it was *God* who drove the conquering Moslems back. Thus in every critical moment the divine power has outflashed for the defence of the right. So to the devout student of history the ages are luminous with God's purposes ripening to the fruition of universal righteousness.

"The morning cometh." Christ lifted up on the cross is at once the *means* and the *assurance* of ultimate victory. "The *cross* is the point of life to a kingdom which shall spread from heart to heart, from race to race, and from century to century, till it completes at length the conquest of the globe. That cross of agony and shame reared aloft on Golgotha shall never be overturned. Empires shall rise and fall, but around the cross, increasingly through the years, Jews and Gentiles, wise and foolish, high and low, bond and free, shall gather. High looming amidst the civilizations and the centuries, it shall stand and draw, working slowly it may be, but working surely until its work is done, and great voices are heard shouting back and forth athwart the heavens, that the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever."

Those of us who worship God ought never to doubt the final issue. To be God means that everything in his universal realm is marching toward victory. Our lines might be much thinner than they are, our march much slower, our trophies fewer, and still we would not be disheartened. As the church has a living faith in a

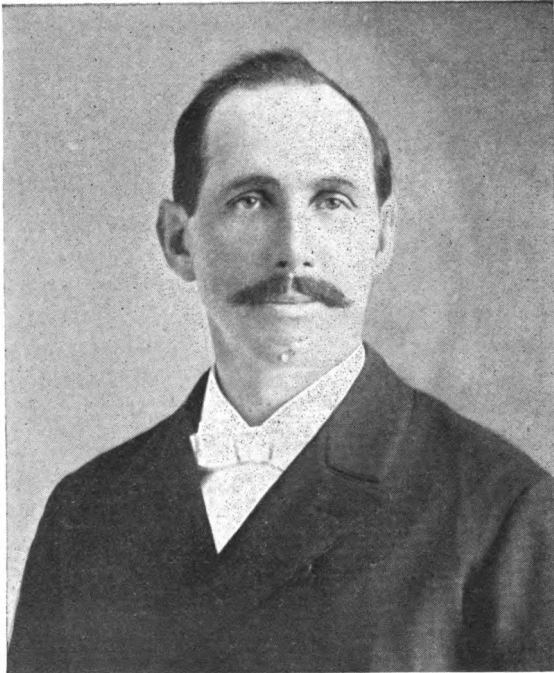
living Christ, it cannot doubt that the time will come, however distant and however long delayed, when her camp-fires shall be kindled and her banners shake on every hill-top from the rising to the setting of the sun.

“Chaos is come again, and the world is growing worse,” say the prophets of evil, but not so do we interpret the annals of the past, not so do we cast the horoscope of the future. Christ is pledged to make Christianity the universal faith. Faith in Christ is faith in a redeemed humanity. So, in spite of the existing widespread corruption, we believe that the divine life among men that has never died out in the longest and darkest night, is growing to its new opportunities and responsibilities. We are no prophets, but we can all of us discern a future now dawning on our horizon over which the Hebrew prophets would have clapped their hands. “The morning truly cometh,” as God’s spirit has said.

We, as Christians, are not getting all of the comfort or of the superb calm out of our religion that we might. The supernatural and divine are in our creeds, but we are prone to leave the divine elements out of our daily life. God is the Governor of the universe—all things fall out according to his ordering. He is our helper, he never takes his hand off. Anxiety is then a form of atheism. Confidence in God cannot exist in a human heart with misgivings as to the issue of things lurking in another corner of the same heart. If we believe in God as our Father, as supreme in his intelligence and irresistible in his power, let us fling ourselves into our purposes with zeal and gladness, and not go around moping about the present, or with knitted brow and wry faces turned toward the future. If we are truly God’s children we are in line with his purposes and plans, and his will is ours. God has no intention of being disappointed in his plans. He believes infinitely in the just

and true, and for him to believe in the just and true means that the establishment and maintenance of justice and truth are a part of his purpose. So that if our purposes are at one with those of God there can come no failure to us, except God should fail. This is a thought worth keeping close to your heart as you feel your way forward into the times that are to come. "The morning cometh." Instinct leans that way; confidence in God means that; and history points to an appointed triumphant consummation.

My friends, all our endeavors in behalf of truth and justice are elements in the progress of Christ's kingdom. Ours it is in our little corner of the great pattern of history to do our part perfectly. God will harmonize all, will make all faithful effort to converge to the end to bring in the reign of righteousness among men. May God forgive us all the errors of the past and build us into the scheme wherewith he is realizing his intentions for the future, and hasten the time when sin shall be a thing forgotten, discord and variance a memory only, and the earth be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.



JAMES TODD.

EQUIPMENT FOR MODERN CHRISTIAN SERVICE.

(A sermon for the times.)

BY REV. JAMES TODD, D. D.,*

Pastor First Presbyterian Church, Escanaba.

Text: "Be diligent, show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." 2 Tim., 2:15.

This is an age of unparalleled activity. Life in it is like a boundless, restless ocean whose surging billows dash themselves madly against every limiting rock until it is broken down, and the sea flows over it as part of its vast expanse. All conquests are thus won in this age, for aggressiveness is its only highway to victory. Science and arts, literature and commerce, politics and potentates have felt its thrill and acknowledged its regal authority. Its achievements are world wide. It has made continents as widely separate as the poles near neighbors. It has turned the miraculous into modern, daily duty. In many of the walks in life the formerly impossible has become the commonplace.

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Aggressiveness is undoubtedly the spirit of our age, and though there may be much in it to lament, as in its haste it destroys much which should be conserved, yet it develops more which was hitherto unknown. This is our compensation whereby the age is enriched.

It may be well to remember that its end is not yet, lest we should be subjected to enervating surprise. And reverence cannot stay its progress, nor is it a respecter of persons. Landmarks hoary with age limit not its march; and even truth itself seems to tremble before its power.

By this spirit the tendencies of times are changed; and these have influenced the Christian church. However it is not for the church of Christ to sit still and indolently cry over spilt milk. It is hers rather to seize this spirit of aggressiveness and cleanse and sanctify it by utilizing it in her holy calling. It is the church's duty to marshal her forces against all that is erroneous, insipid and evil in this spirit; study its movements more closely; and if need be, by changing her manners and methods, buckle on more firmly her divine armor, and with increased devotion march forward and conquer this progressive age for Jesus Christ.

In view of this generally acknowledged spirit of aggressiveness in this age, and the duty of the church to meet it, the most important question to be answered is, "What is the necessary equipment for the church and individual Christian, with which to meet effectively and ultimately conquer this controlling spirit of restless and sometimes unreasoning and ruinous aggressiveness for the highest and noblest ends?" The answer I shall attempt to give in this sermon must necessarily be incomplete. It shall deal with basal principles which we believe may, however, be expanded and applied safely and effectively to accomplish the desired result.

I. The possession of conscious Christian life. Even the church can only control objectionable forms of life, by a higher Christian life. The introduction of unlimited forms of worship, or new methods of action, cannot improve permanently antagonistic forms of world life; only life can control life. And only the possession of a higher Christian life will equip the church and the Christian for effective work in the present age.

This higher life is what we call in theological language "the assurance of faith," in evangelistic phraseology "the consciousness of acceptance with a personal Savior." Largely because of these definitions it has been considered by some a ghost to frighten the weak and timid, and by others a shadow unworthy the attention of the strong. But if we forget for the time all definitions, and think of this attainment as the possession of a higher Christian life, we may be persuaded to acknowledge its value and importance in religious work. For if faith is the root of the tree of Christian life, surely assurance of it is the blossom which teems with sweetest fragrance. And while we cannot have the fragrance and fruit without the root, in order to be efficiently equipped for modern Christian service we should have both. It is a truth of both science and religion that only life can beget life; and the great need of this age is conscious Christian life.

The law of life is, "like begets like," and it is as unscientific as it is unscriptural to expect persons not possessed of this Christian life to be proper channels through which it may be communicated to others. Spontaneous generation is as unknown and impossible in religion as it is in science; and lifeless formation in religion is as ineffective in imparting Christian life and moral power, as dead matter in nature is in producing life. Heat may be evolved from an icicle, but we do not

light our fires with them. Money may be dropped from the hand into the slot machine, but only living toilers are made cashiers. The analogy holds true in Christian service. Not dead but living Christians are qualified to regenerate and transform a world of sin. Not the coldness of souls frozen by indifference, but the warmth of living, loving spirits kindles the fires of Christian life in this age. This form of Christian life will always wield an influence and a power. Much that is desirable may indeed be lacking in the servant or church of the Lord Jesus; but with this higher Christian life possessed, the name and the word of Christ become, when uttered, an uplifting force. Like the sun's light, wherever it shines it is seen. Clouds and darkness may bedim it, but its warmth will penetrate them and be always felt.

Natural life has its beauty, its freshness and its delight. The birds warble, the grass grows, the flowers bloom; and all nature, vocal with praise, proclaims unmistakably its life-giving and beautifying power. Physical life has its glow, its magnetism and its force; but not more so than this spiritual life of which the church of Jesus Christ and every Christian worker are the recognized channels. Its possessors do not require to be labeled in order to be known. Those who possess it require no particular veil or coat of many colors to mark them. They are living epistles known and read of all men. And through such the attracting force of a Christian life is felt. The glow of its mysterious influence radiates the warmth of life divine. Renewed hearts emit the fragrance of holiness, and sweeten all life. And all lives controlled by the higher life move in their desires and tendencies toward God, and good, as naturally and visibly as the flower turns to the light. It was this qualification for Christian service which made the

apostles so omnipotent in their day, and their age was less receptive of religious influence than ours is. Paul did not only believe, he enjoyed a conscious life of faith—the assurance of it—and testified, “I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.”

And this equipment affords substantial comfort to all Christ's servants. In this commercial age it is customary to weigh the influence of each church's and servant's work by statistics. That may be well to a certain extent, but beyond that limit it is misleading, unjust and discouraging. By such a criterion of spiritual life and work the workers with a large showing become like a brilliant comet, while the fainter stars become discouraged with their own twinkle. But it is as easy to bottle up the galaxy of the midnight aurora as to place the accurate estimate of the value of the influence of one faithful Christian life in a church report. The force of the inspiration which proceeds from a Christ-loving heart cannot be weighed. The imperishable blessings imparted by a benevolent life cannot be enumerated. Can a Michael Angelo paint the beauty contained in one of the graces of the world's Savior, which are transmitted by a higher-lived Christian? No.

Conscious Christian life always asserts itself in the character; gives force to the words we speak; shapes the lives we live, and wields an influence which cannot be tabulated, and which should comfort and cheer all. Perhaps even less activity, but certainly a higher Christian life possessed by the church; divinely alive men and women this age requires for Christian service.

II. The second requirement is a profound conviction of the fundamental truths of our religion. Morals are the fruits of faith. No man's character is better than his own or some one else's creed. Faith is the

fruit of conviction, as the roots of a tree are the result of the soil in which they grow. The eternal verities of the sovereignty and fatherhood of God; the inspiration of the Bible, the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ, and the redemption of society by his gospel; rewards to the faithful and punishment to the impenitent both in this life and in that which is to come, must be firmly held in order to an efficiently equipped Christian service for this age. This may be an age of aggressive doubt, but it is not a time for the Christian church compromising the bed-rock truths of Christ's religion. Without a firm conviction in these truths Christ's servants are soldiers without swords, his church an army without artillery, a magazine without explosives. These truths should, however, be fortified by a comprehensive knowledge of their setting, and illumined by wide thought and a limitless love. Our knowledge concerning them should be drawn from all available sources, and especially from God's own two books—nature and the Bible. Our thought upon them should be as expansive as revealed truth is in both. It is only as we know them thus that extremes in teaching them can be avoided, the thoughtful in the world reached, and sin and error overthrown. And only thus can vulgar liberalism, an unphilosophic and irreligious mysticism be shunned in their interpretation. *All truth is weakest at its extremes*, as the ocean is shallowest at the shore; and only a comprehensive knowledge of revealed truth and its context can reveal to us its golden mean. These principles of interpretation here mentioned, so clearly revealed in our Savior's teaching, have made him the prince of preachers in all ages. As a teacher the lowly Nazarene superseded Socrates and Plato. He shines forth as the sun in the heavens of thought is to a fire-fly in the night, when compared with Buddha, Confucius and Mahomet, be-

cause truth revealed in nature and grace was fully known to him. His knowledge swept the universe, but theirs was local. No geographical boundaries limited his thought—it touched every race and clime; but theirs was bounded on every side by race prejudice, self-interest and human littleness. In Jesus, knowledge and thought were broad and deep, comprehensive and profound; and yet just as narrow and superficial as his Father's revealed will. He weighed truth as a whole and made its circumference co-extensive with seething, suffering humanity. He never founded great principles upon fragments of truth; therefore, he included Moses and the prophets in his teachings, as well as all truths previously revealed. When discussing religious questions he neither ignored the lesson from the lily nor that from the farmer in the field; hence, the growing splendor of its light and the beneficence of its influence as he taught truth.

It is no exaggeration to say that some of these truths have become falsehoods by men neglecting our Lord's methods of teaching, dissociating them from their setting and teaching them in fragments. Inaccurate knowledge and contracted forms of thought have turned heaven's light on earth into darkness and made God's truth appear as error. For example, some teachers take a portion of truth and isolating it from its context, read, "Whosoever sins ye remit are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain are retained." And on that fragment of truth they have built the confessional and several whole lies as necessary religious principles. Such forget that God by his Spirit also taught that in the Christian church all true believers are a royal priesthood, 1 Peter, 2:9, and only the ceremonial law of Jewish times made human high-priests.

Again, a beautiful text is taken by others by no means priestly, who read one half of it thus: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," and then jubilantly assert, "That is Scriptural Armenianism;" while some take its remaining half and read, "It is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his own good pleasure," and then declare, "That is Biblical Calvinism." Whereas both halves are God's whole truth, teaching the principles of the sovereignty of God and human freedom in man's salvation.

Once more, destructive critics say, "The Scriptures containing these truths are of more recent date than is commonly believed, and in many instances their authorship is more than doubtful." And they add, "The inner consciousness of the critics, the anti-Jewish words and ideas contained in the books prove it." But they, too, are forgetful of the other half of the case: that many of the ablest scholars of this age, including Gesenius, Herzfeld, Deleitzsch, Greene and other representative names in Biblical scholarship and research, teach that many of these words are abstract terms which could naturally be formed from Hebrew roots. Sayce, Hommel, Petrie and Smith, and many other pioneers of Egyptology, inform us that the very stones of Egypt unite to-day with the inspired inner consciousness, and the voices of Jesus, Stephen and Paul in crying out against attempts to revolutionize great principles by mere fragmentary statements. Sir William Dawson, Argyle, Tristram, Thomson and other eminent authorities tell us that a meagre acquaintance with geology shows that Exodus is an Egyptian and not a Babylonian book; that not Persian or Assyrian, but Egyptian manners, infused with the ideas of desert life, pervade the later books of the Pentateuch. So it seems evident that where we have the whole available truth on

this question there is nothing in the structure of these books to justify their rejection as uninspired tradition, but much to show they may even be more ancient than Moses. Therefore, we should fortify with extensive knowledge and illumine by a wider thought the fundamental truths of our religion. Reject the theory of accepting fragments of truth for the whole, search for the whole truth and we shall have strong, profound, religious convictions. It is also thus we may crystallize truth in the church and for the world, and make it sparkle before the unbelieving mind as diamonds in the sunlight. Strong convictions, crystallized, illumine minds, but doubts darken and ignorance befores them. The world needs light, not darkness. Mankind thirsts for the whole truth, not scraps of it. Emerson said, "This world needs affirmations, not negations to enlighten it." Goethe said, "Give us your convictions, as for doubts we have enough of our own." Carlyle said, "Faith in truth is properly the one thing needful in this age."

III. The third requirement is a patient, humble, prayerful spirit in studying God's word. The church is an institution through which Christian truth is revealed. But its believers, members and teachers are also disciples learning truth. An imperious and independent spirit in a Christian worker is more characteristic of the rebel than the disciple, of the smatterer than the student. It is the spirit of a Sir Isaac Newton, and not that of the higher critic, or the modern liberal preacher, which is most useful in this age. A bombastic spirit may serve as an advertisement to a speculator, but it is wholly unfitted to discover and commend religious truth. The more teachable the disposition of Christ's servant, the more effective will be his work, whether in the study, the pulpit, or the world. We

must keep in the valley of humility if we would secure the water of life for thirsty souls. The high head may be nearest the stars, but the feet of such are apt to slip into the ditch. The patient, humble, prayerful spirit overcomes best the difficulties in life and the apparent discrepancies in God's word.

It is safe to ascribe most of the scepticism of the age to prayerlessness and pride. For example, the late Prof. Huxley in his prayerless pursuit of so-called Biblical blunders confounded even geology with himself; he learned from none. Ingersol in his pride talks as if there was nothing in heaven or earth outside of his philosophy, and the so-called modern apostle of reason has become illogical—if not irrational. Destructive critics in their self-will have dogmatized concerning Biblical truth, until liberty of thought has come to mean license of statement, and loyalty to acknowledged authority has been turned into treason against revealed truth. Thus, in the name of free thought, we have had the Herod of dogma out-Heroded.

But to be equipped efficiently for modern Christian service, the spirit of humility and the habit of prayer must be united in the study of God's word. His word is like a shield, and has two sides to it; and only those patient, humble and prayerful will see much of both. There are many discrepancies in his word, but discrepancy is not a contradiction. There is much that is mysterious in divine truths. But what is mysterious is not incredible. Light is mysterious, but even Tyndall admitted its truth. Life is a great mystery, but even Haeckel acknowledges its reality. The Bible is an inexhaustible mine of heaven's treasure, and fresh nuggets will always be discovered by the patient, prayerful and humble student. Indeed, none should object to that which has indisputably enriched spiritual life and

moral worth. A restless liberalism should not sneer at truth because it claims to be old—for so are our mothers. An iron-heeled conservatism should not crush a jewel of truth because it is new—for so are our babies. All truth is *reality in harmony with the mind of God*, whether it is embedded in mystery or basking in the light of ancient day or modern hour; and the patient, humble, prayerful student shall see much of it. Mystery—hidden truth—is the closed hand of God extended to mankind, and to all he gives the invitation, “Come, seek, and find.” And the humble, patient, and prayerful student is best equipped to open it. He who knew all things said, “I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that it has pleased thee to hide these things from the wise and prudent, and to reveal them unto babes!”

It is thus the modern Christian worker may find behind all the mysteries of creation and revelation a personal God. Thus he shall behold around him a God-created or a God-evolved world. Thus he shall learn that Christ, as the Savior of society, is the supreme revelation of the Scriptures; that every page of the Bible is charged with a blessing to humanity through the mystery of redemption; and that the Holy Spirit works through the church to propagate divine life. Thus he shall see more clearly how history confirms the Bible by confirming prophecy; how philosophy is seeking the Christ by aiming after a perfect life; how idolatry gropes after him by sacrificing on its altars; how science is a telescope to revelation; and how all things combine to teach the world-transforming truth that the Bible is opposed to nothing but what is Godless, Christless and Spiritless.

IV. Another element in this equipment is a definite aim. Truth may be discovered and taught in equal

proportions. Strong convictions may be entertained ; conscious Christian life may be possessed ; but without a definite aim in Christian service the worker is still inefficiently equipped. Aim in Christian service is the concentration of the mind on some definite religious result. Activity, tact, sacrifice, sometimes slavery, and even attractiveness,—all that is in the best sense implied in progressiveness—will probably be required to produce the result, but a definite aim in the Lord's work is indispensable to efficiency. Apollo, it is said, always shot his arrow in the center. Why? Because he aimed at it. Locksley split the willow wand and watched the arrow of Hubert. Why? Because he aimed at doing so. Emerson said, "Hitch your wagon to a star," i. e., aim high. The worker with a definite aim and an high one is invincible, but those without it are failures. Those who aim at nothing and shoot at it, are almost certain to hit it. Miners who seek for nothing in particular may find treasure, but it is not likely. The ship steered for nowhere is more likely to strand on the rocks than reach the harbor. Christ's servants are marksmen who should aim to hit souls with truth in love ; gold seekers, who should bring jewels of humanity to their rightful owner, Jesus Christ ; pilots who should guide souls safely over the ocean of life into the haven of eternal rest. Our aim should not be lower than the transformation of lives into the likeness of the man Christ Jesus. Unless we accomplish this our service is a failure when tried by the truest standard. We are shepherds seeking the lost sheep, and feeding the heavenly shepherd's lambs. The question is not, how far have they wandered or how near have they been kept, but are the wandering ones found, are the lambs fed? We are physicians treating a world sore, sick and dying morally. The question is not, how skil-

fully is the medicine administered, but are the lives of the patients saved? We are soldiers of Christ's cross. The question is not, how military-like is our deportment, but are we defeating the enemy and winning the land for our Lord?

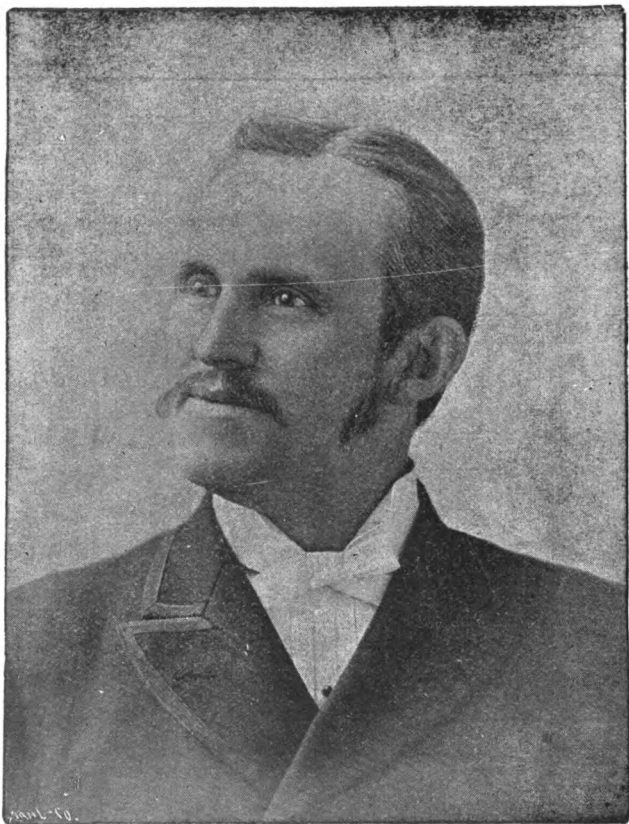
It is not the plan of battle even, nor the armor we wear, but it is the shots which hit that tell most in Christian service. Therefore each should aim at the death of self, the salvation of society, and the transforming of the world into the paradise of God. Oh, the need of it! Evil still stalks abroad majestically like a ruthless monster in search of its prey. The Macedonian cry uttered from afar still rings in our ears. The battle against the faith once delivered to the saints is still waged fiercely. The struggle of eternal right against wrong is incessant. The shibboleth of the leisure classes to-day is doubt. The philosophy of many is a gospel of mud, and the god such worship is Mammon. And to all his servants the Captain of Salvation cries, "Be diligent, show thyself a workman approved of God." Possess conscious Christian life; be live men and women; have crystallized convictions on fundamental truth; have humble, prayerful, studious dispositions and a high aim in service.

At the battle of Vicksburg the contending armies strove fiercely for the advantageous position on a ridge; but for a long time the issue seemed doubtful. Fiercely each army strove to hoist its colors on the blood-bought height, until with a rush the Union soldiers swept off their enemy. However, when they sought to unfurl the stars and stripes over the conquered spot, the standard bearer was absent—he had fallen in the fight. They looked around and found him with his fast-ebbing strength still bearing up the flag. When his comrades reached him he smilingly said in a deathly whisper,

270 EQUIPMENT FOR MODERN CHRISTIAN SERVICE.

“Take it, boys! take it, boys! it has never touched the mud.”

May we who bear this blood-stained banner of Christ's cross not only be equipped for this high and holy service, but when the battle of life is ended and we are called hence from the fray, may we in our dying breath be able to say to our comrades, our children and our church, “Take it, boys! take it, boys! it has never touched the mud.”



JAMES M. BARKLEY.

THE MAKING OF MANHOOD THE MISSION OF THE NATION.

(A thanksgiving sermon.)

BY REV. JAMES M. BARKLEY,*

Pastor of the Forest Avenue Presbyterian Church, Detroit.

Text: "That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as cornerstones, polished after the similitude of a palace." Psalm 144:12.

This psalm is the production of Israel's inspired king. And this fact alone entitles it to be regarded, in some sense, as a national psalm. But further still: its essential contents carry a decided flavor of nationality. This is apparent all through the psalm, from its opening burst of praise to its final swell of triumphant satisfaction. It is Davidic and personal only as David the person is representative and royal; as he stands for incarnate nationality.

Another thing is noteworthy: in largest part this national psalm is a national prayer. After the first outburst of grateful blessing the psalm becomes petition-

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ary. The royal singer becomes a royal suppliant; and he prays for national blessings of a material sort—for full garnerers, for multiplied thousands of sheep, for oxen strong to toil, for national contentment, for riddance of their enemies. But he sues for these things, not as an end in themselves, but rather as the means to an end. The highest desire of this kingly suppliant for his people is that expressed in this text where he prays, “That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as cornerstones, polished after the similitude of a palace.” And as a means to this highest and mightiest national product—a gracefully matured manhood and a beautifully cultured womanhood—he prays for peace without and prosperity within. Well, now, this thought of the Psalmist seems to shape a theme suited to this national occasion; and I am, therefore, minded to speak to you on this theme: *The making of manhood the highest mission of the nation.*

I am inclined to this indicated line of thought, not alone by the evident teaching of the text, but by apparent tendencies of the times. In many quarters there is a manifest tendency to unduly value the worth of material prosperity, to make of material progress a fetish. There be many excitable enthusiasts who, pointing to our national material achievements, would say, “These be thy gods, O America!” These priests of a practical materialism have a revised rubric for the modern worship of the golden calf. Now, God forbid that I should pose as a pulpit pessimist! God forbid that I should seem to frown when prosperity seems to smile! She has been a shy goddess these past recent years—has prosperity. Material plenty has not made prosperity. While banks hoarded capital and granaries burst with wheat, labor stood idle in the market-place

all the day, and then at nightfall begged bread from door to door. Pale, pinched children and patient, toiling wives went hungry in this land burdened with breadstuffs. Amid material plenty real prosperity retired. God, as it seemed, touched the nerve of our national vanity at its most sensitive point, just to demonstrate the feebleness and fickleness of this goddess, prosperity, which so many are so prone to worship.

But now, this goddess again unveils her welcome face; and God forbid that I should seem to scowl at her approach. But, beloved, I would have you take her at her true worth. I would have you think soberly and righteously on this subject. I would have you place prosperity in its proper relation to higher things. I would have us all come into the spirit and temper of this national prayer-psalm; and while we praise God for the favors of the past, and entreat for their enlargement for the future, I would have us realize that these material prosperings are but means to that higher mission of this nation which I have already indicated. Let us not prostitute our national powers to the raising of stock, the shipment of wheat and the weaving of woollens. But let us make all these things, powers and productions alike, minister to the mission of the nation—*the making of manhood and womanhood.*

I. This is a *nation's noblest production.* For illustration of this fact look at the nations of antiquity. What survives of them save the memorials of a mighty manhood which they reared, and which, in its turn, glorified them? We delve into the mounds of entombed cities like those of Memphis that once shone with the splendors of its stately temples; of Babylon whose hanging gardens excited the wonder of the world; of Thebes with its hundred gates. And we do this not

merely for the sake of seeing the still shapely stones that lie there in buried confusion, but we do it in an endeavor to estimate fairly and fully the great genius that once wrought these mighty monoliths into stately temples and tombs. It is the achievements of manhood imprisoned in these buried cities that attract us. Who knows or cares how much wheat Egypt exported in those historic years? Or how it fared with the Goshen dairies? No one. But the genius, that is to say, the highest manhood of Egypt, that graved her history "with an iron pen in the rock forever;" that framed the funeral liturgies in her "Book of the Dead," is imperishable. We can not always call its name, but we can discern its essence. Who knows how many beans or currants or olives were gathered in Attica in any single year? Or how much honey was harvested on Hymettus? Or how much commerce flowed through Corinth in any given time? Who ever figured out how much marble was mined from Mount Pentelicus? No one. For no one cares a farthing for all those things. But oh, the *manhood* whose genius chiseled those marbles into classic forms and sang its epics amid the sunny isles of Greece! The *manhood* whose eloquence charmed the Agora and aroused the nation as it "fulminated over Greece to Artaxerxes' throne;" the manhood whose courage battled at Troy and Thermopylae and Salamis and Marathon; the manhood whose philosophy has made the Academy, the Grove and the Porch the synonyms of thoughtful wisdom,—that *manhood* is the thing that lasts.

Alexander's empire faded away and left little map modification of the world. It was, in fact, a huge conquest without an empire. But the manhood that fought Alexander's battles sowed the eastern world with ideas. Those ideas were localized at Alexandria, the Athens of

the East. They gave an idiom to gospel and epistle. They pioneered the pathway of Scripture translation, and lent a new language to law-giver, prophet and psalmist. These are some of the mighty residua of that Alexandrian Empire. And you notice they are resident, not in material things, but in mental. And it is in the manhood which made such things possible that the world rejoices. And so wherever we go amongst the remains of the nations of antiquity, we see that the most persistent things, the things that have survived the rack and ruin of empires, are the essential qualities of manhood. We see that these are a nation's noblest product, the only things that remain real and permanent. And if we are to live as a nation potential in human affairs, or are to survive in story and song, then we must give higher heed to the making of manhood than to the production of material things.

We must do more than build big ships. Tyre did that. But long ago her ships with their embroidered sails and royal rowers were forever swept from the seas. Her wharves, once crowded with a world's commerce, long since rotted away. And she who sat "at the entry of the sea," the commercial queen of the world, ages ago became as "the top of the rock," "a place to spread nets upon." We must do more than cut lumber and dig ore; for the lumbermen of Lebanon, the miners of Cyprus and the smelters of the Hittites are all gone, leaving no memorials save bared mountain slopes, buried furnaces and abandoned mines. We must do more than raise wheat and make wine; for the husbandmen of Egypt and the vine dressers of Eshcol are without monument. We must do more than fatten hogs and export cattle; for the cattle kings of Goshen and the swine herds of Galilee have perished without name. These material things are all well in

their way. They are good ; but merely as a means to the making of manhood. Humanly speaking, the only thing that makes a nation live, that renders it potential while it does live, and remembered when it ceases to live, is manhood. That is the calm, dispassionate, universal verdict of history. And if we, as a nation, are to survive, to grow strong, and to be permanent, then manhood modeled after the Nazarene pattern should be our most precious and pre-eminent production.

II. *To such a mission, the making of manhood, was our nation erected and dedicated.* Look for a moment at the twin lines of earliest immigrants who came across the seas to this western world. One of those lines followed the trans-Atlantic track of the Genoese Navigator. It came to a land favored with the gifts of God in marvelous prodigality. It was a line of immigrants made up from the Latin races, softened by luxury and speaking the Romance languages, low and musical. It bowed at the altars of a faith whose garments were stained with martyrs' blood. It came not as the pioneer of a purer faith and a freer conscience ; not with the purpose to found humaner institutions ; but it came in quest of gold. It was looking for an Eldorado. It had its lustful eyes fixed on the fabled treasures of the Aztecs, the Incas and the Montezumas. It came for the pelf that perisheth, chasing the *ignis fatuus* of material prosperity.

Look now at that other line of immigrants who followed the course of the Cabots. They came, not from soft Andalusian or Italian plains, but from England, Ireland and Scotland ; from France, Germany, Holland and Switzerland. They came not to a land of palm and perpetual summer, but to "a stern and rock-bound coast." They came not relaxed by luxury, but inured to hardship and schooled to sternest virtue.

They came cherishing a faith that had, for conscience' sake, given itself to the rack, the stake and the sword. They came with no consuming desire for gold, with no dazzling dreams of Platonic Republics or Morean Utopias; but with a determination to establish a free government wherein religion and learning should walk together, twin sisters in a common cause. They came looking for freedom to worship God, planning institutions that should foster intelligence, liberty and piety. Accordingly, while yet the Mayflower was plowing its pioneer furrow through the yielding waters, those

“ Noble sires of noble sons ”

drew up on the fly-leaf of a Bible the very first compact of constitutional liberty for this new world. And just so soon as their pilgrim feet pressed the virgin soil of this western world they began the erection of institutions. The Puritan in New England, the Dutchman in New Amsterdam, the Huguenot and the Covenanter in the South, each built as his first institution the church of the living God. In that church, as the all-authoritative oracle of the conscience, they enthroned the word of God; and as the expounder of the word they installed the ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ. There admonition, comfort, doctrine and exhortation fell upon their hearts from the messenger of the Most High. And then, because their faith was grounded in intelligence, reason, understanding and will, they built beside the church the school house, whose function was the development of these constituent elements of the mind. Thus, those “ forefathers of a glorious race ” addressed themselves to the development of the essential factors of the inner manhood. And the necessary product was *manhood*. Thus, from its very inception

this North American nation was dedicated to the divine mission of the making of manhood.

III. And now, after two centuries and three quarters of experience, *mark how this mission to manhood has paid*. It has paid not alone in dividends of manhood, but also in all those diverse dividends which manhood is capable of achieving. It has not only paid, but paid better beyond all computation than the material mission policy pursued by our sister South American States.

Once again throw those twin lines of immigrants into comparison. By their achievements in these two centuries and three quarters judge them. You will see that those immigrants who came to climate and conditions dangerous and difficult, but who made manhood of the noblest sort their pursuit, have achieved manhood. And that manhood, pure of motive, persistent in purpose, forceful with energy, intelligent in judgment, clear in conviction and aggressive in action, has achieved all else that makes a nation powerful. We have wealth in comparison with which the treasures of the fabled gold halls of the Incas are insignificant. We have institutions revered the round world over. And beneath it all, the secret of it all, we have a manhood which in the fibre of its intellectual, moral and physical power is universally respected. On the other hand, those immigrants who made *gold*, rather than God and humanity, their quest, have, comparatively speaking, neither wealth, manhood nor national power and prestige. Thus we learn the lesson of to-day, not alone from the buried cities and civilizations of the old world, but we lay before us the opposite objectives and parallel pursuits of the republics and states of the new world. We let them speak to us out of the teeming thought and throbbing events of our own days. And they inform

us, in language not to be mistaken, that that nation makes most permanent progress which aims not alone at material things, but at the making of a manhood into which has been breathed the vital breath of the Son of God.

IV. The elements or factors essential to the fulfillment of our mission as a nation are: 1. *A parentage pure and righteous.* Before sons can be "as plants grown up in their youth," and daughters "as cornerstones polished after the similitude of a palace," there must be sons and daughters. The raw material, so to speak, out of which a noble national manhood is made, is well-born children. Blessed is that nation that is a nation of families, where children sit like olive plants about their fathers' tables! It has the elemental factor of a great and glorious manhood and nationality. Woe to that nation whose marriage tie is lax, whose marriage list is low and whose children are natural born! It has in it, no matter how seemingly prosperous, the elements fatal to greatness, to manhood, to progress and religion. Napoleon I once said, "The need of France is mothers." And as Napoleon III, of uncertain ancestral antecedents, handed his sword to William I, son of Louise, mother pure of Prussia, he, too, must have felt France's need. For the march of William's veterans from Berlin to Paris was not more the march of the sturdy sons of Germany than of the pure motherhood of the Fatherland. The lesson is plain. Every nation that will live and be masterful, that will be productive of high, true manhood, needs not merely motherhood, but a parentage pure and righteous throughout.

2. Another essential factor in the making of manhood is *family government and home influence.* This factor is the complement of the former. And it is equally important, for the family is the first and the

fundamental institution. Out of it proceed all other institutions. Here, in the embryonic and plastic state, are the state, the social world and the church of God. How important, then, is it that the family government and home influence be active and firm and healthful! These are the nurturing powers and processes that are soonest to shape our sons and daughters into a symmetrical manhood and womanhood, and thereby impart to our institutions a lasting stability and usefulness. Some one has said that family government is a lost art, and that we must depend on influence alone. Well, if that be true, then we need to re-discover that lost art. For when government is lacking, influence is lame. The home that has not in it the gentle government of the family, is a school of anarchy as regards the state, a menace to the institutions of society and a foe to the kingdom of God. Therefore, as we love manhood for its own sake and for its outreaching influence, let us make our homes schools of order and patriotism as touching the state, of purity and virtue as touching society, and of reverence and religion as touching the kingdom of the living God.

3. Again, the *atmosphere beyond the circle of our homes must be purified in order to the making of a pure manhood*. And that lays a mighty and a practical task on us. For all the environment of the growing generation is set thick with threats to their highest welfare. Especially is this true of those who dwell in cities. The atmosphere they breathe is charged with elements of evil. The city condenses deviltry. It tests to the utmost every virtue. Here the fraternity of evil is most enterprising and daring. Here iniquity is intensest. Every great city is a witches' caldron into which every

“Secret, black and midnight hag”

casts the elements of a fatal charm. The "strange woman," whose "steps take hold on hell;" the rum-seller who in defiance of decency giveth his neighbor drink; the theatrical vendor of melodramatic nastiness that panders to passion; the theoretical anarchist who struts the stage in an atmosphere of atheism and smoke; the practical anarchist who, as an offender, violates law, or as an official winks at the violation,—these dance about the caldron and cast in the elements which

" For a charm of powerful trouble
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble."

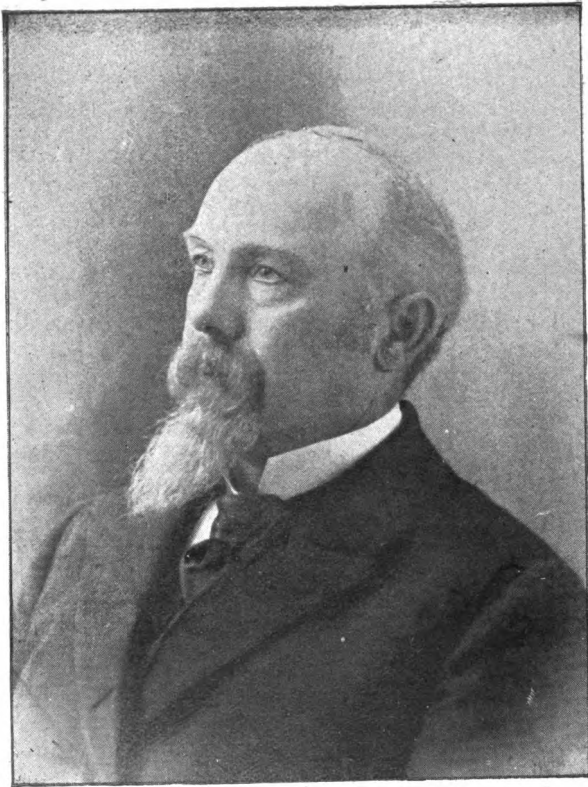
And this tormenting vapor vitiates the very air breathed by the coming manhood. It needs that some mighty moral Hercules shall come to the cleansing of our cities. An aroused moral sentiment stirred to righteous wrath would do the work. And for the sake of the manhood of to-morrow the manhood of to-day ought to rid our cities of the harpies that pollute and prey upon them.

4. And then, when we have exorcised the evil spirits, *we must bring in the good spirits*; else the last state will be worse than the first. Schools with loftier moral tone in teaching and less politics in management; churches entrenched in gospel truths for which they deign no apology, and exercising a Christly charity; a society less eager of entertainment and more earnest in attainment; a state where justice holds an even scale, where every man either from choice or compulsion obeys law, and where the frigidity of honesty freezes out the malarial poison of corruption, these are some of the positive virtues, civic, religious and social, public and private, that are needed for the making of manhood.

And as we value the state, as we would save the republic and perpetuate the nation, let us cherish the ideals and encourage the endeavors that fashion a manhood modeled after the Noblest Pattern. For

“ What constitutes a state ?
 Not high raised battlement or labored mound,
 Thick wall, or moated gate ;
 Not bays and broad-armed ports,
 Where, laughing at the storm, rich navies ride ;
 Not starred and spangled courts,
 Where low-browed baseness wafts perfume to pride.
 No;—men, high-minded men,
 With powers as far above dull brutes endued
 In forest, brake, or den,
 As beasts excel cold rocks and brambles rude ;
 Men, who their duties know,
 But know their rights, and, knowing, dare maintain,
 Prevent the long-aimed blow,
 And crush the tyrant while they rend the chain :
 These constitute a state.
 And sovereign law, that state’s collected will,
 O’er thrones and globes elate
 Sits empress, crowning good, repressing ill.”

That, please God, is the brand of manhood we want. And let us make it our chiefest concern to cherish and encourage its growth ! God give us bread without scarceness, hills covered with cattle and vales with corn ! God grant that our orchards may laugh in the glee of a full fruitage, and that our vineyards may be wrapped in the purple of a royal vintage. In a word, may it please God to grant us the largest material prosperity consistent with our safety ! But, oh, above all this, and by all this God grant us a manhood modeled after the pattern of the Perfect Man, the Nazarene Peasant, the Savior of the world, the Son of God ! Amen.



DAVID HOWELL.

THE LAW OF CHRISTIAN GIVING.

BY REV. DAVID HOWELL,*

Synodical Superintendent of Home Missions.

Text: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there may be no gathering when I come." 1 Cor., 16:2.

The earnest, almost plaintive cry of every Christian denomination for larger contributions to the benevolent work in which the church is engaged, leads thoughtful men to inquire why such persistent demands for money are necessary. Is it because the objects are unmeritorious, or is it because Christian people are not in the spirit of giving?

Not a few are bold enough to say that the church is actuated by the same spirit of over-expansion which periodically runs riot in commercial enterprises, bringing upon the people financial bankruptcy and ruin. The churches, therefore, in their judgment, should not be encouraged to advance their expenditures beyond the normal receipts for such purposes. The term

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normal is with them an indefinite ideal. Others, more thoughtful and penetrating in their views of the needs of the world and the relation of the church thereto, freely admit the need and deplore the lack of sufficient means to properly carry forward the work of evangelization. They are so given over, however, to schemes and devices for raising funds that the development of the spirit of benevolence in the individual giver is lost sight of, and the object for which they labor is in a measure defeated. Still others, more discerning because more spiritually minded, not only see the urgent need of haste in preaching the gospel of Christ to all nations, but as clearly see that the lack of interest and lack of means to forward Christ's work lies in an imperfect understanding and personal neglect of the scriptural principle of benevolence.

Earnest, liberal Christian people bewail the seeming slowness of world evangelization, and regret the meagerness of the funds provided by the churches for this purpose. Those, however, who are open-handed, free, generous, and to whom giving is easy, are not usually those who have the means to sustain the charities of the church and of the age. Such people need but little stimulus to cause them to give liberally to the extension of Christ's church. It is those who love money, who toil and sacrifice for it, who save it, who cling to it, and to whom it is hard to part with it, who have this work to do. It is in the hearts of such people that the true principle and spirit of Christian benevolence must be implanted or they never become liberal. The constraining love of Christ must come in and awaken conscience, establish principle and arouse devotion to duty, if they ever give easily. With such people emotional appeals soon lose their power. Commercial and strategical methods of securing money in the name of

benevolence are ephemeral. They may succeed temporarily, but the last spiritual state of him upon whom they are practiced is worse than the first. In the limited time before me it will be impossible to examine the full doctrine of Christian giving as set forth in the Scriptures. Such an examination, however, clearly reveals not only the fundamental principle of giving to the Lord, but much as to the manner and amount of such gifts.

The fundamental principle involved in true Christian benevolence, briefly summarized, is *to make giving to Christ a part of worship*. If we examine carefully the eighth chapter of Second Corinthians, we see that giving is the out-flowing of the grace of Christ which was in them. The grace which brought Christ from heaven to the cross will flow out of the Christian, because, if he has not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. "As ye abound in every thing, in faith, in utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence and in love toward us, see that ye abound in *this grace* also." (2 Cor. 8:7.)

Under the Jewish system there was no worship without giving, and every act of giving was an act of worship. Every one was to bring an offering. "None shall appear before me empty," said the Lord God. It was not necessary that all gifts should be so munificent as was Solomon's when he came to dedicate the temple; twenty-two thousand oxen, one hundred and twenty thousand sheep and other things in proportion. The poor man was not deprived of worship because he could not bring a talent of gold, or an unblemished bullock or sheep. He might bring his turtle-doves, his young pigeons, or if he had nothing else, his little portion of flour, his wine, his new corn, his cakes baked or fried, or even his sprinkling of salt, but he must not come empty in his worship. Worship and giving were in-

separably connected. The same truth is taught in the gospels and epistles of the New Testament. Gifts and offerings and worships go together.

In all our benevolences the Apostle directs that certain conditions shall have attention. First, they must be acts of worship ; second, at stated times ; third, " upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store ; " and, fourth, they must be proportionate and universal.

If we give as an act of worship we give directly to Christ. " Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. " This important fact is apparently too often not comprehended by the bestowers of benevolences, neither does it find a place in the appeals and methods of those who depend upon commercial devices, or upon arousing the emotions for success in securing money for benevolent purposes. The Christian believer, he who hopes by the merit of Christ's atonement to be saved from the effects of sin, and who desires to be submissive in all things to the will and mind of Christ, cannot but feel that he should use all things which have come into his possession in such a manner as shall deserve the approval of his Lord. He will regard what he has as lent from God, and must very largely be returned to him in such manner and measure as will return him the greatest blessing. Such a believer will worship God with an offering, and it will be easy to give. But, if we hold our possessions as something not devoted to Christ, and our gifts are wrenched from us unwillingly or with reservation ; if we have no other idea than to feed and clothe needy men, or to stop the appeals and what seems to us the importunities of solicitors and collectors, we shall always give grudgingly and sparingly. If we look upon giving as something to be regretted, or to be endured only, we

shall give with no heart, no faith, and there will follow no reward. If we give to Christ as a part of worship, we do not give to men, we give to him directly. We do not give to foreign missions, or to home missions, or to the poor if we give as an act of worship, but to Christ. It is pleasant to know that giving is as acceptable to him as prayer; while, without offerings, our worship is not complete. Christ does not demand impossibilities from his disciples, or that they shall give to him what they have not, but he does demand that we hold all that he has given us in trust for him, and that in every act of worship some part of it, either treasure or service, shall be returned to him.

Giving to Christ as an act of worship will relieve the giver of anxiety as to the ultimate use to which the gift may be put. He has received the gift and will direct and use it. Whether he sends it to foreign fields to enlighten the heathen, whether he uses it to send a minister to a mission church at home, or whether he allows Judas to steal it, the giver has not the responsibility. Every one's duty is to set apart a share of his goods to-day for Christ, and it matters not what the next call may be. It would be pleasant if we each could minister directly to our Lord's needs as did the women of Galilee, or like Mary, pour oil upon his head, but it is just as acceptable to him if we warm and clothe some cold and needy one in his name. Whether we preach or teach, whether we labor in the most menial service, whether we give a princely sum, or the poor widow's mite, if we do it in worship of our Redeemer verily we shall have our reward.

Again, giving as an act of worship will cause more to be given to Christ. The amount to be given, or rather contributed to the service of God, is to be measured only by the hold which one's possessions have

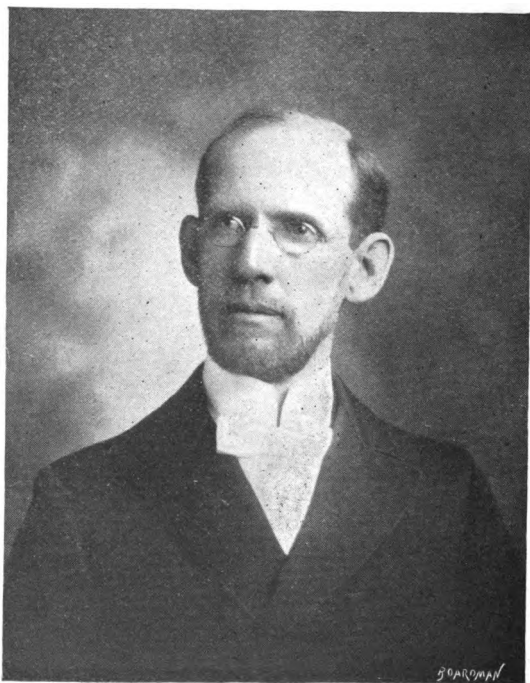
upon his heart. Just in proportion to our desire after God and his favor, will be our desire for worship of God in his appointed sanctuary; and as is our desire for sanctuary worship, so will be our willingness to bring offerings to the temple in order to promote that worship. He who seeks after God with a loving heart, spares not his substance if by any means he may honor God and aid his fellow-man. When a call is made in a congregation it is often the case that each one has his favorite object. One gives to foreign missions, another to home missions, and another to the Bible Society, each excluding all objects except the one in which he is most interested. Properly speaking, we do not give to either of these objects or causes, or to any object or cause. We should give directly to Christ and make it a solemn act of worship. Besides, if we give as an act of worship we will always be ashamed of the smallness of our gifts. So great has been the love of Christ toward us, that we ever want a larger sum to lay at his feet. It seems well nigh impossible for men to be possessed of any amount of earthly good without having it so much in mind and heart that it forms a barrier so impenetrable that the love for Christ which he requires us to show by our acts to our fellow-men is totally unable to reach us. It is only through worshipping God with offerings that the tight hand is unclasped and the hard heart so softened that men cheerfully follow the command, "Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow from thee, turn not thou away."

"Let every one of you lay by him in store as God has prospered him." A Christian with the right conception of his obligation to God will realize that he owes a certain part of his income to the cause of his Master. There seems, however, to be a lack of appreciation of the Christian's responsibility in this direction. Under

the old Hebrew dispensation one-tenth was the law. This law has never been abrogated, but is enlarged upon and emphasized by St. Paul in the text. He evidently meant that we are not to be confined to the strict letter of the law, but are to give two, three, four, five-tenths, as God has prospered us. The absolute rule as to the amount which each should contribute of that which God has placed in his hands, is only to be limited by the opportunity and ability for so contributing. The volume of our love for Christ will be measured by our alertness in seeking and embracing such opportunities. Were Christians to obey this law, there would be sufficient money in the Lord's treasury to carry on all the lines of benevolence projected by his church. It would be mere speculation to attempt to account fully for the neglect of this responsibility, but we believe it is largely due to a decadence of the spirit of worship among Christians. This decadence is easily traceable, in part, at least, to the "extreme worldliness of the church." Extreme worldliness and true Christian worship are incompatible. If worldliness enters the heart the spirit of worship will decline, and the fountains of benevolence will be dried up. The urgent need of every department of Christ's church for money to prosecute the work, and the low state of giving as an act of worship, afford an excellent opportunity for self-examination on the part of the church. Such an examination will result in much earnest prayer, stronger and more fearless preaching and a revival of true spiritual worship, accompanied with such a wealth of offerings as will permit the gospel to be preached to every creature.

When the day comes when all the church shall act on this principle, when none shall appear before Christ empty, then will vastly more be given to him, the vol-

ume of benevolence will be stable, and giving will be as delightful as any other part of worship. Then shall the King say: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungered and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me."



JOHN M. FULTON.

THE SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING OF PETER.

(A Monologue.)

BY REV. JOHN MAYHEW FULTON, D. D.,*

Pastor Westminster Church, Grand Rapids.

My name is Peter. By trade I was a fisherman of Bethsaida. Brother Andrew and I had formed a partnership with two sons of Zebedee. We did a thriving business until the wonderful excitement began to prevail along the Jordan because of the preaching of John the Baptist. We left our nets and went to Bethabara. He preached repentance and the kingdom at hand. Every utterance went home to the rough sinful natures of us fishermen. We were baptized and became his disciples.

A few days later came Jesus of Nazareth and his wonderful baptism, whom John declared to be the Son of God. Two of our company, John and brother Andrew, followed Jesus and abode with him that day. That evening my brother came back with his soul on fire. "Simon," said he, "we have found the Messias! the

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Christ! Come!" He took me to Jesus. When I went into his presence he looked upon me and the first words I ever heard fall from his lips were these: "Thou art Simon, the son of Jona. Thou shalt be called Cephas." His words and manner made an impression upon me that I shall never forget. At once I seemed to have a vision of an excitable, unstable fisherman transformed into a man of rock!

We continued with him next day, six of us, for our friends James, Philip and Nathaniel were added to the list. Jesus conversed with us much about the kingdom and his mission, and when we went back to our fishing on Galilee it was understood that as soon as he wished our services we would join him.

At Cana we saw his first miracle. At Capernaum we beheld some of his wonderful works. The days rolled by until finally he came walking along the shore just as Andrew and I were setting our nets, and he said, "Come ye after me, and I will make you fishers of men."

That was the last cast of our nets. Our voices were no longer heard hawking fish along the street. Immediately we forsook all and followed him.

It will be impossible to tell the whole story of my three years' association with Jesus, but I shall endeavor to relate the story of my own spiritual development and shall mention those incidents of my life wherein my Lord taught me my most important lessons.

I had not been with Jesus long until he taught me the very important lesson of his supremacy over the whole realm of life and activity. One fair morning the people came after him out to the seashore. He stepped into my boat and taught the people as they lined the shore, ranking back, back as far as they could hear his voice. When he had ceased speaking he turned to me

and said, "Now, Simon, launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a draught."

This young landsman, from Nazareth's carpenter-shop, who had become preacher, was now giving instructions to an old fisherman, and such instructions as very clearly showed that he knew nothing about it. "Launch out into the deep"—why, every fisherman knew that the shoals and grassy patches were the places for fish. Broad open day, too, when every fisherman knew that night was the orthodox time for casting nets. Imagine me, as successful a fisherman as ever followed the craft, launching out into the deep where no fish stay, and casting my nets, with that crowd of people watching me from the shore! They would think I was daft, and my Master too! So I entered my protest and demurrer. I did it mildly as possible, but in such a way as to let him know that an old fisherman didn't approve the plan—that the sure result would be empty nets. "Why you see, Master, we have washed our nets and put them away. We were out there dragging our nets up and down all night and took nothing—every fish darted away, and now you ask us to do it in broad open day! Nevertheless," I said, seeing that he was not going to yield, "nevertheless at thy word I will do it." Off we sailed for the deep. I was rebellious. I felt that he was making dunces of us all. How it was done I shall never know, but I suppose the same divine power that afterward stilled the waves and walked on the surface of them, now streamed under the surface and brought the finny tribes north, south, east and west—flocking out there into the deep. At last he ordered us to cast the nets, and never did more hopeless nets sink down into that sea from more hopeless hands, when, *mirabile dictu!* A shoal of fish struck the net; the boat lurched back under the heavy strain; the net stretched

and tugged at its fastenings, and the threads began bursting. We beckoned James and John to bring the other boat to help. Then we lifted up the net—filled my boat with fish—filled John's boat with fish, until the boats began to sink! My heart smote me, my conscience condemned me. I had underestimated and mistreated my Lord—I felt that he knew it and was rebuking me in this tremendous way. I just fell down at his feet and exclaimed, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord. You may as well give me up. I'm not fit for discipleship. I was wrong and you were right. Forgive me, Lord, harm me not, I acknowledge my sin."

It was a new lesson to me. It enlarged the mastership of Jesus over me. I clearly perceived that Jesus knew more about my own business than I did myself—that I must yield to him in that also, that there was no department of my life or enterprise where he was not pre-eminent. Jesus was supreme in temporal and spiritual affairs. I submitted all.

The next important lesson for me to learn was that I must believe and receive God's truth and grace just as he chose to dispense it. I was fond of Jesus and I believed in him; but it was in a shallow way. I was always putting my own human interpretations upon his deepest and most spiritual utterances. But there was one side to his instruction that I could never understand, did not appreciate, and did not like to hear. It seemed to me there was a streak of melancholy in him. He was looking on the dark side of life—his own life. He seemed to look forward to a violent end. He talked about being lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent, about giving his life for the world, about giving his flesh for bread, about the dread hour in which he should die at Jerusalem! I did not understand that—could see no

reason for that. I was willing to receive Jesus as my king, my guide, my teacher, my exemplar, and one day when he was enquiring of us what men thought of him, and what we thought of him, I spake up and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." My confession seemed to gladden his heart, and he said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar Jona."

Then he started again on that melancholy strain, and began to show how he must go up to Jerusalem and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed—I could stand no more of it—that mournful thought of his being killed—how could that be? Was he not the Son of God; had he not just owned to that? "Lord," I said, "get your mind off this thing! Put the thought away from you! No such thing is going to happen to you." It was the sorriest speech I ever made in my life. He saw in it the hidden hand of the evil one. He turned on me like a flash and said, "Get behind me, Satan. Thou art an offense unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Never shall I forget that day. One moment, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar Jona, God hath revealed it to thee;" the next moment, "Get thee behind me, Satan." What a conglomeration was I! Never again should I dispute the teaching of my Master. I might not understand: I must believe.

A week rolled by; no explanation had been given—that mournful word "killed" was ringing in my ears. Went away to the north. One evening Jesus took James, John and me, and we began to climb the mountain. It was a weary stretch. Reaching the point of destination, we flung ourselves down and soon were asleep, but Jesus was praying. Suddenly the divine glory that was banked up within his humanity began to

shine out with heavenly brilliancy, and pierced through our heavy eyelids. We awoke and there was that wonderful transfiguration that no pen or tongue can describe. There was Moses, whom God had buried with his own hand in the valley over against Beth-Peor; and there was Elijah, who had been caught away in a chariot of fire—Moses, the mighty law-giver, and Elijah, the mighty prophet; back they had come to talk with God's Son on the mount, and the theme of their conversation was that which had always been unwelcome and distasteful to my dull earthly ears, "his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." And somehow I gathered up that the future of Moses and Elias, of Abraham and Samuel and David and Daniel, and all the righteous dead, was involved in that death which was to take place on Calvary. Back they had come from that bourne beyond the grave to talk of that one thing that I did not like! They seemed to be sympathizing with him, and encouraging him, and whereas I had said, "This shall not be unto thee," they seemed to be saying, "On, on, to Calvary! It's a dreadful day, but don't fail us! All the mighty hosts of ages past are looking forward by faith to Calvary! All the countless throngs of ages to come must look back by faith to thy atoning death. O thou Son of God, fail us not! Face the cross. Make the sacrifice, and back to heaven thou shalt go to receive crowns and praises and love and gratitude everlasting!" Down we came from the glory-mountain. No word of explanation was given. The great truth was still a mystery. I did not understand it, but somehow I felt differently toward it. I was glad for what I had seen and heard. His death was to be a stupendous event accomplishing stupendous results. Since then I have learned something of the meaning. "There is none other name under heaven." "We are redeemed

not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ."

My next lesson was on the necessity of meekness and humility. We knew the end was near and the consummation of the kingdom close at hand. What mighty revolution of empires was to take place we knew not, but we were eager for places of preferment and positions of importance. "Who shall be greatest?" was a question we could not help thinking about and discussing. We sat down to the table and not one was willing to take the menial service of feet-washing. Not one would volunteer. Whom would the Lord designate? We looked one at another, and waited almost breathlessly. After a painful pause which made our unwillingness conspicuously prominent, Jesus arose, girt himself with a towel, poured some water into a basin, and without one word began to wash our feet as we reclined on the table couches. Oh, how I wished I had done it! He went from one to another; at last he came to me. I could not permit it, and shrinking back I said, "Lord, dost thou wash my feet?" He saw my reverence and quietly replied, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." "Thou shalt never wash my feet," I exclaimed. "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me," was his calm, clear reply. The thought of being cut off from my Master's favor and love brought me to my senses, or drove me pendulum-like to the opposite extreme, and I flung myself down on the couch, saying, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." But again he calmly replied, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." Then I was left to think on what I had done. It was my old mistake of speaking first and reflecting afterward. "Lord, dost thou wash my feet?"—that was reverence, I was

right there. "Thou shalt never wash my feet!"—that was rebellion. That was refusing to receive the offices of his humiliation. Were my feet more foul than my heart? Could I refuse to permit him to wash my feet and expect him to cleanse my sinful soul? Could I be glad that he had laid aside his garments of glory and stepped down from his heavenly throne to this lowly and wearying ministry among men, and then halt at the thought of his girding himself with a towel and washing the dust of travel from my feet?

Jesus then sat down at the head of the table and said, "Know ye what I have done unto you? Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet." It was a lesson on meekness and humility that I never shall forget to my dying day.

Then swiftly came the great crisis of my life. Jesus had said that we should all be offended because of him that night. That surely was an underrating of my devotion to him. I had made many blunders and was full of faults, but surely, if I knew anything, I knew that I loved him, and I replied, "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." "Before the cock crowing thou shalt deny me thrice," was his calm reply. I might have known better, I ought to have profited by my former mistakes, but impulsively I replied, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." Don't blame me too severely. It was not boasting; it was my love that made me say it. I felt and meant every word I uttered. But how little did I understand myself, my weakness and the tragic events that lay in between that hour and the morning dawn!

Quickly came Gethsemane, the arrest, the flight.

In the conflict I had used my sword and smote off the ear of Malchus. I was fearful of the results of my rashness. In terror I followed to the judgment hall. I was not standing and listening to what was taking place with my Master, but was sitting among the group off by the fire. Suddenly a whispering began about me and I felt every eye upon me. "Yes," said a young maid, "this man was with him." I winced; but I said, "Woman, I know him not." Later another charged me and said, "This fellow was with the Nazarene." I hurried an oath of denial that silenced them for an hour. Then another boldly charged me with being his disciple, and said my speech betrayed me. Speech! Well, if speech would settle this thing I would give them a sample, and I let loose my old fisherman's tongue with a volley of oaths their ears had not been accustomed to—then I heard the cock crow—memory burned within—I turned my glance toward Jesus—his eyes were resting upon me—he seemed to say, "You don't know me, Peter? You don't remember when I called you from your fishing? You don't remember how I healed your wife's mother? You don't remember how I healed the leper, how I fed the multitude, and walked on the sea? You don't remember Moses and Elias on the mount? You don't remember the feet washing and the supper last night, and my warning that you would deny me thrice? Oh, Peter, don't you know me?"

Out I went into the night with a flood of tears bursting from my eyes. Away I went into the gray dawn of Jerusalem's most tragic day. I had done what Jesus said I would do, and I said I would not do. On his own ears had fallen my curses and denials, and throbbing through my own brain came the memories of his words: "Whosoever shall deny me before men, him I will also

deny before my Father which is in heaven." I was cut off at last. I was out of fellowship. I had been at the gates of heaven; now I was at the gates of hell. That day Jesus was crucified. I had no opportunity to confess and set matters right. Others had stood about the cross, and taken his body to the tomb, but I had denied my Lord! They could go back to the upper room, but where was I to go? Judas had betrayed him, and I had denied him—would the others associate with us? Dare I enter the door where the disciples assembled? I wanted to go, yet I kept aloof. That night I climbed the stairway, but my courage failed me, and I crept away again. I felt that they would condemn me, for my own heart condemned me. I avoided all who knew me. I wandered through the streets. I went to Calvary and saw the cross standing whereon my Lord had died. I ventured to enter Joseph's garden where the soldiers watched his grave. I neither ate nor slept. I could endure it no longer; the second evening I went to the upper room. They greeted me coldly. I could bear that because I deserved it. I threw myself down upon a couch to listen in silence. It was a sad night for all. Again and again I heard them rehearse the story of the crucifixion—his sayings on the cross—his address to John, his prayer for his enemies—oh, if I had only been there, perhaps he would have spoken to me—perhaps have prayed for me! How much a man misses when he fails to be in his place and do his duty!

Day dawned at length. Women, more faithful and loving than men, had gone with spices and ointment to the grave. Suddenly they burst back into the room, exclaiming, "Jesus is risen. He is alive again. He sent word for his disciples to meet him in Galilee." Then Mary turned her head and beheld me. "O Peter," she said, "he sent a special message to you. The angel

said, 'Go tell his disciples and Peter, that he goeth before you into Galilee.'” Too good to be true! I sprang through the door, and ran along the street; on through the north gate I hastened and down through the valley, clambered up the sides of Golgotha and on to Joseph's garden. John had outrun me and stood looking in. I pushed on past him into the sepulchre and found it even as the women had said. Risen indeed! Now to Galilee! Northward I turned my face along Samaria's highway with something of my old-time vigor. Through the villages I passed like one on an errand of life or death. The one hundred and twenty miles dwindled to sixty and the sixty to ten; four days' journey in two, for Jesus had risen, and Peter had been sent for! By the shores of the sea we loved so well we met again. There was no human eye to see, no human ear to hear, when the gracious Lord restored again his erring apostle. I had sinned grievously, and my Lord taught me in that solemn hour that it was no little matter to sin against light and love.

O ye that have erred and sinned and fallen, come back to the Savior! Out of communion you can have no peace, and the sweetest place for the penitent this side of heaven's gate is where the tears fall at Jesus' feet, for there he restores the joy of his salvation.

One great lack in my life remained to be supplied. Jesus had said, "It is expedient that I go away, that I may send the Comforter." That promise was fulfilled at Pentecost. Then I entered into an absolutely new experience. I had read about it in Joel—the promised pouring out of God's Spirit upon all flesh; I heard it from the lips of Jesus—"Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." But what it meant was more than I could tell.

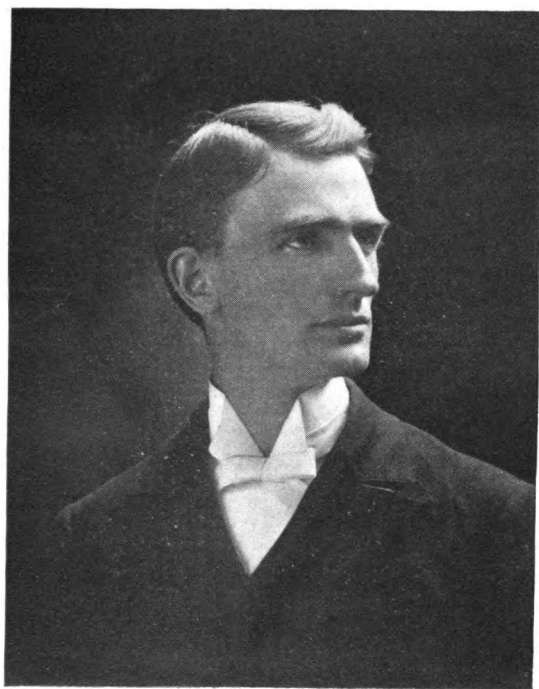
At last it came—heaven's breath, and fire, and

power. At last I became a fisher of men. At last I was becoming somewhat a man of rock. At last I found the secret of the blessed life—not by might, nor by power, but by God's Spirit.

Oh, if there is anything that will purge away the dross of pride and self; if there is anything that will make a man loyal and true to Jesus; if there is anything that will take away absolutely all fear of the face of mortal clay, and make one dare the wrath of men, the scourge, the dungeon, the sword; if there is anything that will fit me for efficient service of the Master, it is such a baptism of the Holy Spirit as I received at Pentecost and again and again in after life. Without that the Christian life will be just what mine was before—a mixture of weakness and sin.

That gift is for every son and daughter of God, for my Lord himself said it: "If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him."

These were the great lessons I learned in the school of apostleship: The supremacy of Jesus over the entire realm of human activity; the necessity of believing and receiving God's truth and grace just as he chose to dispense it; the necessity of meekness and humility; wretchedness of being out of fellowship with Jesus, and the necessity of the Holy Spirit in every Christian life.



ROBERT S. INGLIS.

GOD'S WITNESSES.

BY REV. ROBERT S. INGLIS,*

Pastor First Presbyterian Church, Jackson.

Text: "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater." I John, 5:9.

"He left not himself without witness." Acts 14:17.

How credulous we are of the witness of men. We have become so accustomed to being astonished by things men accomplish that we cease to wonder, almost, and begin to expect, as a matter of course, nothing else. This readiness to receive the witness of men was signally manifested about two years ago when announcement of the discovery of the X rays was made. We did not know who Roentgen was, but we were willing to believe in him. When a little later pictures appeared in the magazines illustrating this new invention, which abolished what was formerly considered a property of matter, we only said, "Wonderful." Dr. Nansen returns from the unknown North and tells of scenes that no man before had ever witnessed, and we received his witness without question.

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We receive the witness of men ; the witness of God is greater. The great witness of God to the world is Jesus Christ. Jesus of Nazareth is inexplicable without God. But he is not the only witness God has given us. When Paul preached to the people of Lystra, he said to them, (Acts 14:17,) "Turn unto the living God who made heaven and earth and sea and all that in them is. Nevertheless he left not himself without witness in that he did us good and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." He left not himself without witness. What witness hath God left of himself?

I. Witness, the universe. David cried, (Psalm 19:1,) "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork." Paul said, (Romans 1:20,) "The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood from the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse." There is no excuse for not knowing God. You may have heard the story of the Frenchman, traveling in company with an Arab, who, when he arose in the morning, finding the Arab on his knees, with a sneering tone asked him whom he was addressing. The Arab's reply was, "God." "How do you know there is any God to talk to?" asked the skeptic. "How do I know there is a God?" answered the son of the desert. "How do I know that a man and a camel passed my tent at night? I did not see them, for my eyes were closed in slumber. I did not hear them, for my ears were dull of hearing. Yet I know that a man and camel passed my tent in the night, because I see the footprints in the sand." So we reply when asked why we believe in God—because we see his handiwork.

Yet men *will* deny God. They deny even this wit-

ness of himself. They say this universe is the result of spontaneous generation, by process of evolution producing what we see. But they are without excuse. Back of all theories, back of all philosophies lies the question, Whence? Whence life, from motion? Whence motion, from matter? Whence matter, from the atom? Whence then the atom? For this last question as for the first there is no other answer and no better explanation than that given in Genesis, "In the beginning, God." In spite of all assertions to the contrary we still believe that the wisest and best of our students of the universe and its laws and life accept this theory of the beginning. And with pride we point to Newton and Faraday, Dana and Guyot, Dawson, and Sir William Thomson, who do accept it and make the fear of the Lord the beginning of their wisdom. But it is only natural to expect that the Creator of the universe and man should have made further revelation of himself to man. And so he has in what we call,

II. Witness No. 2, the Bible. The word of God to man. The revelation of his son, Jesus Christ. So we hold up this testimony and say, "He hath not left himself without witness." Jesus said just a few days before his work was finished, (Mt. 24:14,) "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations." And we point to this prophecy, so boastful considering the occasion and the maker, if he were not divine, and cry again, "We know that his witness is true." Examine this witness. Consider the circumstances under which it was produced. Think of the time it was in process of production. Before John, before Christ, before the prophets, before David, before Joshua, yea, even before Moses, were its testimonies known. From Moses to John, from Genesis to Revelation, a thousand years and half a thousand

more. For 1900 years it has been the same. Why doubt that part of it was the same 1500 more? What unity! A book of books, 66 in all. 40 authors. The lands of Egypt and Babylon and Assyria and Judea and Greece and Rome in it. Different tongues, different people, yet one. One in cause, one in author, one in purpose, one in spirit. It is "the everlasting gospel."

The traveler gazing at the dome of St. Peter's in Rome is told that it was not completed until its architect, Michael Angelo, had been in his tomb for fifty years. Yet the work was brought to glorious completion, because his plans were followed. The great dome is a witness to the design of the architect. So this book is a witness to the design of its author. Voltaire one hundred and fifty years ago told the world this book was becoming obsolete. That was a prophecy no newer than false. Poor Voltaire has been a long time dead, but this book is not obsolete yet. Obsolete! Not in '81 when two and one-half million copies were issued in this land. Obsolete! Not when nine hundred thousand copies were sold in '85 at a penny each. Obsolete! In 1300 a span of London bridge cost \$125, a copy of the Bible cost \$150. To-day a span of London bridge could not be bought for \$10,000. while a silk-sewn, leather-bound copy of this book may be purchased for \$1.00. No, it is not obsolete yet.

Look at its marvelous, yes, miraculous preservation, in the face of the opposition of man and devil. It is a sign not of a dying but a living book that it is spoken against. In some ways this criticism is good for it. It is shutting men up by process evolutionary to the question, if the Bible is not from God, whence is it? All theories urged against it, one by one, have failed, till the world is being persuaded that it is what the greatest statesman and grandest Christian gentleman of the

century has called it, "the impregnable rock." Heine, the infidel, in a moment of admiration wrote, "What a book! Founded in the abysses of creation, towering up above the blue secrets of Heaven, sunrise and sunset, promise and fulfillment, birth and death, the whole drama of humanity—all in this book."

III. Witness the third, the church visible.

Jesus himself is a witness of God to man. The church is called "the body of Christ." When Christ instituted the church, gathering about him his followers on the Mount of Ascension, in giving them parting directions he said, (Acts 1:8,) "And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in Judea and in Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." What a prophecy in the light of this day! What presumption in the light of that day! Witness the change in those apostles from the day of crucifixion to the day of Pentecost. What a marvelous transformation in fifty days! What changes Peter, the lying coward denying his Lord, into Peter, the lion-hearted, denouncing his Lord's murderers? What but the conviction in his mind of the truth that Jesus was God? Witness the growth of that "body of the Lord." Beginning at Jerusalem they soon had "turned the world upside down." Witness the blood of the martyrs. What did it mean but that God had not left himself without witness, and that greater than man's witness for error was God's witness for the truth. Mark the progress of the church to-day in fulfillment of that presumptuous (?) prophecy. Here in this, then, "uttermost part of the earth," is his kingdom growing, as Dr. Carrol of the census bureau has shown, seventeen per cent. faster than our rapidly growing population. We are sorry that it grows no faster, but this growth in this day is a witness of God through his church.

Yet men cry out against the church and declare it composed of a lot of hypocrites. Hear the words of William Cullen Bryant, taken from some of his last writings, "If I thought that the religion of skepticism were to gather strength and prevail and become the dominant view of mankind, I should despair of the fate of mankind in the years that are to come." Listen to James Russell Lowell in answer to skeptical views expressed in his presence, "I fear when we indulge ourselves in the amusement of going without a religion, we are not perhaps aware how much we are sustained at present by an enormous mass all about us of religious feeling and religious conviction. These men indulging themselves in the amusement of going without a religion may be thankful that they live in lands where the gospel they neglect has tamed the beastliness and ferocity of men who but for Christianity might long ago have eaten their carcasses like the South Sea islanders, or cut off their heads and tanned their hides like the monsters of the French Revolution."

No, the church is not hypocritical, and none know this better than its defamers. Even this accusation has its good. Not long ago I was handed change for a five dollar bill, and one dollar passing through my inexperienced fingers was so slippery and so smooth that its spuriousness was at once apparent. That counterfeit dollar was a hypocrite. A hypocrite is just a counterfeit Christian. There never was a counterfeit without a genuine. There never was a counterfeit of a genuine of little value. Worth is necessary. We are not bothered with counterfeit coppers, but counterfeit dollars are abundant. A Christian profession is worth imitating. The church is worth imitating. The church is worth copying. We are sorry that Christianity is sometimes counterfeited. We lament the presence of

the hypocrite in the church, but it proves the value of the church and the worth of a Christian reputation. Down through the ages has shone like a star, its lustre sometimes dimmed by clouds of immorality or controversy, its existence threatened by flaming comets of persecution and unbelief, but always at the center, clear and steadfast, the church of Jesus Christ—his body on earth—a witness to the men of this world that God has not left them without witness in the world.

But there is yet another witness that God hath left of himself, and that the greatest of all—the Holy Ghost.

IV. "The Holy Ghost also is a witness to us." (Heb. 10:15.) The three former may be called external witnesses, but this is internal as well as external. The former are Christian evidences, but this is Christian experience. We could argue by the hour for the support of our faith. We can give "reasons for the faith that is in us," satisfactory to ourselves, at least. But all this will not do so much to convert a soul as the testimony of experience. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you." Peter at Pentecost said, "We are witnesses of these things." So you and I are witnesses of the power of the Holy Spirit.

(a). We are witnesses of his converting power. Look at Augustine, look at Bunyan, look at Newton, look at Whitefield, look at Jerry McAuley, men turned suddenly and completely from darkness of sin to light of righteousness by the power of the Holy Spirit. And probably without going so far away we could add another example of a sinner saved by grace.

(b). We are witnesses of the composing power of the Holy Spirit. Did you ever read the story of Betty, the match-seller? (A. T. S. No. 276.) Old Betty was converted in her old age, and from that happy day to the day of her death never could do as much as she thought

she ought for her gracious Lord. She went about doing good, nursing the sick, begging for and giving to those poorer than herself. But at last she was taken with a violent cold and confined to her bed by rheumatism. There she was as happy as she had been while more active. One day an old friend called and said, "I little expected to find you so patient; it must be a great trial to lie here and do nothing." "Not at all, sir, not at all," was her earnest response. "When I was well I used to hear the Lord say to me day by day, 'Betty, go here; Betty, go there; Betty, do this; Betty, do that;,' and I used to do it as well as I could; and now I hear him say every day, 'Betty, lie still and cough.'" But it is not only the humble who have experienced this composing power. It is great enough for the great. A veteran statesman lies dying; by his side sits a great merchant prince of a different political persuasion, but of the same religious persuasion. What is it that brings comfort to the dying statesman? The discussion of questions of economy; the rehearsing of his great campaigns? No. But Samuel J. Randall lays a thin hand over his fluttering heart, saying, "I have peace," and then pointing to a Bible lying open on John Wanamaker's lap, he says, "I found it there." With the same faith you and I can sing composedly,

"Peace, peace, sweet peace! Wonderful gift from above,
O wonderful, wonderful peace! Sweet peace, the gift of
God's love."

(c.) But we are witnesses, too, of the consoling power of the Holy Spirit when death has robbed us of those dear to us as life. Have you ever been a witness of this power? I have. I have stood beside a young mother, who for hours had been sitting, holding her first born on her bosom, while the little one breathed

out slowly the breath of life, and praying God for help and strength for the coming trial. I have seen her as the hours crept on in the early morning, when the tide of life ebbs so low, and the little one "fell asleep," looking up toward heaven with a face in which faith was marked even stronger than pain, and in which hope was stronger than despair, cry with a groan which cannot be uttered, "O God, open wide your arms and take my little baby." From such a scene as that I turned with firmer faith and deeper devotion, because I had seen the power and felt the power of the Holy Spirit to comfort and console.

But some one says, "I don't find such comfort; I have never felt this converting, composing or consoling power of the Holy Spirit." I am sorry for such a one. This may be the reason. I have said this is an internal as well as external witness. It is more internal than external. I John, 5:10 says, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." If you do not believe in Jesus Christ you cannot have this internal witness. Paul says, (Romans 8:16,) "The spirit beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God." Do you feel that you are a child of God? Once when I was in very deep distress, when the billows were going over my head, I received a great many letters, very sweet and very comforting. Praise God for human sympathy. It speaks to us of the divine sympathy. But amongst these letters was one especially helpful, not so much for what it contained, as for the fact that it was written in a, to me, familiar handwriting, and began, "My child," and was signed, "Your father." If so and if you can take this word of his as a letter from a loving father to a dear child, then you will find comfort in it and the consolation of the Holy Spirit will be yours. But another cries, "Oh, it's all such a

mystery to me. I cannot understand it all." Poor child, what would it be if you could understand it? Do you remember how many things were mysteries to you when a child that are all plain now? And yet you are only a child somewhat grown. Even Paul did not say, "Behold, I show you the explanation of how we pass from death to life." No. He said, "Behold, I show you a mystery, we shall be changed." Mystery? Aye, a glorious mystery. And better for me the mystery of the gospel than the mistiness of agnosticism. Better for me the mystery of the future life than the mysticism in this life. Better, a thousandfold, for me to see "through a glass darkly" than not to see at all.

A few years ago I traveled out to our northwestern coast. My friends there had written me of the beauties of their great guardian mountain, Mt. Tacoma. Travelers on the way who had seen it told me of its glories. I had a desire to see it. When we crossed the mountain range at early dawn I was watching for it, but it was nowhere in sight. Finally I said to a fellow-traveler, "Where is Mount Tacoma?" "It ought to be right over there," he replied, "but I fear you will not be able to see it for the mists." But I kept watching in the direction he had indicated, and suddenly as we rounded a spur of the mountain chain, away up through the clouds, towering in imperial grandeur above the little hills about it, was a great white breast of mother earth, and I had just time to say, "That must be Mount Tacoma," when it was gone. That glimpse was the only view I had of it. From the valleys below and from the streets of the cities on the sound, morning after morning, I turned my eyes mountainward, but I could not see it. Yet I doubted not it was there. One day from a sparkling stream of water dashing into the sound I drank a refreshing draught, and when I asked,

“Whence this cool, clear water?” my friends replied, “From the mountains,” but I could not see them. Yet I doubted not my friends. I received the witness of men in regard to that mountain of earth. The witness of God to Mount Zion is greater. We cannot see it now for the mists of life. Occasionally we catch maybe a glimpse or are refreshed by the streams that flow down from that hidden source; but some morning, bright and fair, we will wake up and the clouds will all be cleared away, and before us will tower in glory the city of our God, the mountain of his holiness, the streams whereof make glad this earth.

THE CERTAINTIES OF RELIGION.

BY REV. HENRY NEILL,*

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Text: "It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed." Luke 1:3-4.

Among the interesting movements in our modern religious thinking and life, there is none more significant than the return to the apostolic period for study, for imitation, and for spiritual cultivation. The proximity of the period to the historic Christ gives it untold value. The truth is undisguised and applied directly to the mind and heart. The simplicity of Christianity makes an appeal that seems to one to be irresistible, and all this gives a power and attractiveness to that early period which has caused a renewed study of the spiritual forces which, even in their incipiency, were so regnant. In order to the application of the Christianity of Christ in those days the method employed by Luke

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is of the greatest interest, inasmuch as it parallels the most scientific methods of investigation employed to-day to search after facts from which truth shall be revealed. The stimulus which the modern scientific spirit has given to the search after religious truth has been of the greatest service to Christianity, as the inductive method has been so universally adopted, whether in the search for the "testimony of the rocks" or for the nervous system to be found in a frog's leg, or as to the authenticity of a Greek manuscript of the New Testament.

But Luke has antedated the Baconian theory, as disclosed by his method in the prologue to his gospel. "It seemed good to me also," exclaimed Luke, "having traced the course of all things *accurately* from the very first, to write to thee in order, most excellent Theophilus." There is a three-fold method which Luke adopts: First, that of accuracy; he has before him sources of information from the reports of eye-witnesses; and next, with a discriminating use of these reports, he pursues a rigid historic method to trace the facts "from the beginning." It was the purpose of Luke, guided by the Spirit, to trace this new phenomenon of the church from the very commencement. And then finally, the order of presentation was laid stress upon, in order that he might give emphasis to his viewpoint. "That thou mightest know, most excellent Theophilus, the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed."

The person to whom he writes, as a typical person, throws light upon the character of his gospel: Theophilus, a converted Greek, evidently acquainted with classical literature, who would demand an historical certainty and warrant. He stands as a representative of the Greek world of culture, and likewise of the great

Gentile world. Luke is writing for the Greek mind. The Greek looked upon himself as having the mission of perfecting man. Through all the ages, as has been said, in literature and art, in philosophy and bodily development, he was moving toward his one great idea, the perfect man. He accordingly bequeathed to the world the grandest models of beauty and of thought that the unaided human mind has ever produced. The gospel for the Greek must be dominated by the Greek idea. It must meet the true and correct the false in the Greek ideal. It was for Luke to portray the man more perfect than ever the Greek mind could conceive of—God in the perfect man, Christ Jesus. Here was just the Savior the Greek needed. Through that deep heart and matchless intellect and marvelous sense of the beautiful Jesus himself shone. Jesus was Deity taking human form. Luke prepares for the Greek as he declares his purpose to trace all things from the beginning, accurately and in an orderly way, that the perfection of Christ's humanity and his exquisite life might be felt.

But the time when this was written for Theophilus and the Greek world makes the purpose of Luke in the certainties of religion still more impressive. It was about the year 64, the time of Paul's imprisonment. Ever since the crucifixion of our Lord it had been a period of transition, a period of flux. The old ceremonies passed away only with friction in many places. Traditionalism was strong. The new covenant was looked upon as an innovation. The old Jewish party rejected the new, as expressed in Christ and Christianity. Nothing seemed fixed. They failed to make distinctions between the transitional and the permanent. There was a demand for certainties. Luke deemed it his mission to strengthen the faith of his

friend Theophilus, and so of the Gentile world, and he chose this method of collecting such undoubted testimony as would establish men in the certainties of religion. It shall be our privilege to emphasize some of these certainties which Luke established by his record.

What perhaps first impresses us is that Christ is so portrayed that God becomes a credibly conceived being, a God real, personal, present—a saving God. The world needed God to be revealed to them in his helpful, loving, saving power. The many religions of the world had failed to bring God near to men. It was for Luke to make God to be manifest in the flesh, “the brightness of the father’s glory and the express image of his person.” God was realized as near to men, on the side of men, their friend, their helper, their Lord and their God. This was and is a certainty of religion, as Christ made God credible, lovable, believable, and Luke has given us a view-point of Christ real and historic.

Luke likewise gives emphasis to the certainty of Christ’s power to forgive sin. He sets forth Christ in such a way as to make the soul conscious of sin. He does this by some of the inimitable parables of Christ which he records, as well as by the deep undertones of his gospel. Sin is a religious term. To be a sinner consciously one must realize something of God’s nature. Sin is to be distinguished from vice and evil and crime. As principal Fairbairn has said, “Sin is a religious term, intelligible only in the realm of religious experience and thought. Evil is a philosophical term, vice is an ethical term, crime is a legal term.” But only one to whom God has revealed himself in some degree, through Jesus Christ, becomes to himself a sinner. To the prodigal there was revealed God as father, and straightway he cries out, “I will go to my father and

will say, I have sinned against heaven and before thee and am no more worthy to be called thy son." It was the publican whom Luke portrays as having been so conscious of God that he smote upon his breast saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The story of the crucifixion as depicted by Luke tells the story of the cross as the divine estimate of sin, as well as the divine remedy for sin.

In connection with this very truth there is another certainty closely related; that the final idea of God is his sovereign fatherhood by the union of love and righteousness in him; not the Father of sentimentalism and of indulgence, but one who loves men because he hates sin in men, and because of what they may be. As Dr. John Watson has said, "With Jesus, God and Father were identical." Fatherhood was not a side of deity, it was the center. God might be a king and judge. He was first of all, last of all, and through all a father. Under fatherhood is gathered every other revelation. Jesus even reasoned in terms of the Father. "If then ye being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him." And then Luke enlarges upon God's fatherhood, as he makes it a universal fatherhood. When one compares the genealogies of Matthew and Luke as portraying the lineage of Christ, Matthew writes for the Jew and traces the lineage of Jesus only to Abraham. Matthew was only emphasizing his Jewish ancestry. But Luke, with the thought of the relation of God to the whole race through Jesus Christ, traces the lineage of Christ through many a long line of Jewish ancestry, back through Jacob and Isaac and Abraham, back through Shem and Noah and Enoch and Seth, "the son of Adam, the son of God." The humanity of Jesus traced

through all these mighty progenitors, and then "Son of God"—God the Father of all men by creation—God the Father of all men in that he is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come unto him to live. Through Jesus Christ, God as Father has made provision for all mankind,

" For the love of God is broader
Than the measure of man's mind ;
And the heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind."

There follows from this great thought the logical and natural result of the responsibilities of God's children who have said, " We are not only thine by right, but thine by choice." " And ye shall be witness unto me," saith Luke, " both in Jerusalem and all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." The certainties of religion give it the missionary character, give it its witnessing character, because Christ has made God to be understood, to be believed in, to be loved, to be followed ; because Christ has given the soul a consciousness of its sinful nature through his revelation of God ; because Christ has revealed God as a sovereign Father, as the final idea of God, and revealed him as a universal Father. Luke gathers together these certainties and uses them with tremendous propulsive force as he exclaims, " Ye shall be witnesses everywhere, for ye shall be endued with power from on high." It is a proof of the certitude of the things in which he instructed Theophilus and all the world, that these certainties have introduced the missionary age of the church, and with great accumulating power is the church rising to her responsibility. The relation of Christ to the individual causes him to issue his command to the individuals, " Go ye into all the world and

preach the gospel to every creature." But may one not believe that in this day when co-operation is being emphasized and expressed as the great solvent of material and spiritual problems, the Christ at the heart of society should exclaim to society, to organizations, even to the great Anglo-Saxon race, "Go ye into all the world." Events are just now rapidly developing with reference to this mighty accomplishment of a world's salvation. This war with Spain is not so significant in itself, but it has already forced America out from its hermitage, as it has been encircled by the mountain range of the Monroe Doctrine, that it may find itself leveling the mountains which have circumscribed it, and allying itself with Great Britain, proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ to the pagan races of the world. One may well believe that nations will be born in a day, as races surcharged with God's certainties shall give momentum to spiritual forces greater than the forces which annihilate the fortifications of an enemy, or destroy navies and armies.

But the certainties of religion must take account of the other life, and of this Luke was not unmindful, as he makes his gospel lay such stress upon the continuity of life as an impregnable certainty. Life is not affected by the dissolution of soul and body, for Luke reveals that "Lazarus the beggar died, and that the rich man also died, and the rich man lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and seeth Abraham afar and Lazarus in his bosom." Life is represented as a continuity. The Sadducees, the skeptics of that day, would try to entangle him as to the resurrection by proposing a question as to the wife who had seven husbands, and "whose wife shall she be?" And Jesus made an epoch in the history of religion when he seized the opportunity to unfold the doctrine of the future life: "The children

of this world marry and are given in marriage, but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage, neither can they die any more, for they are equal unto the angels of God, being the children of the resurrection. Now, that the dead are raised even Moses showed at the bush when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living." And then the narrative culminates in the crucifixion work and the resurrection triumph, and the certainty of eternal life is confirmed, for eternal life begins in him who heareth his word and believeth on him who sent Jesus Christ into the world.

This has been the comfort of the great as well as of the humble. Gladstone's greatness revealed itself not only as a statesman and an orator, a scholar and an author and financier, but as one who calmly and confidently waited for the great change to come to him; and, believing that life in Christ knew no ending, could say as the shadows gathered, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee;" for he was established in the certainties of religion.

And so we look upon this record of Luke, and upon what Mr. Gladstone calls "the Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture," as the foundation of our certitude. And it is then that we are able to say, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have delivered to him against that day."

THE WHITE FIELDS AND THE FEW LABORERS.

BY REV. MARCUS SCOTT,*

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Text: "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest." John 4:35.

The scene depicted here is intensely interesting. Our Savior was busy teaching and healing in the towns and villages of Galilee. Multitudes followed him, attracted by his love, and from his interest in them led to look to him with hope. Their helpless condition struck a chord in that heart that is never appealed to in vain. Jesus was moved with compassion; for he saw them—his own fellow-countrymen—scattered abroad as sheep, shepherdless and uncared for, and turning to his disciples he said, "Say not ye, there are yet four months and then cometh harvest? Behold, I say unto you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they

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are already white unto harvest." Let us meditate on these words of our Savior.

I. The field surveyed.—When our Savior uttered these words what did he really see? A country small at the largest. It was only some one hundred and fifty miles long by some fifty miles broad. Its population at the most was somewhat under six millions. And yet what a sight that was to compassionate eyes. No wonder he was deeply moved, and turned to his disciples with tear-stained eyes. Nearly nineteen centuries have rolled away since then. What about the white fields now? Are they still "white unto harvest," and are they loudly calling to-day, as of yore, for more laborers?

Let India first claim our attention. From its position, geographical and moral, situated at the very heart of Oriental Paganism, India occupies a most important position in the white fields of missionary enterprise. It has been well called the "Gibraltar of Paganism," and, like its great namesake guarding the entrance to the Mediterranean, it seemed for years to be impregnable. But if now India be the Gibraltar of Heathenism, let it be once won for Christ, and then like the other Gibraltar it will be a controlling fortress guarding the way to all the heathen empires of the East. India has a great population numbering 200,000,000 of heathen, all more or less hostile to the gospel. It has two great, ancient and powerful religions, Brahminism and Mahometanism, the most despotic religions the world has ever seen, holding the people firmly in their iron grasp. Then India has been long cursed with social caste, which with adamantine barriers prevents any intercourse among the natives, and makes it a crime which even death cannot expiate for even one man's shadow to fall upon another. For years this vast empire was

ruled over by the East India Company, whose openly avowed aim was to grow rich by India's plunder, and whose leading director once said he would rather import devils than missionaries into India. Such were only some of the difficulties the gospel had to encounter in India. At length in God's providence the doors were opened for the missionary of the cross in India, and the day-star of hope began to shine on that dark sky. Carey, Duff, Nesbit, Wilson and many others gave themselves for India, and the gift has not been in vain. The caste idea has been in many places broken down. The Hindoo the moment he becomes a Christian is not the outcast he once was. Good schools are everywhere being erected, taught by well-trained Christian men. The intelligent youths receive a sound, liberal education, and such an education can never be barren of results. In 1750 Schwartz, the most devoted man that ever gave his life to the mission cause, sailed for Tranquebar, and that same year 400 heathen were baptized as the first fruits of his labors. In 1880 the native Christian population of India numbered 500,000, and this conversion to Christianity is going on at an increased ratio year after year. Along with this there has been a marked decay in the practice of those cruel and superstitious rites which have for ages disfigured this land of palaces and palms. The widow no longer burns on the funeral pyre of her husband, and no mother now throws her child into the idolized Ganges. And yet how much remains to be done in India? Why, in England there are 40,000 ordained ministers, and at least 40,000 lay agents—an army of at least 80,000 Christian workers. And in the vast field of India we have only some 640 missionaries. Two hundred millions of heathen, our fellow-creatures, ruled over by a country professedly Christian—"Christian England"

is the name it claims—and like us they are born for the same unending eternity. Two hundred millions enslaved in ignorance, polygamy, infanticide and enforced widowhood. Bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh they are, and they are hurrying on to the grave with no peace for the present and no hope for the future, for the gospel of Jesus Christ they have never heard proclaimed. “I belong to an empire,” said a Christian Indian lately, “where seven to one name not the name that is life to me.” And again he writes: “Of every six infants one first sees the light in India; to what instruction is it born? Of every six brides one offers her vows there; to what affection is she destined? Of every six families one spreads its table there; what love unites the circle? Of every six widows one is lamenting there; what consolation will soothe her? Of every six wounded consciences one is trembling there; of what physician does it know? Of every six men that die one is departing there; what future has he before him?”

“ Far, far away in heathen darkness dwelling,
 Millions of souls forever may be lost.
 Who, who will go salvation's story telling—
 Looking to Jesus, counting not the cost?
 God speed the day when those of ev'ry nation,
 ' Glory to God ' triumphantly shall sing;
 Ransom'd, redeem'd, rejoicing in salvation,
 Shout ' Hallelujah, for the Lord is King !' ”

Look now at China and what waving harvest-fields we see. In China everything is stupendous. Its population is estimated at from 350,000,000 to 450,000,000, or twice that of India. It has an area of 3,951,130 square miles. It has a coast line of 3,350 miles, and a frontier of 12,550 miles reaching through 38 degrees of latitude, where you find every variety of animal, vegetable and

mineral. These Chinese are on the whole worthy of their country, and are generally a frugal and industrious people. While they have all the vices of pagans they yet rank above the natives of India in morality. Their civilization may well be called ancient; for it dates back to Confucius, who was born in the year 550 B. C. China has also a high type of education, and one great system of manners, letters and policy. The great wall of China, over 1,500 miles long, is the most gigantic defense ever built by man. The Chinese are passionately fond of their country, and call it the Celestial Empire. So much is this the case that on every map they give nine-tenths of the whole globe to China, one square inch to Britain, while they leave out the continent of America altogether. Their language dates back to the beginning of the Christian era, and their library of over 80,000 volumes was ancient when that of Alexandria was burned. Morally and religiously the condition of China is dreadful in the extreme. With all their civilization the Chinese are a nation of atheists, gamblers, opium eaters and drunkards. The position of woman is degraded and deplorable beyond description. The birth of a daughter is held to be a calamity and a disgrace, and about two-fifths of all the infant girls are either drowned or buried alive by their parents. And those who are not thus destroyed in infancy are sold before they reach their teens for slaves and wives.

Missions began in China in 1807 by Robert Morrison, of Morpeth. He was joined in 1818 by William Milne, and the two translated parts of the Bible into Chinese. Native converts soon began to multiply. Now there are over forty missionary societies at work within the wall of China. Chief among these we have the China Inland Mission, presided over by Mr. Hudson Taylor. Our own Presbyterian Church is also doing a

noble work for China's millions, and has many devoted missionaries spending and being spent for China. But if ever this great land is to be won for Christ the church must arise and do a thousand-fold more than it is at present doing. What are 1,200 missionaries among a heathen population of 400,000,000? In those very provinces where the missionaries are settled there are at least 80,000,000 of heathen who have never yet heard the gospel. If there were only laborers adequate to supply the white fields of China, what a harvest might now be reaped. The missionary conference at Shanghai in 1890 asked for 1,000 more missionaries at once. How long will it be until this "fortress of paganism becomes its Waterloo?"

From China glance at Africa. We call Africa the dark continent, and it fully merits the name. Until quite lately nothing was known of the interior of the continent. The heroic labors of David Livingstone first threw light on this vast land, with its huge plains untrodden by white man's foot, its magnificent lakes and its noble rivers. Livingstone's death gave the signal for Africa's evangelization, and, like Samson, he became mightier in his death than ever he had been in his life. Livingstonia, as the mission was called, was the direct result of this brave man's life and death. The mission was founded in 1875 by the united efforts of the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland, with Bandawe, on Lake Nyassa, as a centre.

In the Congo Free State, a district with an area of a million and a half square miles, embracing a country the richest in the world, with the Congo flowing through it, navigable for 8,000 miles, and inhabited by some 50,000,000 of people, the Baptist Church has a large and flourishing mission. If so much money can be spent and so many lives placed in danger as Stanley's late expedition

entailed, an expedition questionable in its nature and altogether deficient in results, surely then the Church of Christ can do more for the evangelization of Africa. How needy this field is, and how large, let Stanley himself testify. "In my journey," he says, "from Zanzibar to Banana, a distance of over 7,000 miles, I never met a man, woman or child who had ever heard the name of Jesus." How loud is the Macedonian cry from dark Africa. There 724 heathen die every day, and of these only two ever heard the gospel message. Seven hundred of our fellow-creatures passing into eternity every single day who never heard the name which sounds so sweet in a believer's ear, and without which we say we cannot live.

Look at Burmah with its population of 3,700,000; a country rich in gold and sapphires, but richer still in the grand field it offers to the missionary of the cross; Siam, with an area of 200,000 square miles, and a population of 8,000,000, all waiting to hear the gospel; Japan, the land of the rising sun, barred against the gospel for centuries, but now quite open to its reception; Korea, the hermit nation, 400 miles long by 200 miles broad, with a population of over 10,000,000, and all within reach of the gospel. We have Mexico, too, our near neighbor, with its 800,000 square miles, and its population of nearly 10,000,000, waiting to be brought to Christ. And far away, down in the Southern Pacific, there are clusters of islands, fair and beautiful, "where every prospect pleases and only man is vile." These are the South Sea Islands, rich in beauty, rich in vegetable and mineral wealth, but richer by far in white harvest fields, waiting for the reluctant laborers to come. To take a wider outlook; it is not, perhaps, generally known that, counting clergymen of all denominations, missionaries, Bible women, colporteurs and Christian workers of all

kinds, there are as many missionaries working among the 4,000,000 of London as there are among 800,000,000 of heathen and 200,000,000 Mohammedans abroad. And therefore if the bitter cry of outcast London is loud and stirring, as all who read General Booth's book will readily admit, the bitter cry of outcast heathendom is at least 250 times as loud and at least 250 times as piercing. Are not the fields white unto harvest? And are they not to-day, as never before, waving with golden grain waiting to be gathered into our Master's garner?

“ The fields are ripening, and far and wide,
The world now is waiting the harvest tide,
But reapers are few, and the work is great,
And much will be lost should the harvest wait. ”

II. Encouragement in the work.—The first century of the Christian era was a great missionary period. The gospel was then preached over the whole of the civilized world. Paul in his missionary journeys carried the gospel to many countries. At the time of his death at Rome, in the year 67, A. D., the gospel had been carried over western Asia, southern Europe, and northern Africa, and for nearly two centuries the gospel continued to make conquest after conquest among the civilized nations which surrounded the Mediterranean Sea. Then the church grew wealthy and worldly, and little was done for missions for long centuries. The Reformation in 1517 roused the slumbering church to some sense of its duty, but it had then, or thought it had, quite enough to do with the Papacy at home to prevent it from carrying the gospel to the heathen. Christian missions proper began in 1792, when William Carey propounded his views before a small body of Baptist ministers in England, and thus in reality we have only had one century of missions to the heathen world. In

1792 the heathen population of the world stood at 847,000,000. To-day it stands at 1,047,000,000. That is an increase of 200,000,000 heathen during the century.

How many converts have we gained to Christianity during the century? In round numbers some 3,000,000. These converts are scattered over every part of the habitable globe. Two thousand five hundred of them are regularly ordained ministers of the gospel, 27,000 of them are acting as evangelists to their heathen fellow-countrymen, while many others are actively engaged in regular Christian work. What is the exact strength of the missionary forces of the church actually at work in the mission field? To evangelize 1,047,000,000 of heathen we have 3,000 ordained missionaries, 750 laymen, and a noble army of 2,500 lady missionaries; in all a body of 6,250 missionaries of the cross. Were this body equally divided over the heathen world it would give 167,000 heathen to each missionary at work. Besides teaching and preaching, this noble army of Christian workers is scattering abroad the Word of God in 300 different languages. And in this lies the certain hope of the world's complete and ultimate salvation.

How much does the church of Christ give per year in order to carry the gospel to the heathen world? Just about \$15,000,000. Think of what the drink bill of Christendom is for one year. Add to this what is annually spent on mere pleasures, many of which, to say the least, are of a questionable nature. Then think of the amount spent on tobacco and other luxuries, almost every one of them injurious to the human system. Put these vast sums together, and compare the total amount with the \$15,000,000 grudgingly given for carrying out Christ's great demand. Nor is this all. For every missionary sent to Africa there is sent 70,000 gallons of liquor, said to be the vilest made. Over 8,000,000 gal-

lons are transported into Africa alone every year, and this causes more destruction in a single day than all the missionaries can repair in years of hard work. The drink traffic in Africa is a greater curse to the people than even slavery itself. And the same can be truthfully said of the New Hebrides.

In spite of all these obstacles Christianity is making a steady and rapid progress. Let no one imagine for a moment that the mission cause is a failure. Wherever you look among the nations to-day you will find that Christianity is a great and important fact. It is showing itself in millions of lives, it has changed the whole current of the world's affairs, it is shaping and molding the present, and nothing in the future can stay its progress. As well say that the sun in the heavens is a failure. The religion of Jesus Christ is adapted to all classes and conditions of men; to the highest intelligences of India and China, and no less to the lowest forms of degraded humanity, whether living amid the eternal snows of Lapland, or sweltering on the burning plains of tropical Africa. What is needed to-day is more consecration and more zeal to bring it to bear on the great masses of heathendom. Think of the vantage ground we occupy as compared with the church in a former generation. To-day there are 7,000 trained missionaries in the field. The Bible is translated into 300 languages. Nearly all of these languages are reduced to a grammar. And we have 3,000,000 of converts from heathendom to inspire us with hope for the future. It was late in the afternoon when Napoleon rode on to the battlefield of Marengo. With his experienced eye he saw that the battle was almost lost. Looking anxiously at the setting sun, he said, "There is just time left to recover the day." He gave his orders with characteristic promptitude, and the defeat

was turned into a complete and triumphant victory. Could some victory like this not be won for Christ during the closing decade of this century? Everything is on the church's side. She has the men, the means, and the promise of her ascended Lord. What is needed is faith in God, prayer to God, and consecrated, well directed effort for God in winning souls.

In human history there is no sublimer, more soul-stirring story than that which sketches the triumphant march of Christianity from Jerusalem and Judea to Arabia, to the shores of Africa, to Asia Minor, and last of all to the classic shores of Greece and Italy, and thence to Britain. It conquered the Roman Empire and made its way northward and westward till French and Spaniards, Germans and Scandinavians were in possession of the enlightening gospel, and Europe was won for Christ. Thence it crossed the ocean and took possession of the new world, and from the old world and the new it is going east and south among the pagan peoples of Asia and Africa, winning victories compared with which those of Alexander the Great, Caesar, or Napoleon, are as nothing. And in this majestic march, unparalleled in history, the church of Christ has simply been fulfilling the great prophecies of scripture, and realizing its grand promises. What in all the Christian era has given a greater proof of God's favor and blessing than the success of the gospel in this century, fast drawing to a close? The success of the first century was great, but the success of the first century was a failure when compared with the success of the nineteenth century. Then only about five hundred thousand nominal Christians professed conversion. But during the century of modern missions over three millions have become converts to Christianity, and this conversion is going on at a rapidly increasing ratio

every single day. Look at those standing miracles of blessing and success—the conversion of the Sandwich Islands, the New Hebrides, the Fiji Islands, the Georgia and Friendly Islands, for the clearest evidences of God's favor and approval. The annual average conversion in Africa is 18,000 souls. China has in less than fifty years increased from eight Protestant Christians to over 50,000 communicants. Japan has 35,000 professing Christians, the fruit of twenty-two years. India is experiencing a Pentecostal outpouring of God's Holy Spirit, and conversions are taking place every day. In the Methodist Episcopal church alone there were 60,000 conversions from heathenism to Christianity in three years. The great work of the Baptist mission in Telegu during the past twenty years rivals what took place in the early church as narrated in the early chapters of the Acts of the Apostles. It is only a quarter of a century since David Livingstone ended his noble life-service on his knees in his reed-covered hut at Illala, and laid the burden of Africa's evangelization upon the heart of the Christian world. During this brief interval the missionary of the cross has almost literally taken possession of Africa for Christ, and to-day the work is going rapidly on. Wherever we look abroad upon the face of the world we see the missionary at work, and everywhere we see much to encourage and stimulate, to arouse and inspire the church to greater zeal and earnestness in its God-given mission of winning the world for Christ.

III. Our privilege and duty. (1). Let us be deeply interested in the cause of missions. There is no other cause half as worthy of our individual interest. The very fact of 1,000,000,000 of our fellow creatures living and dying without a knowledge of the gospel should be enough to arouse the most careless Christian

living. Our Savior died for the cause of missions, and can we doubt his interest in it? The heathen are his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth are his blood-bought possession. Let us, his professed followers, be profoundly interested in this cause, and let us take every opportunity of showing it.

(2). Let every Christian give proportionately and regularly for the spread of the gospel. This is the direct measure of our interest. Not long ago a poor woman said to a collector of the London Missionary Society, "I cannot give as the wealthy do, but I can give sixpence a week." Let every Christian be animated by that spirit, and the problem of "missionary support" would be solved.

(3). Our duty is to pray for the success of missions. Jesus requested his disciples to pray for more laborers. Let us do the same, and let us pray for them after they are in the field. More prayer for them, and less criticism of them and their methods. At Waterloo the British troops fell on their knees to avoid the French fire, and then from their knees they marched on to victory. In the conquest of the world for Christ victory will only come as we rise from our knees. Christ's cause is the winning cause. To him shall the gathering of the nations be. The ultimate success of his kingdom is just as sure as God's plan and purpose can make it. The sound of the herald angels shall be heard again; not chanted by angels this time, but by men and women redeemed and washed in the blood of the Lamb. The continents of the earth will raise the song, and the isles of the sea shall swell the chorus, as a redeemed world rolls heavenward its psalm of praise—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Meanwhile upon our ears there falls another and a

different sound, wrung from the depths of millions of despairing hearts. Across the billowy ocean it comes, gathering momentum as it nears our shores, and a loud, loud wail breaks upon the ear of Christian America; breaks upon our ears to be heard and heeded, or to be sent back again to the dark lands whence it comes, unheard and unheeded, and the bleeding hearts and the wounded consciences of 1,000,000,000 of our fellow creatures to go to an eternity where hope can find no entrance, but cruel despair an unending home.

Then think of the reflex influence of missions upon the church at home. The divine plan and purpose seems to be that the church which does most abroad is the strongest and healthiest at home. At one time Greece was disunited and broken up in broiling factions, ever on the verge of internecine war. The Persian at the gate was the hammer which welded the factions of Greece into one compact whole. In front of the foe the bickerings of the barracks are forgotten, and shoulder to shoulder the soldiers are one in sympathy and purpose, as they fight their country's enemy. And with such a work to do, with the command of Christ ringing down these centuries, with so many things to cheer and encourage, and from the vantage ground at present occupied, should not the church of our risen Lord unite her broken ranks, call to aid all her resources, and with an earnestness and zeal which the circumstances make absolutely imperative, endeavor to carry out her Lord's great demand?

“All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded

you ; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. ”

Dying ! yes, in thousands dying
A hopeless, despairing death,
Can we not hear them calling,
Pleading with bated breath :

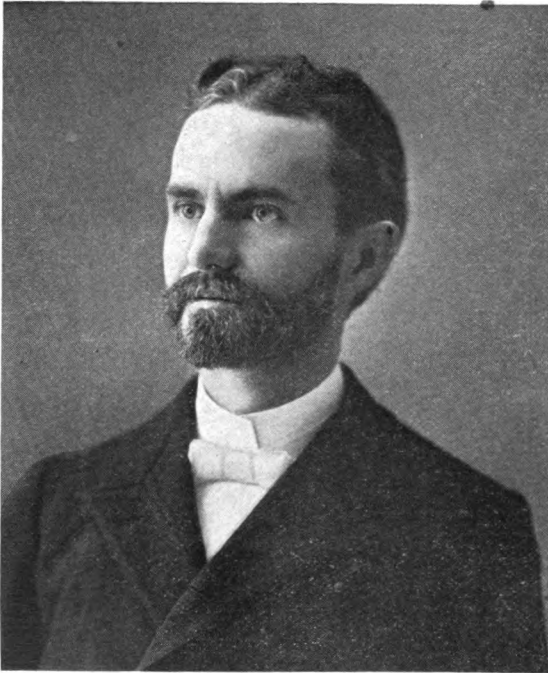
“ Will no one come over and bring us light,
Must we perish in darkness, denser than night ? ”

Dying untaught, uncared for,
While in this favored land,
Who know that they are perishing,
Lend not a helping hand.

Yet we thank the Lord we are not as they ;
That on us he has shed the gospel ray.

Dying, while we are dreaming
In selfish idleness,
Unconscious that those darkened lives
Are so full of bitterness.

Oh, brothers and sisters, for whom Christ died,
Let us spread his gospel far and wide,
And thus hasten on that glorious day,
When the sceptre of Christ all hearts shall sway ;
And the weary nations of earth shall find
Rest for the soul and peace for the mind.



WILLIAM A. SERVICE.

THOUGHTFULNESS IN RELIGIOUS THINGS.

BY REV. WILLIAM A. SERVICE,*

Pastor First Presbyterian Church, Howell.

Text: "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."
Rom. 14:5.

In Paul's day there was a difference of opinion in the church at Rome concerning a question of morals. There seem to have been four parties in the church: a party which made no scruples about eating meat offered to idols, and another party which refused to eat such meat; a party which esteemed one day above another, and a counter-party which esteemed every day alike. The anti-meat-eaters, it would seem, said to the meat-eaters, "It is wrong to eat that meat which has been offered to idols, and you must stop it." And the Sabbatarians, it would appear, said to the non-Sabbatarians, "It is wrong to use all days alike; you must observe holy days." Each party evidently labored to convince the counter-party of error, and to vindicate its own opinion and conduct. But the anti-meat-eaters cannot convince the meat-eaters that the eating of the meat offered to idols is wrong, nor can the meat-eaters convince the anti-meat-eaters that the partaking of it is

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right. The result is similar between the other two parties. The Sabbatarians fail to convince the non-Sabbatarians of error in using all days alike; and the non-Sabbatarians fail in vindicating to the Sabbatarians their disregard of holy days. As a natural consequence all parties feel hurt: the Sabbatarians and the anti-meat-eaters, because they believe the church is being scandalized; the meat-eaters and the non-Sabbatarians, because they surmise there is an effort on foot to curtail their liberty.

The contest goes on for some time, but with little prospect of a satisfactory issue. At length, as the only apparent way out of the difficulty, all parties agree to submit the whole matter to the arbitration of a third and unprejudiced party, Paul. Sabbatarians and non-Sabbatarians, meat-eaters and anti-meat-eaters, at once write him stating their case and endeavoring to justify their conduct. Paul reads their letters and then writes to them the words of the fourteenth of Romans and of our text: "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things; another who is weak eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not, and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth; for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth; yea, he shall be holden up; for God is able to make him stand. One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

The kernel of Paul's answer is in the words of our text: "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Thus the apostle, instead of deciding the question submitted him, throws it back on the original questioners. It is as if he had said: I decline to treat

you as children in this matter. You are not ignorant of the truth, and I will not be your conscience. It is better that each patiently and conscientiously think out for himself his own duty. "Let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind." You must learn to exercise individual thoughtfulness and responsibility in all matters of duty.

I desire to make this answer of Paul's to the contending parties in the Roman church, this idea of individual thoughtfulness in religious things, the subject of our remarks to-day.

I. Thoughtfulness is necessary to teach us what to believe. What shall I believe? This is one of the profoundest, most pregnant questions that a man can put to himself. What illimitable realms of thought it opens out to every inquiring mind! This universe, what shall I think of it? Is it created or creator? Whence are all these myriad worlds and whither do they tend? If created, what power called them into being, holds them in their course and shapes their destiny? Is its name chance, law or God? Then God, what shall I think of him? What is he in himself; what, in relation to created nature; what, in relation to the human race; what, in relation to me? And man, what shall I think of him? For him does death end all? Is he but the creature of a day, a sublime spectacle of animated misery, or is he immortal; are the godlike hopes he entertains of himself destined to bud and blossom under other and more congenial skies and grow to fruition through unending ages? Also revelation, what shall I think of it? Has the infinite broken the silence of the eternities to tell of their mysteries to man? And the Bible, is it the true record of this revelation, and the only record, and in very truth the word of God? Then there is Jesus, what shall I think of him? Shall it be as

of the cunningest impostor the world has ever known, or as of the sweetest, truest, holiest, divinest man that ever walked our earth? Also sin and the atonement, the intermediate state and the judgment, what shall I think of these? Such are only some of the questions which present themselves to him who asks, what shall I believe? To solve them adequately, completely, is undoubtedly beyond the utmost stretch of created intelligence, is possible only to Omnipotence; for in them lies the riddle of the universe. Yet every man ought to think about them, ought to think personally and as profoundly and searchingly as he can; because in them lie his destiny and his happiness, and so much of them as is essential to these he can solve.

Moreover our individual solution of them will be our creed, our personal creed. And a personal creed, which a man has thought out for himself, which to him represents spiritual facts, is the only creed to which he has a right, and in which he can live bravely and die in peace. Yet such creeds are not as plenty as they should be. It is to be feared that too many men come by their creeds as children come by their clothes—they are given them by their fathers. Is not this the reason why some professors of religion have so little spiritual nerve and muscle; why in some lives religion has only the power of a superstition or a mysterious dread, or an indefinable fear; why the spiritual life of some is so weak, pale and sickly, so wavering and full of doubt; why they desire to believe one thing to-day and another to-morrow, one thing when they are sick and another when well? They are trying to maintain a religious life, to cultivate spiritual vigor on some one's else knowledge of the truth. Is it any wonder that they sometimes feel there isn't much in religion after all, or surmise that its utility has been greatly exaggerated? Of course men who

are trying to maintain a spiritual life on some one's else knowledge of the truth, on an inherited creed, will fail. You cannot assimilate natural life from the food which another has eaten. No more can you assimilate spiritual life from another's spiritual repast. Everyone must eat his own natural bread, and his own spiritual bread. Inherited creeds are only fit for children. They are children's creeds. Children may be taught by authority, but men ought to be taught through their own reason and individual experience. A man's creed ought to be personal, the exponent of his individual knowledge and experience of the truth. And a personal creed, thought out by man for himself, is the only creed that can be a power in his life. Moreover a man has a right to a personal creed; for is not the Holy Spirit promised to the individual Christian to lead him into all truth? And when a man after spiritual travail has given birth to his creed, that thing which is born of him is of the Holy Ghost and is sacred, and the church should be very slow to say that it is unclean.

Now, do not misunderstand me. Think not that what I am saying amounts to latitudinarianism, and that I make light of creeds. I do not make light of them. I would remove my shoes from off my feet as I walk over any great creed of the past. Creeds to me are always holy ground. They are the roads over which holy men have walked with sweat of brain and sweat of heart up to God. I say nothing against church or creeds. They are good, are necessary, are better than any individual creed, contain more of God's truth than any individual creed. I believe in them. I believe in our own church creed. But I do not believe in the use to which creeds are sometimes put, viz., in tuning the pulpit or the pew to them in their entirety. To do so is to strain moral fibre, sometimes to snap conscience. I do believe in

tuning the pulpit, at least, to the fundamental notes of the gospel; but not that subscription to church creeds in their entirety should be made the condition of church membership, or even the condition of ordination. That is not the right use of them. They ought to mark the goal, not the starting point of individual belief. They represent the sum total of the truth into which the Holy Spirit has led the combined church throughout its history. Now, is it not preposterous to demand either of a new convert or a young licentiate an experimental and intellectual knowledge of all this truth? Besides, does not the scriptural idea of growing in a knowledge of the Lord Jesus necessitate a growing knowledge of truth, make a place possible for a growing creed? Aye, and that, too, for the church as well as the individual. Is it not unreasonable to suppose that the complete key to the "mystery of godliness" is to be found in the brain of any man or set of men? May there not be heights and depths, lengths and breadths in it which Calvin or the Westminster divines even, keen and profound as they were, have never sounded? I suppose, therefore, it is reverently reasonable to hold with old Pastor Robinson, of Pilgrim Father fame, that while the Holy Spirit continues to be the teacher of the church, we may expect more light still to break out of God's word. If I had to choose between an infallible creed and an infallible Pope, I believe I would prefer an infallible Pope; for happily the infallible Pope has the grace to die after a term of years, and thus make way for a new and oftentimes improved species of infallibility. But infallible standards, if not absolutely immortal, are exceedingly tenacious of life, and what is worse still, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, know no change. A living and progressive infallibility is preferable to a dead and stationary infallibility. I hold it

plain that if we are to have a creed that is to exert a power in our life, a creed that shall impart spiritual backbone and vigor and health, a creed which does honor to the Holy Spirit, it must be a creed which represents individual knowledge and experience of the truth; in short, must be a creed that has been born of the Holy Spirit and our own brain by vital union and sympathy with God's word.

II. Thoughtfulness is necessary to teach us duty. If personal thoughtfulness is necessary to teach us what to believe, and to make what we accept as our belief a power in our life, it is no less necessary to teach us what to do. If I have thought out well my creed, I have also at the same time and by the same process thought out to some extent my duty, perhaps thought out in the main my duty. Thus, if my creed teaches me that the wages of sin is death, and that I am a sinner, does it not at the same time and by that very lesson teach me that my duty is to seek a Savior? If my creed teaches me that I have no power to save myself, that to this end all my right doing is useless, that Christ alone can save, does it not by that very lesson also teach me that my duty is to believe on the Lord Jesus, to accept him as my Savior? It is foolishness to cry out against creeds in a wholesale way as the fashion of some is; for you cannot separate creed from duty or duty from creed. Define well your creed and you define well your duty. Distinguish clearly your duty and you formulate a creed at least as broad as the duty. You cannot be a Christian without a creed. His creed is the Christian's battle plan, his sailing chart. A creed for the Christian means much doubt, unbelief and perplexity avoided; because a creed well defined means duty well defined.

But even after we have thought out our creed, we will find we have not thought out all our duty. Duty is

broader than creed. A well thought-out creed will give us only the grand-trunks of duty. But there are a thousand duties to be done in the branch-roads, in the lanes and fields of a religious life, of which the broadest and most comprehensive creed will never give us a glimpse. It is plain what my duty is in the creed-lines of a religious life—what should be my attitude toward God, toward Christ, toward sin—all this is plain. But what my duty is in those paths of life which lie beyond the creed-lines, what I ought to do here and what there, what in these circumstances and what in those ; ought I to engage in this business or conform to that practice?—these are questions not quite so plain. It is because so much duty in life is of this uncertain, not clearly defined, almost shadowy character, that there arises the pressing need of constant, keen, discerning thoughtfulness on the part of him who would know what his duty is. “But is not the Bible the only rule of faith and practice? If I am in doubt as to a matter of duty, cannot I go to it and get the necessary light?” Undoubtedly. But one will still have need of personal thoughtfulness ; for it must be borne in mind that the Bible is not a code of maxims, rules and statutes in which may be found a precedent for any and every case of conscience. The Bible teaches duty by principles. It points out along what lines the laws of right and duty must run. But it leaves to every man to say this act or that runs along these lines, is true to the principles. Hence arises the need of thoughtfulness, first, that we may understand the principles of duty, and secondly, that we may rightly apply them.

But when I say that thoughtfulness is necessary to enable us to understand the principles of duty, I would not have you think that I deem the principles laid down in the Bible as very abstruse, hard to be under-

stood, requiring the logical acumen and spiritual insight of a religious philosopher to discover their meaning. No, it is the glory of revelation that it has made the way of duty so plain that he who runs may read. So when I say there is need of thoughtfulness to understand Bible principles, I refer to the kind of thoughtfulness rather than the degree. There is need of conscientious thoughtfulness; for these principles often run counter to our wishes and desires and seeming interests. Take the principle of love to one's neighbor. Unless we come to the elucidation of this with a conscientious and painstaking mind we are almost sure to misinterpret it. The Jews as a nation did, notwithstanding their Rabbis, their Hillels, their Gamaliels, their scribes and doctors of the law; and did so because they interpreted it in the spirit of tradition, of national pride, of individual prejudice and selfishness. They did not meditate on it in that spirit of conscientious, painstaking thoughtfulness which alone will lead to the truth when the knowledge of a truth and surrender to it is likely to be antagonistic to individual prejudices and interests. Accordingly we find them as a nation still ignorant of its true meaning, and Christ teaching this to them in the parable of the good Samaritan, and that, too, after they had been studying it for two thousand years. So again take the principle of sacrifice for the sake of others, and of individual liberty. Taken alone and separately, their meaning is plain and unmistakable, and no great power of intellect is needed to understand them. But put the two together, and does it not require an exceedingly conscientious and painstaking mind to give to each its relative force and authority? Let an occasion arise involving the two laws and the practical interpretation of them, and is it not quite likely that selfishness will cause us to gravitate toward

the law of sacrifice if we are not exceedingly conscientious in the whole matter? A lack of conscientious thought will often make the interpretation of the most acute and logical mind come far short of the truth. Logical thoughtfulness may make a correct creed, but it takes heart thoughtfulness to make a correct life. Heart thinking is what we need to teach us the Bible principles of duty.

But we need thoughtfulness not only to teach us the meaning of these principles, we need it still more in their application to actual life. And here it is necessary to save us from misapplying them. Nothing is plainer than that a principle of action, right in itself, wrongly applied or misapplied will result in evil more or less criminal. (Take the principle of forbearance, a principle of duty most plainly inculcated, and if rightly exercised fraught with influence potent only for good and mutual advantage. But forbearance has its appointed limits; and however beautiful and good it may be within these, it no sooner passes these limits than it ceases to be a virtue and may become a crime. There is need, then, of constant thoughtfulness to keep us from misapplying certain of the passive principles of virtue.

But positively, thoughtfulness is necessary to teach us what principles to apply in any and every circumstance of life. In the application of Bible principles to individual action, any change in circumstances will call for a corresponding change of the principle to be applied. In living his life the Christian must always play the judge, because every man's life is unlike that of any other's. It is worked out under different conditions, with different education, different temperament, different opportunities. Now, these are the things that determine duty. Individual duty is always to a great degree determined by individual circumstances. Where

much is given much is required. Now, it is just because of this conditional nature, this individuality of much of duty—just because I have something in my life different from anything in yours, and you something in yours different from anything in mine, that individual thoughtfulness becomes absolutely indispensable in applying the principles of right to one's own life. Were it not for this we might determine our duty by precedent. But it is this individuality that precludes the use of precedent in determining duty and throws me back on my own individual thoughtfulness. It is this that makes it impossible that I should pitch my life on the same key with you or any one else, or you on the same key with me or any one else. We cannot pattern our lives exactly after any one—not even after a David, a Paul, a John, or any other man, because our conditions of life are different from theirs.

Now, in determining duty we will find need not only of thoughtfulness, but of a peculiar kind. There will be need of self-sacrificing thoughtfulness, because selfish interests will often conflict with plain duty. Again, there will be need of courageous thoughtfulness; for there is much conventional right in the world and loyalty to duty will bring one often into opposition to it, and only courageous thoughtfulness will avail to break the tyrant yoke of a conventional and spurious morality and keep us true to duty.

III. But finally, even after we have found out our duty, thoughtfulness is necessary to teach us how to do it. All know the truth of this statement who have tried to be loyal to duty in this busy, selfish world of ours. All such know that even when duty is plain, how often they must stop to ask themselves, Where can I best do it, and how—by acting or by suffering, by leading or by following? Where can I best do it? Ah, how neces-

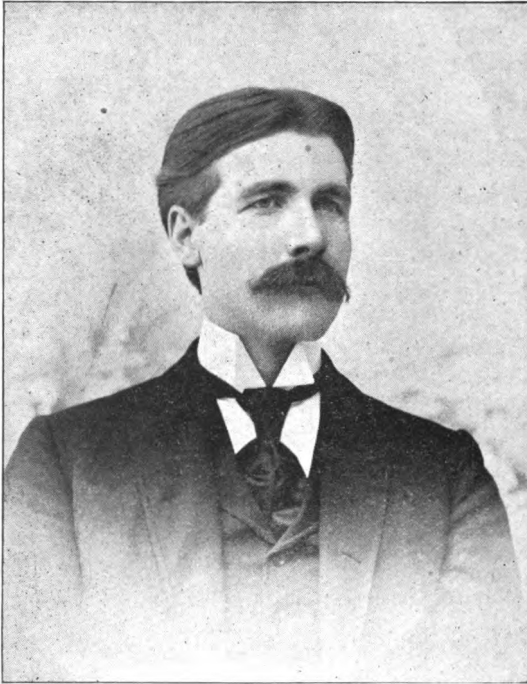
sary that question is. There is a place of duty for a Gladstone, a Bismarck, a Luther, which is not the place for you or me—their measure of duty we cannot fill. And there is a place for us which is not the place for them—our measure of duty they ought not to fill. Every man can fill some place well, a great many places indifferently and some places not at all. Ordinarily, a man's place is in the position he can fill best, and generally in the largest place he can fill best. But how shall a man find his place? Will providence show it to him? Undoubtedly. But it will be only through his own personal understanding illuminated by the light of providence. If you would find your place of duty you must test your own ability, you must measure your own capacity, you must discover your own adaptability, you must observe how God is shaping circumstances; in a word, you must be thoughtful.

But even after you have found your place you have only partially answered the question as to how you shall do it. There will still be need of thoughtfulness, for there is always a wise and an unwise way of performing a duty in any and every sphere of activity. And as duty is done wisely or unwisely it advances or defeats one of the great objects of all duty-doing—the progress of truth and right-doing in the world and in the hearts of others. Some men and women perform their duty with so little tact, with such a woeful lack of common sense, in a spirit of such harshness, of such hostility to other people's wishes and of wanton disregard of other people's natures, that they are almost sure to create opposition and bring down defeat upon their well-meant but ill-advised efforts. Haven't you again and again found men doing their duty, and in the doing of it put so much of themselves into it that you have forgotten that they were doing duty and have found yourself, be-

fore you were aware of it, opposing what they were doing, although it was right, simply because you wished to show that you disapproved of the way in which the thing was being done? Of course the worldly, selfish man will often be arrayed against the man who faithfully performs his duty. But a man who will do duty in such an unlovely way as constantly to arouse the opposition of fellow Christians is, to say the least, still a child in Christian usefulness. Don't let the right be made unlovely by doing it in an unlovely way. Now, thoughtfulness alone will save you from this. If you wish to do your duty in the best, the wisest way, you must study ways and means and methods, you must study men, you must study yourself—you must be thoughtful, constantly, keenly, patiently, conscientiously, humbly thoughtful—you must, like Paul, learn how to become all things to all men that by this means you may win them to the right and to God. The great trouble with Christian workers in doing their duty, the reason why they are not more successful in their work, is because they do not think enough how to do their work. If we gave one twentieth of the thought to discover how best to do Christian work, how to influence men for the right, how to bring them to Christ, that we spend in trying to learn how we can best invest our money, or how we can best cultivate our farms, or how we can make our dresses even so that they shall look best, and yet look a little different from anything any of our acquaintances have, there would be more harmony in our churches, and better and more glorious harvests gathered into them for the Lord. Successful duty-doing, believe me, is conditioned on personal thoughtfulness. The North was successful in the civil war, not simply because it had more men or more money than the South, but because it went to the war

and fought out the war with thinking bayonets. And that is the way every church should fight the hosts of sin and wickedness and unrighteousness in its community. Let every member in it become a thinking bayonet in the Lord's host. Just in proportion as we become thinking Christians will we be successful Christians. Just in proportion as a man thinks out well his duty will he do well his duty.

It is only by individual thoughtfulness that what we accept as our belief can have any power in our life; that we can know our duty; that we can know how to do it. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Let every man be thoughtful. Think out your creed; think out your duty; think out how to do your duty—and then do it. Let no man take thy crown.



FRED G. CADWELL.

SELF-GIVING THE LAW OF THE GLORIFICATION OF LIFE.

BY REV. FRED G. CADWELL,*

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Text: "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily, verily I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." John 12:23-25.

Jesus here lays down, as Godet says, "the fundamental law of human life." The same author says that this text contains the "substance of the moral philosophy of Jesus." Jesus not only taught the profoundest truths, but he also presented them in the simplest forms, in forms that all could easily understand. This I take it is the mark of the great teacher. Jesus knew that men think largely through the imagination, and so he illumined his teachings with illustrations. No teacher or preacher ever used more illustrations than he. In this text he first sets forth a fact concerning himself; then he illustrates this fact from nature; and finally he crystalizes the general truth which is in the

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fact and in the illustration in the form of a paradox which sticks like a barbed arrow in the memory. The fact concerning himself of which he speaks is that he, the Son of Man, is soon to be glorified. He then shows that he is to be glorified in just the same way that a seed is glorified. The seed, as long as it remains simply a seed and no more, is of little worth or consequence or beauty, but it has wrapped up within its tiny coats the promise of flower and fragrance and fruit and human joy and strength. But that promise cannot be fulfilled until the seed gives up its present form of life and dies to itself. Then he sums up the truth in this paradox, "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall save it unto life eternal." This is the profound truth which is the substance of Christ's moral philosophy, namely, life is only glorified by losing itself, by giving itself.

Wherever we look we find things entering into a higher life by giving themselves. The sun is all-glorious simply because it pours out its light and heat into all surrounding spaces. The tree floats a greener banner to the sun, because each preceding fall it has given its foliage to the soil beneath. The seed dies to itself in the dark, damp ground, and thus rises into a new and higher life in the flower. The grass gives itself to the grazing kine, and thus the invisible door, that separates the vegetable from the animal world, swings silently on its hinges, and the vegetable enters into the animal. The grazing kine gives itself as food to man, and thus it is lifted into the beating heart and the throbbing brain of man. The cells of the brain give themselves up to the spirit of man, and are thus lifted into the realm of thought and imagination. The barren granite hills crumble and give themselves to the hungry valleys beneath, and are only then changed from bar-

renness to fruitfulness of fragrant, flowering gardens. The water drops from the height of the dark cloud and gives itself to the roots that drink it in with joy, only to find itself become a jewel in the throat of the lily. The dewdrop gives itself to the sun which kisses it and is lifted into the golden glow of the dawn or the sunset. The water in the boiler gives itself to the heat which embraces it, only to find itself become powerful enough to turn the wheels of man's industries. The black carbon gives itself to nature, the old chemist, and becomes a diamond fit to shine in the coronet of a king. The forests give up their strength and glory, and are crushed in the lap of mother earth, only to come forth as coal which makes possible the glowing hearthstone about which the happy family sits. The giant oak gives itself to the woodman's ax, only to find itself carved and beautified and rendering a diviner service in the home of man.

“ The stagnant pool stands still,
 And thus more stagnant grows ;
 The dancing, sparkling rill
 Runs purer as it flows.
 The pool may wear
 A pleasing smile,
 But lades the air
 With poisons vile.
 The brooklet sings
 As on it toils,
 And gladness brings
 To thirsting soils.

The worthless pool stands dry,
 No water in it found ;
 The gladsome brook runs by,
 Its waters still abound.
 The pool shared nought
 Of its supplies ;

SELF-GIVING.

The sun hath caught
Them to the skies.
The brook bestows
With lavish hand ;
And still it flows
To bless the land."

Thus, wherever we look in nature we see this law proclaimed, that life is glorified by self-giving, by giving itself.

When we lift our thoughts from the material world about us and fix them upon him who made this goodly frame, the earth, we find that this law of the glorification of life obtains in the divine life. This does not cause us surprise, for as we look to find the artist in his canvas, the sculptor in his marble, and the author in his book, so we look to see the image of the divine being stamped upon his works. God would not make a world without making the laws of his being its laws. God is continually giving himself. Metaphysicians declare that a trinity of personalities in the Godhead is the most reasonable belief, because the Father must have a son, or a being equal to himself, unto whom he can communicate himself from all eternity, otherwise there would be no true life in God. Hagel, the German philosopher, declared that God had to pour out his being from all eternity into a creation, or else he would not be God. Only thus can God realize his being or have self-consciousness. A universe of created beings made in his own image would be a necessity as a mirror to reflect his own image back into his own mind. We may not hold to this philosophy, but we must see that God finds himself in the truest sense by first losing himself. God's life, his love, his thought, his energy run out continually into the remotest atom of his universe, and into every creature, however humble he may be, and this

constitutes the perfection and glory of his being.

If self-giving is the law of glorification in the physical world around us, and in the being of God, the Creator of all things, may we not expectantly look to see it manifest in the life of man? Let us look at man's physical life first of all. How does the body get its development, its strength, its glory? You go and ask the physiologist, and he will tell you that the body gets its glory by self-giving. You have to give the strength which you have in order to get more. If you would get more muscular and nerve cells you must give those you already have. What is that man doing who is pounding with bared arm the glowing iron upon the anvil? You say that he is fashioning some tool for human industry. Yes, but at the same time he is using up his muscular and nerve cells. Yet as the days go by his arm does not get any smaller, but on the contrary it grows more shapely and sinewy, and he is capable of striking a harder and still a harder blow upon the anvil. The fact is that he has given one muscular and nerve cell in order to get two, and two in order to get three, and three in order to get four, and thus he has acquired his muscular and nerve glory. The law of the physical life is that we live by dying. As soon as we cease to die, we cease to live. As one studies the life of the body in its relation with the higher life he learns some very beautiful lessons of unselfishness, of un-self-ness. The body only grows weak and enfeebled as it serves its own ends and passions. Its highest strength and endurance come in the service of the higher life and in the service of others. It is a well known fact that a man can work longer, and with less fatigue, when he works for some one whom he loves, than when he works simply for himself. Then, these bodies can not be perfectly glorified, they cannot put on their greatest strength and

beauty, until they have been laid away and have returned to the dust from which they came. Then out of this complete giving up of the body God promises to raise up a glorified spiritual body, which shall be a fit tabernacle for the indwelling, glorified spirit of man.

Let us now take a step higher, and come up into the intellectual life of man. Here I think we shall find that this same law of glorification by self-giving obtains. We know that the intellect is glorified in the measure in which it is expansive. We say that intellectual exercise is necessary to intellectual growth; but what is intellectual exercise? Is it not the act of the mind in losing its thought in things? It is only as the mind gives its thought to things that thought returns laden with intellectual spoils to adorn, and intellectual food to feed the mind. The more perfectly the mind gives itself to the world, the more of the world does the mind have as its possession. The law here is, "lose self in order to possess self." The superior power of one intellect over another is simply the superior power of that intellect to lose itself in things. Shakespeare could lose his thought in the motives that work in human hearts, and thus found himself the dramatist of all the ages. Francis Bacon could lose his thought in the principles of human thinking, and he found himself one of the greatest philosophers of modern times. Milton could lose himself in the glorious vision of God journeying amidst human kind, and thus he found himself the author of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*. Newton was sitting one day in his orchard, when he saw an apple drop from the bough overhead. Immediately his thought went out into it, and when it returned it came laden with the law of gravitation. Herschel lost his thought in the stars that shine at night, and they whispered back to him the secrets of their motions.

Tyndall lost his thought in the tiny atoms of matter, and they honored him with the revelation of their powers and laws. Linnæus lost his thought in the flowers that bloom on hill and in vale, and he found himself the greatest botanist of modern times. James Watt lost his thought in a steaming tea-kettle, and found himself the famed inventor of the steam engine. Millions of boys and girls and men and women had seen steaming tea-kettles before the days of James Watt, but he was the first to lose himself in a steaming tea-kettle and thus get the revelation of its possibilities. Thus the law of the glorification of the intellectual life is, "lose thyself."

Let us take a step still higher and enter into man's moral life. What constitutes man's moral glory? What is that one grace which includes all the other graces? You answer, love. But what is love? Love is simply the losing of self in others. We love in just the proportion that we give ourselves to others. To love, to give ourselves to others, is to find our true selves, to realize our beings. No man can be a man until he loses himself in others. See that boy awkward and unkempt in appearance. His mind is only active about play and the physical needs of life. As yet he is only an animal. But some day the soul of that boy arouses itself, and looking out of its windows, the eyes, it sees another soul sitting behind its own windows, and the soul of that boy runs out and loses itself in that other soul. Losing himself, the boy finds himself—finds himself no longer an animal, but a soul; no longer a boy, but a man. Mother and father look at him in wonderment and say, "What has come over our boy John? Yesterday he was a boy, to-day he is a man." Now the one-time awkward boy mends his gait and his manners. The one-time unkempt boy asks for a barber

and a tailor. He who had trampled the daisy heedlessly under foot, now stoops to pluck, admire, wonder. For the first time he sees an invisible Presence behind the forms of nature. He who before had only loved the play-ground, now loves the green meadow, the dim forest, the flowery bank of the stream, and the silent night. He who had scorned books now bends over his reading. He who was stammering in his talk, now finds his speech growing musical. He whose imagination had lain dormant, now sees visions and dreams. He who had lacked all the virtues, as well as the vices, now finds his heart a garden where all the flowers of the spirit bloom and perfume the life. His playmates laugh at him and whisper that he is in love. Of course he is, but in being so he has only lost himself in another soul, and in losing himself has found himself.

Did you ever read that exquisite little story by George Elliot, entitled *Silas Marner*? When a youth Silas Marner lost himself in another soul. But that other soul cast him off. Thus thrown back upon himself, the life of Silas Marner, like a once-flowing stream suddenly checked in its flow and thrown back upon its self, gathered putrefaction and began to dry up. He betook himself to a lonely country district in the outskirts of a lonely country village, and there he worked away at his loom all day and far into the night, the horizon of his life as narrow as the horizon of his thought, which was ever growing narrower. The currents of his soul flowed out toward one and only one thing, and that was the shining guinea which the housewife of the neighborhood put into his open palm in payment for the product of his loom. But this overflow of his soul into the guinea and then back again into himself, was not current enough to keep the waters of life sweet and

pure and wholesome. While still a young man his eye lost its luster, his step its steadiness, and the wrinkles of old age furrowed his face. One day in his absence a thief entered his cottage and removing the tiling from the floor where his guineas were hidden, stole his hoarded treasures. Now the little current that had been in his life is wholly stopped, and he withers and fades fast. One night Silas Marner returns from a trip abroad, and as he opens the door of his cottage he sees what to his excited vision seems to be a heap of guineas lying on the tiling before the glowing hearth. His heart leaps with a wild ecstasy, and in his frenzy he rushes forward to wash his hands as of yore in the golden coin, only to find that his fingers have become entangled in the golden curls of a sleeping baby girl. As this little girl grew up in the light of his hearth his whole being went out unto her, and with this new outflow of his soul a new energy and purpose came into his life. His eye regained its luster, his step its firmness, and some unseen power ironed the wrinkles from his withered face. Through his love for this little one, as through an open door, his heart went out in confidence and love toward his neighbors and toward his God, and the bells in the belfry yonder which so long have rung out upon his heedless ears now appeal to him with new meaning, and he walks hand in hand with the little one to divine worship. Such is the way man is clothed with moral beauty by losing himself in another.

Man can find true or high joy only in the giving of himself to others. The festering, stagnant pool makes no music. It is only filled with croaking. The flowing stream laughs and sings. It is not the inspiration of the air into the lungs, but the expiration of it that makes the vocal cords vibrate with all the rich tones of the human voice. So it is the outflowing soul

that laughs and sings. It is the outflowing soul that smites all the chords in life's harp and brings out their sweetest, divinest music. No truer words, no profounder words, ever distilled from human lips than those which are reported to have been uttered by the great Nazarene when he said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." He who gives most, not he who receives most, is always happiest. Man can not do his best work except as he loses himself in others. Selfishness will corrupt the finest genius. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love"—that is, if I do not lose myself in my theme and in my audience—"my speech is become but as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal." The speaker must lose himself in his audience before he can speak with power. Henry Ward Beecher's mighty effort before a proslavery audience in Liverpool, in which he turned the jeers and scoffs of a howling mob into the applause of admiring friends; Wendell Phillips's enthralling speech in old Faneuil Hall; Webster's reply to Hayne in the United States Senate, which made the whole of New England raise its head with new pride; Abraham Lincoln's matchless words at the dedication of the national cemetery at Gettysburg, words that will be immortal in the records of human speech; D. L. Moody's preaching in Cooper Union, which brought the elite of New York City in tearful penitence to the feet of our Savior,—all this was only made possible by the speaker's first losing himself in his theme and then in his audience. Jennie Lind's song had its chief charm in the fact that it was the outflow of a sweet and melodious soul through that wonderful harp, the human voice. And no one can hope to sing songs that will move and ennoble souls except the song be more than the mere outpouring of air from the lungs. That air must come forth having

been minted in the soul, and having received the image of the King. Robert Browning would not sell his poems for money, lest he should dim with the sheen of gold the splendor of that ideal which he saw daily in his dreams. Robert Burns, though he is starving at Dumfries, will not take money for his national hymns, lest he should taint the pure spirit of his patriotism. God will not let Dante, or Milton, or Shakespeare get much for their divinest work, lest they should check with bars of gold the outflow of their noble souls. Emerson says :

“ Draw the breath of eternity,
Serve it not for daily bread.”

Now, when we come at last to contemplate the life of that one perfect Being who has lived on the earth, in whom all glories and graces shine ; him who hath gathered into himself all beautiful imagery, all lovely symbolism ; him at whose blessed feet the greatest poets have been glad to lay down their divine gifts of ravishing song ; him whom the greatest geniuses of earth, statesmen, orators, philosophers, historians, generals, have delighted to honor ; him who has stained all our arts and literatures and civilization through and through with divine coloring ; him at the dim fore-vision of whose glorious coming the prophets of old broke into songs of rapture, calling him the Lily of the Valley, the Rose of Sharon, the bright and morning Star, the Chief among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely ; him who did not blush to call himself after the brightness and glory of the mid-day sun, saying, “ I am the light of the world ; ”—when we come to contemplate this wonderful, this unique Being, the vision of whom doth still and always will entrance the world, when we come to ask, how was all this ? we find that it was because the law

of the glorification of life which we have seen in the physical world round about us, which we have seen obtaining in the being of God, the Creator of all, which we see in the physical, intellectual and moral life of man—we find that this law was perfectly manifest in him.

Oh, how completely he gave himself to God. He could say, "I and the Father are one;" "All mine are thine, and thine are mine." And in that awful agony amid the gnarled oaks of Gethsemane's garden, when his agony expressed drops of blood, he could say, "Not my will, but thine be done." How completely he gave himself to the world. The four gospels are the divine record of that self-giving. If Jesus of Nazareth was grander in his life than any other man it was because the currents of his life flowed out farther and freer than those of any other man. He bathed with his heart-tides every class and condition of man. He touched with sympathy and helpfulness the high and low, the rich and the poor, the bond and the free, both Lazarus and Dives, both publican and Pharisee, both the aged Nicodemus, and the little, prattling babes that anxious-hearted mothers pressed into his arms for a blessing. Jesus literally lost himself in the world. And when he sees the cross yonder he looks upon the time when he shall hang upon it as the time when that process which has been going on in him from his infancy to the present time shall be consummated, and he shall stand forth before the world and his Father as completely glorified. Then turning to his disciples he said, "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone, but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit: He that loveth his life shall lose it, but he that hateth his life in this world shall save it unto life eternal." And then he

walked through dark seas of hate, and breasted the billows of malice and scorn, and going to the heights of Calvary hung there between two thieves as an expiation for your sins and mine.

Yes, the one perfect human life was one of perfect self-giving, and the Howards who have gone down into our prisons with the sweet, cleansing words of the gospel; the Grace Darlings who have plunged into the seething seas to rescue ship-wrecked mariners; the Whitmores, Booths, and Toynbees who have spent their days and nights in the reeking slums looking for the jewels that have fallen from the Master's crown; the Queen Louisas who have left their palaces of luxury and fashion and have gone down amid their subjects to carry hope and inspiration to them; the Livingstones and Pattons who have given themselves to cannibals and savages, because they saw in them the possibilities of divine sonship,—all these have gained the beauty and sublimity of their lives from self-giving, and they have gained the inspiration for that self-giving from looking to him who died for men in his self-giving.

Let me say in closing that this law also holds good in the spiritual life of man. We give our souls to God, and he gives them back to us clothed with beauty and filled with eternal life, his own life. We die unto self and live unto God. When we truly give ourselves to God he takes us and puts us into the world of things and persons round about us, and thus gives us back to ourselves, through things and persons, beautified and glorified.

LIFE IN DEATH.

BY REV. E. K. STRONG,*

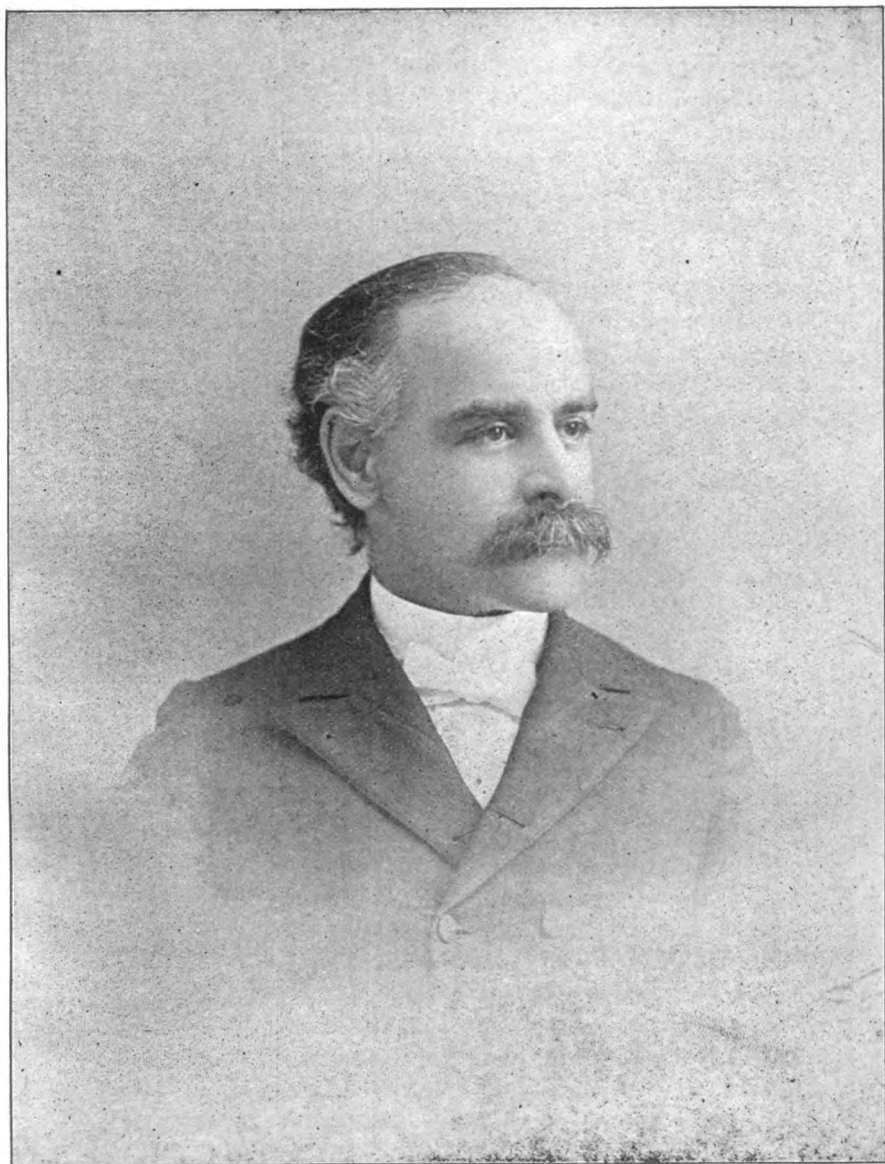
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Text: "He saved others; himself he cannot save." Matt. 27:42.

Jesus of Nazareth is on the cross. Why? The great prophet of Galilee is dying. Why?

The rulers of the Jews are exultant. For here is their enemy. Here is the man they could neither lead, nor force into silence. Here is the man who had repeatedly proved himself more than a match for their greatest scholars and keenest debaters, and whose fearless words had brought them—the Scribes and Pharisees—into contempt before the people. At last this man is trapped. He is doomed. He hangs on the terrible cross. How could these priests and scribes conceal their triumph? So they gather about Jesus in his agony and taunt him with failure. They contrast his wonderful words and deeds with his present helpless and hopeless condition, and laugh as they fling in his face what he had declared was his mission on the earth, "not to judge the world, but to save the world."

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EDWARD K. STRONG.

Now the chief priests mocking said: "He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him; for he said, I am the Son of God."

It was indeed a dark hour for Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth. It certainly seemed as if his enemies had won the day. To human eyes Jesus was a failure, an impostor, the leader of a lost cause. He saved others; cured the blind, healed the sick, raised the dead; but in the hour of his own extremity he could do nothing. Therefore, concluded the Jews, his claims to be the Son of God are absurdly false. But in their taunt, "He saved others; himself he cannot save," these men unintentionally gave expression to a law that rules in this world. Jesus dying on the cross is only an illustration of the great principle: *In death is life, and life comes only through death.*

Notice the workings of this law in the *material* world. Not many weeks ago we were rejoicing as the leafless trees put forth their buds, and these buds burst into leaves. A few more weeks and the year will lie a-dying. On every side will then appear evidences of death and decay. The greenness of healthy life will have passed into the sere and yellow leaf. The flowers, whose exquisite grace and beauty all admire, are born to die. The life of some lasts but a few hours. The loveliness of all perishes in a few days. Then follows decay. But this is that life may ensue. For it is a law of the vegetable kingdom that no leaf drops (unless from outward violence) till a new one is prepared to take its place; no flower perishes till its house is made ready and filled with seeds. Before there is the least sign of decay nature has secretly provided for the sure moment of its death. Beautiful as the leaf or flower

may be in its most golden hour, there is within the bosom of each the young bud which is to take its place. That bud is nourished by the expiring life of leaf or flower. But the one must die for the other. Life comes to the flower of the coming year through the wearing out of the life of the flower of this season.

We rejoice in the great abundance of coal deposited in the depths of the earth. These coal beds are the remains of immense forests. Thousands of years ago where now the miners toil trees rich with green foliage swayed in the wind. Death came slowly but surely, and the forests were buried deep that in the ages to come life might be secured to man. Over these remains we with much reason may say, "They save others; themselves they could not save."

The same law—life in death and death in life—rules in the human world.

We are told that "the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground," and when God drove him from the garden of Eden because of his disobedience, the Lord told Adam, as part of the curse pronounced upon his sin, that he should return unto the ground. "For out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." Now, it is the teaching of science that though we are descended from a long line of ancestors, yet our bodies are composed of mineral substances similar to those which form the crust of the earth. Those elements which enter into and make up the soil meet and mingle in the human body, and are governed by the same physical laws that operate in the wide field of nature. By storm and stream, dust and bits of rock are detached from hill or mountain and carried to the plain below. The soil thus formed becomes the home of various plants which absorb its elements. These plants die, and their decaying remains consti-

tute a rich mould for the sustenance of those grains and grasses essential to the life of man and to those animals on whom he depends. In this way man derives his food from the earth, and mineral and vegetable particles become in him endowed with the highest vitality, and are associated with the immortal spirit in the most intimate relationship. But the circle is not complete. For the human body formed from the earth must return to the earth. Those elements which have ascended through the various stages of vegetable and animal life up to a place in the human body, and have there received their highest expression in its form and action, must go back to the earth, and, mingling again with its materials, begin anew the ascent of the ladder of life in other forms.

All know that the human body is in a constantly dying condition. Every movement of our muscles, every thought of the mind, exhausts a certain amount of our muscular and nervous force. Yet this very exhaustion is for the giving of life. For within limits the exercise of body and mind is necessary to existence. Day by day this process of tearing down and building up goes on. The old, worn-out tissues are constantly being thrown off to give place to new and living matter. Somewhere I have seen a picture of a mother lying in the snow, cold in death, upon whose breast sleeps her babe warmly wrapped in the shawl which but for her self-sacrifice might have preserved the mother's life. This pathetic scene illustrates what is daily transpiring in our homes. The exhausting round of care and labor for the family robs of life many a father and mother. There are a multitude of graves over which this epitaph might justly be written, "They saved others; themselves they could not save."

So, too, in the business world men may be working

for their own individual interests, and yet they are also spending brain and nerve force for the benefit of their fellow-men. The factory hand, the miner underground, the seamstress in her chamber, the laborer by the roadside, wear out their lives for others' comfort. In the accomplishment of great enterprises how many die for the honor and the progress of mankind! The Egyptian pyramids speak not only of the death of mighty emperors, but they also tell of thousands of slaves who toiled in untold misery even unto death in their erection. The Brooklyn Bridge binds two cities in one, and across that airy thoroughfare throbs the life of the great metropolis, but its foundations and lofty towers were built in the sufferings of Roebbing, its architect and builder. Not a glorious cathedral nor beautiful palace delights the eye of which it may not be said, "This lives through someone's death."

All regenerating and progressive movements in the world have been born and reared in self-sacrifice. St. Paul and John Huss, Wycliffe and Tyndale, Savonarola and William of Orange, John Howard and Florence Nightingale, Lloyd Garrison and Abraham Lincoln, are witnesses to this fact. In the sufferings at Valley Forge and in the agonies of Andersonville freedom lived and slavery died. Thus, after centuries of war and bloodshed and intolerable misery we enjoy liberty of body and liberty of conscience. The sailors of the Maine sleep in a watery grave, and Ensign Bagley and his comrades lie in blood on the Winslow's deck, but in the death of those heroes shall not the human race be blessed? What need have we of further examples? The pages of history and the experiences of the present hour are crowded with evidences of the truth of the words, "In death is life, and in life is death."

This being so, why wonder that Jesus of Nazareth

hangs on the cross? If in the world of matter and in the world of man death and life are inextricably mingled, and the one is essential to the other, why deny the necessity of the atonement of Jesus the Christ? Why should not that law which rules in the natural world,—in life is death and in death is life,—also control in the spiritual world? Men praise Jesus for his life, but many, many deprive his death of the significance the Scriptures give it. Now, the existence of Jesus Christ is not as formerly denied by any. Infidels and skeptics unite with the Christian in admiration of the matchless life of the prophet of Galilee. All admit the purity and uprightness of his character. All confess his motives to have been of the highest, and that the object of his life was most unselfish. Yet, after conceding all this, how many virtually join with the chief priests in saying: "He saved others; himself he cannot save." This in the face of his wondrous deeds and marvelous words. This, too, in the face of the remarkable and increasing influence he still exerts. This, also, in the face of the great fact that life comes only through death. All his earthly life Jesus spent himself for others. At his word "the lame walk, the blind receive their sight, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." He saved others; how true! How many hearts, how many homes were made happy by him who never spared himself!

But Jesus is on the cross, and dying! Can he not save himself from this cruel, shameful death? Yes, certainly. He who could still the tempest and call the dead to life by a word, he must have had power to leave the cross. Surely, he who could rise from the dead three days later might have saved himself. Jesus said to Pilate, the Roman governor, "My kingdom is not of

this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews." "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." But no; Jesus could not save himself, because he came to save others. As sin held sway on the earth and the law of God that "the soul that sinneth it shall die," must be maintained, the one who could save from the penalty of sin must necessarily undergo its punishment. Jesus lived a sinless life on earth to prove the power of man to obey God. He suffered and died that the requirements of divine law might be met and atonement made for the sinner. He rose from the dead, and thus proved his ability to fulfill every promise of salvation and eternal life which he had made to men dead in trespasses and in sin.

"He saved others; himself he cannot save." No truer words were ever spoken. In obedience to the great law of this world Jesus must die. He could not overthrow sin and the grave except he himself grappled with sin's fell agent and man's dread enemy—death. Two men are traveling along a Judean highway. Their faces are sad as they earnestly engage in conversation. A stranger joins them and asks, "What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another as ye walk, and are sad?" Surprised at the question, they relate the strange circumstances accompanying the recent death of Jesus of Nazareth. The stranger replies to their expressions of deep and hopeless sorrow: "Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things?" Afterward Jesus said to his disciples, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations." Therefore, though Jesus saved

others, himself he could not save. Not only according to natural law, but also according to the great plan of salvation, obedient to a similar spiritual law, life comes through death. As Jesus impressively said: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall to the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

In an old mummy pit in Egypt there was once found a sealed vase. It was sent to the British Museum, and by accident the librarian broke it. What was within that ancient vase? Only a few grains of wheat and two or three peas, all dried and withered and as hard as stone. In this vase these wrinkled seeds had slept for more than three thousand years. A servant of Joseph may have sowed the wheat from which those seeds came. It may be that Moses saw the parent vine. Kings have lived and died. Empires have risen and tottered to their fall. Generations of men have passed into oblivion. Yet here are these seeds. But this is not all. When those old, shriveled seeds were planted under glass beneath the warm sun they burst into life. They sprouted and put forth leaves, and the vines crawled and climbed as if they had not slept for ages. But look! Life came to those seeds through their death. Before there could be a new life they must die and decay. Mere preservation in the air-tight vase brought no fruit. All the elements of life were there, but there was no power, no growth. "Except a corn of wheat fall to the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." So Jesus, in whom was

life, died that he might give life. From eternity all the elements of life lay in him, but they remained hermetically sealed to the human race until that time when "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons." For "as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

In this materialistic and skeptical age, when reason is deified and scientific proofs are demanded, it is well for us to observe the fact that the same principle underlying nature underlies the atonement of Christ. No doubt the preaching of the cross is to many a stumbling-block, and to others, wise in the wisdom of the world, it is foolishness, but this does not make salvation through the death of Christ unreasonable. If the gospel demands faith it does not discard reason. When I preach Christ dying that the sinner may live, I do not proclaim a doctrine which has no foundation nor parallel in the natural world. This principle of life in death and death in life meets you and me at every turn. We see it graven in the earth, painted on our forests in autumnal tints, woven into man's business and social relations. *Why should it not be also in his religion?* "Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things?" Should not the ministry and church of Christ, then, unflinchingly maintain the glorious truth, "He loved me, and gave himself for me?" Yes, verily; but not chiefly because it is reasonable, but because it is the word of God.

As therefore we stand on Calvary watching the agonies of him there crucified, as we hear the chief priests and doctors of the law sneeringly cry, "He saved others; himself he cannot save," let us with lov-

ing confidence rejoice in the words of Jesus : “ God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life. I am the resurrection and the life : he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live ; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die. *Believest thou this ?* ”

“ ‘ Others he saved, himself he could not save ’—
 So scoffed the priests, and upwards rolled the wave
 Of blasphemy against the dying Lord,
 Until it broke upon the throne of God.

‘ Others he saved, himself he did not save ’—
 So sighed the mourners ’round the Savior’s grave ;
 Their grief embittered by the mystery
 Why he, who Lazarus raised, himself need die.

‘ Others to save, himself he would not save ’—
 There rests the truth ; his life for us he gave.
 Oh, ruined heart, thy Savior had to choose,
 If he should die, or thou salvation lose.”

THIS SAME JESUS.

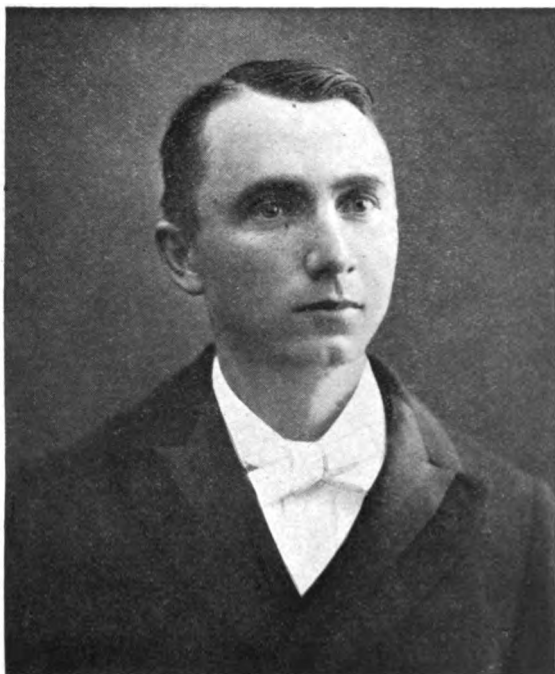
BY REV. PERRY V. JENNESS,*

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Text: "Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:11.

The little group of faithful ones stand on Olivet's summit looking at the cloud that has received the Master out of their sight. He has gone. The risen, glorified Jesus has left his bride—the church—and now, bewildered by the suddenness of his departure, they gaze upward toward heaven, scarce knowing what to expect. Not long are they kept waiting, for behold, two angelic messengers appear beside them with the announcement "that this same Jesus will come again," and in the calm assurance of that promise they return to the upper room at Jerusalem. "This same Jesus," "This same Jesus." What did it mean to them? What does it mean to us to-day?

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PERRY V. JENNESS.

I. That Jesus Christ, the man of flesh and bone, (Luke 24:39) will some day come back to this earth, may be as clearly learned from the teaching of the word as that he was once born in Bethlehem. It was his own promise. John 14:2, "And if I go—I will come again." Matt. 16:27, "The Son of man shall come." It was the apostles' doctrine. 1 Co. 1:7, "Waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Heb. 9:28, "Shall he appear the second time." 2 John 7, R. V., "Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh." 1 Thess. 4:16, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven." Human language cannot be made to express a personal and literal coming more plainly than do these words and many others that might be quoted, all given by inspiration of the Spirit. It is a sad day indeed for the church when almost every important doctrine is explained away by the philosophy of learned men, who tell us that the Bible does not mean what it says in simple language, and no precious truth has suffered so at the hand of human wisdom as this one of the Lord's coming.

Let us notice a few of the objections to this literal interpretation of the Scriptures. "The promise was fulfilled at Pentecost," says one. "Not so," we reply, for the outpouring of the Spirit preceded all of the events that are linked with the Lord's appearing. The epistles were written after Pentecost, but all of them point to his coming as future. So, too, with regard to the destruction of Jerusalem. The book of Revelation and John's epistles were written twenty years after Titus left the Holy City in ruins, and yet they picture the appearing as still to come. "The coming of Christ is at death," says another. Then death is to be reckoned as "the blessed hope," which is absurd. Death is always spoken of in the Word as an enemy, the direct heritage of the sin in Eden, while "his coming"

is something to be devoutly longed for and prayed for. The death of the believer is the separation of soul and body, the spirit going to be with Christ (Acts 7:59.) On the other hand the advent of Jesus is the glorification of the believer's body and the coming of Christ to be with us, and not our going to be with him. The disciples clearly understood this, and all their teaching harmonizes with this idea.

II. If his coming is to be literal and personal, *when may we look for him?* This is the most interesting question of all, and the one that has aroused the greatest discussion. Many have thought that by mathematical calculations, mixing scriptural numbers with historical dates and using lunar, solar, or some other kind of time to fit their theories, they might with certainty predict the great event. But their predictions have failed and the whole subject has thus been brought into disfavor. Many have gone to the other extreme and given up all hope of his ever returning, at least till the close of the millennial period. The real truth seems to be midway between these two views. He will come. That is a fact. The exact time is unknown. That is a second fact. That it will *precede* the millennium may be shown in many ways.

(a) *Its imminence.* Matt. 24:42, "Ye know not what day your Lord cometh." Phil. 4:5, "The Lord is at hand." All through the Word the fact that he may come any day is held out as a warning to the world. Three times in the last chapter of Revelation is repeated the cry, "Behold, I come quickly," and the longing heart of the loving apostle responds, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." If the world is to enjoy a thousand years of peace and universal righteousness before the Master returns, then all commands to watch are useless to all, except to those who shall be fortunate enough to



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live in some coming generation, many centuries still in the future.

(b) *Its relation to the present state of things.* The age in which we live is a sinful age. Satan is the god of this world. The good and bad are to grow together until the harvest, (Matt. 13:30.) The end of the age is vividly pictured to us in the parable of the drag-net and its explanation by Jesus. The idea of a gradual growth in influence and power of the real church of Christ until the whole world is converted, is nowhere to be found in the Scriptures, and comes from the spiritualizing of those passages which refer to the glory of Israel, or the kingdom during the millennial age. If the agencies now at work are to convert the world, then we are not making any progress, for there are to-day two hundred millions more people to be reached with the gospel than one hundred years ago. In other words, during this missionary century we have succeeded in converting three millions of heathen, while the increase in population in heathen lands has been two hundred millions. To this agree the words of Jesus, "When the Son of Man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8). "As the days of Noe were," (Matt. 24:37.) Notice also Paul's description of the end of the age, "This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come," (2 Tim. 3:1.) And Peter adds his testimony along this line, "Knowing this first that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." (2 Pet. 3:3-4.) Could any picture be more perfect of our present time, with its organized selfishness, its mad pursuit after pleasure, its disregard for the Sabbath, its increase of crime and its doubt of the word of God?

While it is true that millions are in the church and living faithful to the heavenly bridegroom, it is also true that, judged by the light in which the world to-day lives, the age is as guilty and corrupt before God as ever before, and will continue so "till he come."

(c). Again, we may show that Christ's coming will be pre-millennial by *its relation to missions*. "The gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; then shall the end come." (Matt. 14:14.) Not when all are converted, but when the whole earth shall have heard the joyful message, when missionary zeal shall have covered the whole world with the clear witness of the finished work of Jesus Christ, then the end may be expected. The divine program is announced by James, who quotes from Peter, in the council at Jerusalem, "Simeon hath declared how God at first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. After this I will return, that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called." (Acts 15:14-17.) Here we have a full answer to those who say that our view is dishonoring to the Holy Spirit. As a matter of fact, the work of the Holy Spirit in this age is to call out of the world a bride for the coming King, and God's elective grace is at work selecting those upon whom the effectual calling of the Spirit shall rest. It is no more a discredit to the Spirit that the world is not converted in this dispensation than to Jesus Christ that his earthly ministry was so barren of results among the Jews. The Spirit is doing his office work in convicting of sin, in regenerating, in abiding, in out-flowing, in giving power for service, and when Jesus shall come the Holy Ghost will be poured out upon all flesh in such a measure as we have never seen in this age. We live in the dispensation of

the Spirit, but it is also the dispensation of the church, which is, as its name indicates in the Greek, a called-out body. How soon that body may be complete we know not, but when it is made ready, every part supplied, then the royal Bridegroom will come, come for his own. Here, too, we have the answer to those who tell us that this doctrine cuts the nerve of missionary interest. Far from it, for those who see this truth clearly are aroused to the greatest missionary activity, that the kingdom of Christ may come on the earth, even as it is in heaven. (Matt. 6:10.) They see the uselessness of trying to convert the world, but the great necessity of reaching every soul with a plain presentation of the gospel. Perhaps this explains why ninety per cent. of missionaries from all the various boards, and ninety-five per cent. of all the evangelists hold the belief of the pre-millennial return of the Lord.

(d) *In its relation to unfulfilled prophecy.* Here we have the key to the Old Testament Scriptures. No one can carefully read the Bible without being impressed with the two seemingly contradictory lines of prophecy concerning the Messiah. In one he is represented as coming in humiliation, a root out of dry ground, with little to commend him to the world except his goodness and meekness of spirit. He is a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, wounded, bruised, killed, his soul an offering for sin. In the other we see pictured a king coming to reign, resistless in the power of his might, crushing all his enemies before him, judging the whole earth with righteous judgment and bringing in a blessed era of peace that extends even to the animal creation. We know that the former of these was literally fulfilled in the first advent of Jesus. We believe that all the other prophecies will have their fruition in the kingdom that shall be manifested at the second coming of Christ.

The Jew did not understand this and so rejected his Messiah, because he came in the form of a servant and not as a king. He wanted a literal king. We, to-day, are in danger of making the other mistake and denying that he will come and make good his promise to reign. If one set of predictions was literally fulfilled, why not the other? A delay of a few thousand years is nothing with God. In the first chapter of Luke we read of eight distinct promises made by the angel to Mary concerning her son Jesus. Five of those promises were really and actually fulfilled. Why say that the remainder shall not be carried out to the letter? When Jesus went into the synagogue at Nazareth and read from the prophet Isaiah he stopped reading in the middle of a sentence, closed the book, sat down and said, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." Why did he stop in the midst of one of the most wonderful of Isaiah's descriptions? Because only that part of the prophecy was fulfilled then, and the rest, "the day of vengeance of our God," looks forward to his future coming in judgment. These illustrations might be multiplied a hundred-fold. The pre-millennial coming of Christ is the only explanation of most of the Old Testament prophecies.

(e) *Its relation to the early church.* The pre-millennial view was the unanimous belief of the early Christian church. No less authority than Prof. Adolf Harnack in his article on the "Millennium" in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, declares that "all scholars must acknowledge that in former times millenarianism was associated—to all appearance inseparably associated—with the gospel itself." It was only when the church became secularized, when the propagation of religion was undertaken by the sword, when the temporal power of the bishop of Rome was asserted, that the literal

teaching of the word was dropped and the spiritualizing philosophy substituted. Even Whitby, the strongest opponent of the literal interpretation of the Scriptures, declares that "pre-millennial teaching passed among the best Christians for two hundred and fifty years as a tradition apostolical." Were the apostles mistaken? Did they fail to grasp the teaching of the Master concerning "things to come," and preach what they hoped might be the result of the spread of the gospel, or did they, inspired of the Holy Ghost, proclaim a blessed truth? If we accept their teaching on other lines we should credit their testimony on this subject.

III. Some one is sure to ask concerning the practical value of this doctrine and its relation to other truth, why do we emphasize it? Because the word of God emphasizes it. From the promise in Eden to the end of the book, prophecy occupies a most important place. Enoch, according to Jude, was a prophet of the kingdom, and so became a sample of those who will be alive and ready to meet the Lord in the air. The tabernacle service was full of kingly types that can only have their fulfillment in the coming days. Many of the Psalms are but pictures of the judgment of the nations, or Christ's peaceful reign as king. All of the prophetic books of the Old Testament are filled with graphic descriptions of events that are yet in the future. As for the New Testament, one verse in every twenty-five relates to the second coming of Jesus and the accompanying events. If God has seen fit to include all this in his revelation to man, and if it "is profitable for doctrine,—for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works," (2 Tim. 3:16-17,) then we do well to "search the Scriptures."

(a) The coming of Christ is the *hope of creation*.

The earth has always shared in the judgments upon mankind. Thorns and thistles are the heritage of sin. The earth will be made to feel the presence of her King, when "the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." (Is. 35:1.)

(b) It is the *hope of government*. When "he shall judge among the nations, and rebuke many people, they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Is. 2:4.)

(c) It is the *hope of Israel*. God's own chosen people are still to inherit their land, and become heirs of the promise to Abraham. Their sins will be forgiven, and their place among the nations recognized, but it can only come to pass when their King, whom they once rejected, shall be welcomed and given his throne. "He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." (Is. 11:12.)

(d) It is the *hope of the church*. "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." (1 Cor. 11:26.) Backward our eyes are cast to the cross as we take the bread and cup at the solemn communion season, for there we see our Sin-Bearer suffering in our place. But that bread and cup are also the pledge of a glorious future, and we look forward to "when he shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (Heb. 9:28.)

(e) It is the *hope of the sorrowing*. "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thes. 4:18.) Paul has just been telling them that the dead in Christ and the living believers will all be caught up together

and meet the Lord in the air. This means a reunion with our dead loved ones. It means a glorification of these bodies of ours. It means also the great victory over death, spoken of as a mystery in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep (die), but we shall all be changed, (that is, put on our heavenly bodies)—the dead shall be raised incorruptible (only the dead in Christ are referred to here), and we (the living) shall all be changed. So when this corruptible (the dead) shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal (the living) shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." Millions going into the presence of Christ without dying will be the occasion of that glorious shout of triumph over death. It was this most precious truth that Jesus referred to when he said to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life." "I am the resurrection (for the dead) and the life (for the living); he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth (when I shall come) and believeth in me shall never die." (John 11:25-26.) Blessed, comforting thought, that death shall not always have the power he has now.

IV. And then, lastly, this truth is of the utmost practical importance to the Christian. It is called the "blessed hope," making its possession a spiritual blessing, because the believer sets his eyes on the glory of the future rather than on that of the present. It is a motive to *watchfulness*. "Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." (Matt. 24:42.) The consciousness of the possibility of the Master's return at any time has kept many awake when the world's temptation was to spiritual slumber. It is a motive to *faithfulness*.

THIS SAME JESUS.

“ Our Master has taken his journey
 To a country that's far away,
 And has left us the care of the vineyard,
 To work for him day by day.

Our Master is coming most surely,
 To reckon with every one ;
 Shall we then count our toil or our sorrow,
 If his sentence be, ‘ Well done ? ’ ”

And his judgment will not be upon a basis of the success of our efforts, but upon our faithfulness, as he himself illustrates to us in the parable of the pounds.

It is a motive to *holiness*. “ And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure,” (1 Jn. 3:3.) We look for Christ, and then the desire takes possession of us to be like him, “ to abide in him—that we may not be ashamed before him at his coming,” (1 Jn. 2:28.)

Time would fail me to tell of all the practical phases of this precious truth ; how it encourages humility, incites to patience, induces obedience and leads to separation from the world. All these, and more, will result from the heart-acceptance of the plain teaching of the Word on this subject.

He is coming ; “ this same Jesus.” Do you want to see him ? Does your soul go out in longing for his presence ? Will you be among those who will bid him welcome, or among those who will desire to flee from before his face ?

He is coming ; “ this same Jesus.” How long he will tarry we know not. It does not seem as though the glad day could be very far away. The signs are multiplying. The earth is ripe for judgment. Long and dark has the night been. Lift up your eyes. The morning dawns. See, from yon eastern sky the Sun of

Righteousness arises with healing in his wings, (Mal. 4:2.) Rejoice, O child of God, for he comes, thy Savior. "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

STRENGTH FOR TRIAL.

BY REV. JOSEPH M. ROGERS,*

Pastor Franklin St. Church, Lansing.

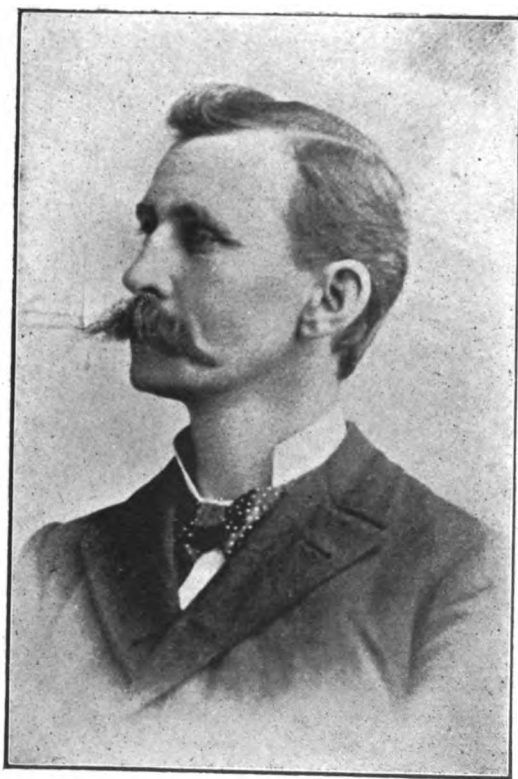
Text: "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me.

In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:1-3.

To how many bruised and bleeding hearts have these words come with comfort and healing! To the dying have they spoken peace, and to the living have they brought consolation in dire affliction. Perhaps they have too generally been applied to the one purpose of comforting the grieved and sorrowing hearts in times of distress. Was this the purpose of the Savior in uttering them? Was it only to comfort them in view of his coming departure from them? While their hearts were truly sorrowful, may he not have thought it necessary to encourage and fortify them in view of the great

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J. M. ROGERS.

work which he was leaving them to do, and, therefore, gave them the reasons why they should be strong and bold to remain and labor and wait? While I have no desire to take away the comfort which these words may have for sorrowing hearts, I prefer now to bring the note of courage and strength to your listening ear in your struggles and trials of to-day's work.

"Let not your hearts be troubled," i. e., agitated, distressed, tossed about. Even as the waters of the sea are *troubled* by the winds above until they become the very symbol of restlessness, uncertainty and inconstancy, so are our hearts tossed about by fears and the storms of life until we become restless, uncertain and inconstant. We forget that we are to "be strong and of a good courage," and that the promise is ours, "I will not leave thee, nor forsake thee." Does not the world need most strong, self-centered, purposeful, courageous lives? And why may we not think that this is the main purpose of this exhortation—to show why we may be strong in our Christian life? As the Christ had much work for the early disciples to do which needed an enduring, brave and stable character behind it, so the work of the kingdom to-day needs the same type of purposeful and courageous men and women.

But how can we of to-day transform ourselves with the resolute, determined men of faith and action, before whom difficulties vanish and fears melt away? My brother, you will do it even as the men of old did, by taking into your heart these words—"Be not troubled," i. e., "be strong and of a good courage," because

1. "Ye believe in God." The revised version gives us the marginal translation in the imperative mood, "Believe in God." And the weary and discouraged hearts sadly reply, "We do, we always have." But let

us honestly question ourselves *how* we believe. Simply in an intellectual fashion? Merely to *know* that there is a God, and that somehow everything is in his hands? Let us remember that Christ taught us to say "Our Father," and that we are to believe in him just the same way that our children do in us, having *confidence* that our wants will be supplied, our future provided for, and that we shall never pass out of his thought and plan. There is no more need for our "anxious thought" about our needful things than there is for our children to fret in fear concerning their food and clothing and other comforts. Our Father's thought extends to the place where we shall live, the people we are to influence, and the surroundings which shall enable us to grow up into that which may be approved of him. "Your Father knoweth" your situation and will withhold "no needful thing." Have confidence, then, in him and rest in sweet assurance of his loving thought. But sometimes we have difficulty in making God, even "Our Father," seem near to us. In his infinitude our minds place him at a distance and, therefore, the Christ says,

2. "Believe also in me." Though he be Son of God we can understand his intensely human life and feel that he brings himself very near to us in it. "He hath borne our sorrows," and "is acquainted with grief." As we follow him in his life among men we see his loving compassion and tender sympathy. We remember that he left no suffering cry unanswered, and none who came to him were turned away unhelped. He interprets the Father to us. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father;" and through him we can draw near the Father with serener confidence and love. We can call to mind his sources of strength, his constant habit of prayer, his reliance upon the Father's power, his serene confidence that, as he was doing the work

entrusted to him to do, his Father would not leave him to do it alone, but would sustain and strengthen him according to his needs. Then, as his Father sent him into the world, even so hath he sent us into the world to do our appointed tasks, and he is pledged to sustain. He will not leave us "comfortless, but will come with us." Have confidence, then, in Christ.

3. Believe in *heaven*. "In my Father's house are many mansions." I confess to a better thought of heaven as a place, in these words, than in any other passage of Scripture. The streets of gold, the brightness and the glory, the beautiful jasper walls and the many shining gates cannot bring to me in description the feeling of reality which I find in the one simple phrase, "My Father's house." How memory carries me back to the joy of my earthly father's house—the home where were all the loved ones, where love dwelt, where the child was sure of his place. Being a member of that home, he was enshrined in an atmosphere of appreciation, sympathy and tenderness found nowhere else. There father, mother, brothers and sisters—love, joy, rest and peace. And all this and infinitely more shall my Heavenly Father's house be to me. As often in our later years we have looked back to the earthly home and sighed for a return to its shelter and comfort, so we are now encouraged to look forward to that which is provided by infinite love.

" 'Twill not be long ; the eye of faith discerning
 The wondrous glory that shall be revealed,
 Instructs the soul, that every day is learning
 The better wisdom which the world concealed.
 And soon, aye, soon, there'll be an end of teaching,
 When mortal vision finds immortal sight,
 And her true place the soul in gladness reaching,
 Beholds the glory of the Infinite—
 'Twill not be long ! "

4. "If it were not so, I would have told you." Here is our strength of confidence—the word of the Christ. Men may speculate and theorize and build up their elaborate systems of belief, but can influence others only in proportion to their confidence in them as teachers. When the Christ speaks with his authority shall we waver in our faith? Believe in God, his Son, and in heaven, for if these were not verities he would have told us. He has not told us much of heaven, but he has bidden us believe in it, and we may trust that in good time its full glories shall burst on our wondering sight and then shall we be satisfied. Eternity only shall be long enough for us to take into our thought its mysteries, and those of all his universe.

5. "I go to prepare a place for you." Would that our thought might more clearly distinguish as to the past, present and future work and activities of the Christ! In reference to his past work, he himself said upon the cross, "It is finished," and then he went away to leave us to the care of the Holy Spirit. The Christ is not on earth. The Holy Spirit is. The Christ is in heaven with the Father. What are his employments, how is he active? What courage should it bring us to think that we are still embraced in his active thought, and that he is working and planning for us, expecting our coming, preparing our place, ready with his welcome!

6. "I will come again." The church of Jesus Christ has suffered much from the vagaries of those who have believed in the personal, literal and visible second coming of the Christ, and, forgetting his own words of caution, have predicted with much enthusiasm its exact time. This glorious doctrine has thus been discredited and relegated to an obscurity from which it should be recovered. We should be careful that in our

rebound from the extreme of lunacy on this subject we be not carried to the opposite extreme of heresy. With the same quiet certainty with which the Christ says, "I go," he also says, "I will come again." As his first coming was predicted with minute accuracy and fidelity, and the Jews failed to see how marvelously were those predictions literally fulfilled, so we stand in danger of so completely spiritualizing the references in the Scripture to this coming event, that we may be deceived into a state of unreadiness to receive the plainest meaning of the Word. By what rule of interpretation we separate that which we know has been literally fulfilled from that which we say shall figuratively come to pass is unknown to me. Some prophecies as to his coming we know have been literally fulfilled. If all are to be treated alike, (and why not?) then those that yet remain to be as literally fulfilled are in the proportion of twenty to one. When we remember also that Christ referred very fully and constantly to his second coming, and very few times, and then only incidentally, to such matters as the church and baptism, should we not wonder why the teaching of to-day does not more fully follow that of the great Teacher? So many of us have been taught to believe that the world is gradually to be brought into subjection to the Christ, and that the ushering in of the millennium will follow its complete subjugation. How, then, shall we explain the plain statement that his coming shall be "as a thief in the night," "in an hour that he is not aware of?" Why the cautions to "be ready?" "Watch, therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." As the disciples of old found such joy in their hope of his coming, so should we of to-day learn to look to it as our hope and our joy. Because we have so obscured the plain teaching of the literal Word, and because our faith is sadly out of pro-

portion to the teachings of the Savior, we respond so feebly to the blessed promise of his coming.

As we believe in the certainties of God, Christ and heaven, so shall we find strength in the certainty of the second coming. In these certainties shall we not be bold, brave, enduring in our warfare? "Greater works than these shall ye do"—these are the expectations of our Leader, and he calls for soldiers. Shall we be laggard?



FORT STREET CHURCH, DETROIT.

HOW TO FIND RELIGION.

BY REV. WALLACE RADCLIFFE, D. D.,*

Pastor N. Y. Ave. Presbyterian Church, Washington, D. C.

Text: "Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master." John 20:16.

The weeping Mary is the type of every earnest soul; her ecstatic cry of recognition, its certain and ultimate reward. With an absent Lord the garden is always a sepulchre. Its beauties attract not, its fragrance pleases not, but for every pleasure there abides a thorn, for every brightness a shadow and a fear. "They have taken away my Lord." The soul, above all earthly flowers and beauteous things, lifts its eyes toward heaven. There abides the thirst for the living

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God, and he is not far from every one of us. He stands ready to minister to every need, to respond to every honest search. He is found of those that seek him. He walks in the garden. Material things speak of him, and those things that are made and seen are the proclamations of the invisible One. With closed eyes, eyes closed by fear, by sorrow, by earthliness, men walk unmindful of the nearness of Jesus Christ. Truth walks along our streets and in our homes; and across the sea, in the darkness of heathenism, Christ stands. Men see him sometimes. They look through tears and darkness. The multitude fail to recognize his voice and presence; but amid our tears, amid the enveloping cloud of ignorance and sin, Christ stands, the Divine Gardener, the sympathizing Friend, the incarnate, resurrected One.

The incident presents to us the successive steps of our search for truth, and eminently for truth in the presence of Jesus Christ. He has to be disclosed to every honest search. If we wish the truth we must hunt for it. It does not hang on the tree for the careless grasp. It does not force itself upon the inattentive and the uncaring. He that would find Christ must hunt for him. He that would know truth must everywhere buy it at its price. The search for Christ is to be a diligent one. Beautifully the record gives the figure. Early, before dawn, while it was yet dark, Mary sought for Jesus. It is not certainly foreign to the suggestion of the text for us to recognize at least the thought that truth is found by him who in the early years seeks it. The conscience becomes hard, the mind sodden, effort limited in certain distinct and material channels, and the spiritual consciousness, unstrained and unsusceptible in age, in youth is controlled by an influence afterward unknown and often un-

thought of. "They that seek me early shall find me," and Jesus gives the promise to the youthful thought, to the child with childlike faith, to the eyes that look with wonder and praise upon earthly duties and earthly experiences, that in the dew of youth the freshness of his truth and his presence will come with benediction.

But far beyond any suggestion is the wider teaching of the incident, that in any search for spiritual truth Jesus Christ is found by him who gives honest, earnest and continuous effort. Do you not notice that Peter and John, transient visitors in the sepulchre, did not see the angels; and that to the women who came with their spices and their eagerness, and who stayed in their sorrow, the angels came and spoke? Early, while it is yet dark, *feeling* the vaguest promptings of the heart, the merest glimmerings and suggestions of the truth, is that which leads into the larger realization of truth and Christlike living. The sun does not burst forth with a noon-day splendor. Truth does not come full-orbed to any soul. Christian lives do not spring like Minerva, full-armed and grown, but first the seed, then the ear, and by and by the full corn in the ear. The young Christian cannot have the maturity of thought nor the consistency of life that belongs to older hearts and professions. Revelations of truth always, knowledge of Jesus Christ eminently, is progressive. First the dawn, and then the light unto the perfect day. First, the honest feeling of the truth we have.

What a vague suggestion, what a remote hope in the heart of Mary, that brought her in the darkness of the morning to the tomb of Christ. But to that hope, to that vague suggestion there came an answer at last. Men are not honest with themselves. They play with the truth and with Jesus Christ. They are the veriest tyros in their search for truth, tyros whom they would

not permit for a moment in their secular life. They take to-day a detached sentence from a speaker's address, a clause from the word of God, a chance word of a passing conversation, a skeptical thought in the drawing room or at the place of business. They dally with it, they play with it, that there may be some awakening for truth. To-day it quickens the mind, but to-morrow it is forgotten again. And men everywhere are walking in their truth as in a tread-mill, never getting on.

Some men are just as far to-day as you were 30 or 40 years ago in your knowledge and in your Christian experience; a little edge or fragment of the truth, a little drop of dew, it may be, of Christian experience, and that satisfies you, or at least you compel yourself to a satisfaction therewith. You question the being of God, but you never enter into a thoughtful discussion. You talk flippantly about the inspiration of the Scripture. You have never given one hour's solid thought to it. You play with the theories upon the divinity of Christ. You never have read one volume of proof or of argument upon it, and through days and years you play with fragmentary truth and go round and round your weary, blinded, inoperative tread-mill of so-called thought. He who attains the full day begins with the dawn and follows it. He who attains the mountain top climbs through many a valley, round many a rock, as Mary, by and by, welcomes the resurrection of Christ because she sought before the dawn the place of his sepulchre.

It is to be a search not only of diligence, but of affection. We attain truth when we love it. Upon what a small basis Mary wrought! She came to the grave of Jesus. "We thought it had been he who would have redeemed Israel." They had dreams of crowns and thrones and organized monarchy and exalted life and

nationality. "We trusted it had been he," and this is all, a buried sepulchre, a crucified leader. But to that dead hope Mary came. Her love brought her back and back again to that idea with no definite thought of what might be, but vaguely imagining something must be, round him in whom centered so tenderly and so really the love and life of the disciples. The truth is not a matter of formularies, of accumulated doctrines. We do not attain the highest ideal and result when we come at the truth with scalpel, with dissecting knife, with crucible. Jesus Christ is known most directly by those who come loving the truth. The revelation is not only by degrees, but it is by certainties to him who desires to know what truth is. Men labor for victory. They have the pride of attainment. They desire argument. They would accumulate knowledge. The richest truth is not to such, but to those who in the sense of sin come, though it may be weeping, to the grave of the dead Christ; who in the darkness, conscious of their need, hope that somehow, somewhere, in some strange way, there may come ministry and relief. He that loves the truth, that loves redemption, that loves the idea of immortality, of reconciliation, of peace, of everlasting life, to him, though he comes in the darkness and to his grave, is the ultimate result, the restoration and life.

We notice that our search may often have its mistakes. There are paradoxes in Christian life and in Christian search. Joy is a sorrow to this seeking one. Mary weeps because there is an empty tomb. That empty tomb spoke of the fulfillment of all the words of prophets, of psalmists, of kings through the ages. It spoke of an accomplished fact, of a declared atonement, of a radiant hope for heaven and immortality. That empty tomb proclaimed a triumphant Christ, yet that empty tomb meant only tears to Mary's heart. We

mistake oftentimes. God is revealing himself in daily experiences. He moves in the mysteries of providence and of grace, and we see, in a present denial, in temporary defeats, in contradictions to our intellectual aims or spiritual desires, the darkness of an irreparable and eternal defeat. God moves in the winds and in the storms. Our disappointments are oftentimes his ministries and best interpretations of his grace, "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform," and by these things that bring us often disaster and defeat, by lives burdened and darkened and troubled in many ways, by plans and purposes which have their ends apparently in darkness and in a tomb, God speaks to us. All prayers of his people are answered, not always as we desire, not always as in the limitation of our ignorance and sin we ask; but as we really ask, asking for the best thing, the most enduring thing, the most blessed thing, prayer has its answer. Mary wept at that empty tomb, a disappointed hope. Jesus was answering it in the supposed gardener. He stands by us with the answer and the revelation, waiting for the recognition of faith.

And truth, as it comes to us, is known not so much by its statement as by its tone. "Mary." That was all, and she knew him. Doctrines may be formally stated. There may be a succession of formulas that after all shall carry in them no life; whilst the daily experiences, the stumbling even into evil, may have in it revelation of a better life and a dearer love. There is a trend in truth. There is an aroma, as it comes here from stammering lips, there from humble lives, again in the conflict of daily trouble, in the struggle of sin, that carries the aroma of truth, that bears in itself, though feebly stated, though illogical to human ears, the fact, the reality, the unconquerable argument of life in Christ.

“One thing I know ; I cannot tell you other things. I cannot explain the physician’s method, I do not know how it came to pass, but this man touched my eyes, and whereas I was blind, now I see.” And against the accumulation of arguments, against the sneers of men, against the philosophies and theories that seem in themselves as we read them oftentimes so irrefutable, we place against them the tone of the Christian voice, the atmosphere of the Christian life, the constant experience of the Christian faith ; and, above all logic and rhetoric and sneer and assault, it lifts itself up and in the word “Mary,” speaks to questioning ears, the voice of Christ, in the experience of its consciousness ; declaring solemnly, certainly, against the world, “Whereas I was blind, now I see.”

And the result of this search is the acknowledgment of his masterhood. When we find Christ, the utterance of the soul is “Rabboni.” It is sentiment, but Christianity is not sentiment, and sentiment merely is not Christianity. It has statements of belief, but formulated statements are not Christianity. It has religious acts and experiences, but acts and experiences in themselves are not Christianity. It is the soul’s acknowledgment of the principles, not the intelligent reception of a truth alone, or chiefly. To the glad eyes of Mary it was the risen Christ, and in his resurrection, truth divine. Piety is the acknowledgment not of doctrine, nor of professional name or station, nor intellectual assent alone ; it is the acknowledgment of the presence of Jesus Christ, the one who was in the beginning with God and was God, and in his very presence, resurrected by his own power, in his very presence carrying the proof of his divinity. Piety is the acknowledgment of the submission of the soul to the divine Christ. I must not touch that crown upon that royal head. I must not

bring him to that equality with myself that shall claim kindred not only, but equal place and equal right with him in his humanity. "Touch me not." Christianity builds itself, if it has life at all, if it has existence, if it has endurance, upon the divinity of Jesus Christ. Whatever others may do I shall not criticise. For myself I cannot even understand the desire on the part of those who refuse to acknowledge the divinity of Jesus Christ, to claim the name of Christian. Christ in the glory of his divinity; Christ in the transcendent triumph, the divine triumph of his resurrection; Christ who carries himself to the grave, and by his own power carries himself from that grave; Christ in whom I have life, promise, power, is Christ the almighty, the omniscient One, very God of very God. It is the personal appropriation of this person. "Rabboni" means not only master, but *my* master. The submission of a person to a person. The acknowledgment by a person of a person. The appropriation of a person by a person. The appropriation, acknowledgment, submission of a human person to the divine person; that is Christianity. And that submission is complete. He is Master. Undoubted, absolute submission of the heart and will to that divine heart and divine will. The heart and will with us are free. It is blasphemous to claim submission of heart and will to other than a divine will. You assail my manhood, you belittle my self-respect when you claim an unquestioning, absolute, entire submission to any other than God. Christianity brings the man into the presence of him of whom to-day it can be said as of old: "What manner of man is this that even the winds and the waves obey him?" Disease cast out, sickness banished, death itself conquered, and not only thus in his omnipotence, but entering into the hearts and wills of men, claiming them with an absolute au-

thority, ruling over them with a scepter, in all things and through all things, to which they are cheerful to bow.

How shall we know this will? Some men tell us that it is to be known in the radiancy of love; yet love can be mistaken. They speak of a Christian consciousness of men; and yet, whilst we rejoice in the divine immanence, we recognize that the Christian consciousness can sometimes, even in the days of the apostles, be led into heresy, into wrong and evil living. They tell us of reason; but reason itself is based only upon facts, and facts must be given it from which to formulate its principles and method of life; and even reason is not always infallible. They say the church shall guide us; but there have been days when the church has not spoken with infallible voice, nor led in ways of heavenly peace and quietness. All are good, the radiancy of love, the Christian consciousness, the dictates of reason, the guidance of the church; each has its place in the direction and impulse of Christian life. You direct your affairs by the time which your watch indicates. I direct by my watch. All over this city and throughout the land men are guiding themselves in business appointments and in daily duties by their own watches, but all have the one guide, the one test, they are guided by the stars. You and I may have our Christian consciousness, our radiancy of love, our voice of reason, our dictum of the church, but church and reason and consciousness must themselves be guided by the only infallible guide, the star of heaven, the Word of God, given by inspiration, and profitable to direct. By these words we are justified, and by these words we are condemned.

In the Word of God we find the will of the Master, and our submission to that is absolute. You will remember how Loyola subdued the will of his agents;

they were to be as a corpse and as a staff in a blind man's hand. To this will of Christ we come, not that we may become corpses, or an insensible staff in another hand, but in our very submission the dead becomes alive, that which was lost is found, and in submission we find our largest liberty.

To this masterhood there is a development. It is a beautiful suggestion of the usage of Jesus Christ, as we follow the terms by which he called his disciples. At first they were disciples of the Master, submissive. Further on in history he calls them friends. When nearer the end, he speaks of them as little children, and after his resurrection he tells Mary "to go and tell my brethren." He that yields to the Master becomes not only a disciple, but a friend and companion; and he who walks in the companionship of Jesus Christ, in submission to his will, becomes by and by as a little child, the highest ideal to the divine lips of heavenly life and character; and walking and submitting, in the love and unquestioning obedience of the child, we are brought into the brotherhood of the risen One, pulse beating with pulse, shoulder standing to shoulder, hope joining in hope, love inflamed by kindred love, spirit informed by kindred spirit, joint heirs with the elder Brother unto the heavenly inheritance.

"Rabboni," says Mary. Here she would find her rest in the arms of the risen One. "Touch me not. Go tell my brethren." It is well that by voice of him, by Sabbath service, by actual experience, we be lifted into recognition and exultancy in the presence and communion of Jesus Christ. It belongs to our life that there shall be sweetness, rest, exhilaration and uplifting of thought and life; but that is the best obedience which carries itself out into the companionship and service and brotherhood of Jesus Christ, and yields itself in

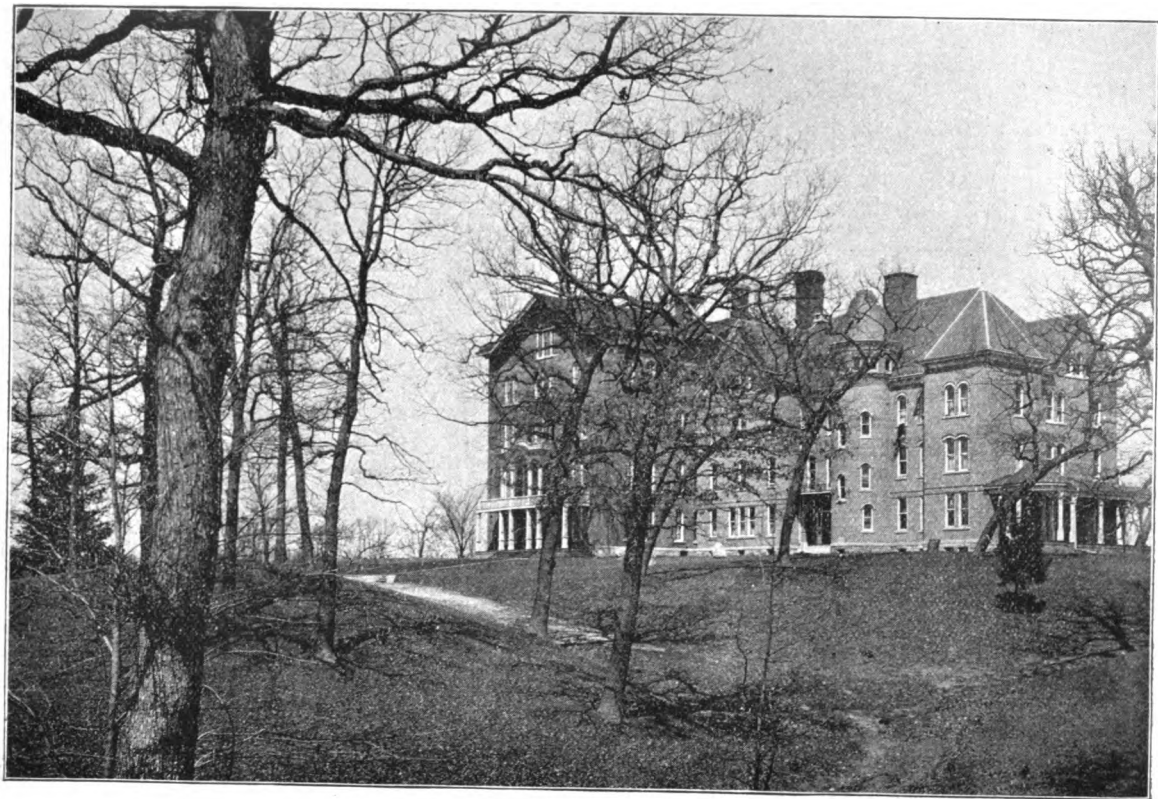
loving service, like unto the Master himself; for the disciple must not and cannot be greater than the Master. Not pleasure but labor, not ecstasy but service, not experience but works, are the testimony of the fact of our Christian faith and our Christian life.

Thus Jesus brings himself to you and me, pointing in the ascension to my Father and his Father, to my God and his God, as he sends us now, here in the lowly Sabbath school work, there among the poor, now on sick beds, wherever the word can be spoken, wherever the tone of truth, of love, of sweetness can be heard, not always in formulated statement, not always nor chiefly in stated solemn service, but in our casual experience, in our daily work, in our common task, carrying the inspiration of his presence and power, that all our life shall have the divine presence, and the greeting "Mary," shall wake the hope and unlock the sealed lips and give recognition, not of us, but of the Christ within us, "Rabboni."

How sweetly quaint George Herbert speaks of our life. "How sweetly does 'my Master' sound; 'my Master,' as ambergris leaves a rich sense unto the taste, so do these words a sweet content, an oriental fragrance, 'my Master.'"

MICHIGAN FEMALE SEMINARY.

Incorporated 1856, with an article in its constitution providing that the appointment of its trustees shall be submitted to the approval of synod, this seminary has been in touch with the synod from the beginning and annually visited by synod's committees. Every such committee has reported the seminary as true to its original purpose of establishing "a seminary of learning for young women that in every department should be second to none." While its methods and plans have been from time to time modified to meet the requirements of modern education, the main direction of its growth has been along the broad, deep lines laid down in the beginning. It is not in any sense a "finishing school." Students are made to feel that when they leave the school the process of education is only well begun, since all life is education. College bred women are teachers here, and the seminary offers excellent college preparation for those desiring it. There are many girls who for various reasons will never go to college. For all such the seminary undertakes to give a course of study equivalent to that of a standard high school, with two years of college added. A high standard of intellectual work is upheld, every effort is made to promote the most vigorous physical development, and the prime object of all education is kept constantly in view, viz., to send into the world young women with strong bodies, trained minds and well rounded characters strong in Christian faith and life.



DODGE HALL.

:

The trustees in their 31st annual report, 1897, show their fidelity to the great aim of the seminary. "In the experience of the board it seemed necessary that for the future the conduct of the institution should be under an executive head, or president. Steps were accordingly taken to secure such an officer, who, with his wife in the home department, and a lady principal in the academic department, should administer the affairs of the school." The synod approved of this action of the trustees, and itself took the following action: "The high standard of Christian education maintained in the past is to be raised still higher, and everything that will serve to make efficiency more efficient, will be done by the consecrated force in charge. Presbyterian homes in the State now need to second the noble self-denying efforts of trustees and faculty, and send them their daughters as well as their dollars, their dollars as well as their daughters."

The course of study embraces Latin, French and German, Physical and Natural Sciences, Mathematics, History and Literature, English Composition, and Bible Study, which extends over the four years' course. There are also departments of Music, Drawing and Painting, Domestic Economy and Cooking, Book-keeping, Stenography and Typewriting, and Elocution. Supplemental to this is a Course of Lectures by physicians, lawyers, business men and musicians, on themes connected with their several professions. In addition to the regular curriculum a Preparatory Department was opened Sept., 1895, and the work done has already shown its desirability. The original building was enlarged by Dodge Hall, which was opened for use Sept., 1892, and which greatly increases the comfort and convenience of the home.

One of the most important features of the school

life is that all the students, except those whose parents live in Kalamazoo, board in the family. By means of reading clubs and similar gatherings much is done to give a broader intelligence than is possible to the mere school. By means of frequent receptions the students meet socially their young friends and with them representatives of the best society of Kalamazoo, a city well known for its intellectual and charming women.

Kalamazoo is a picturesque city of 20,000 inhabitants in south-western Michigan, having the advantage of five railroads, the Michigan Central, the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern, the Chicago, Kalamazoo and Saginaw, the Grand Rapids and Indiana, and the Kalamazoo and South Haven. The grounds of the seminary cover thirty-two acres of rolling land, shaded by fine old oak trees. The building is situated on a hill, and commands a fine view. It is provided with passenger elevator, fire escape, soft water on every floor, is heated with steam and lighted by electricity. The seminary stands ready to fulfill its every pledge to every student.

L. B. B.



McMillan Hall.

THE TAPPAN HALLS, ANN ARBOR.

Sackett Hall.

THE TAPPAN PRESBYTERIAN ASSOCIATION.

It was in 1881, at Ionia, that the synod "Resolved, that a committee, consisting of Revs. A. T. Pierson, J. A. Wight, H. P. Collin, Job Pierson, and Elders W. J. Baxter, E. A. Fraser and A. J. Aldrich be appointed to visit the University of Michigan, examine into the state of religious work among the students, consult with the Presbyterian church of Ann Arbor as to what can be done to care for the spiritual welfare of the young men belonging to Presbyterian families, inquire how many Presbyterian and Christian young men there are in the institution, see what if anything can be done to bring to their attention the important duty of entering the ministry, and report with recommendations at next meeting of synod." This first step was followed in 1883 by the appointment of a committee on Theological Instruction at Ann Arbor, which for successive years, beginning 1884, secured the services of pastors and professors to deliver a course of lectures on vital religious topics and on Presbyterian history and doctrine. There being a felt need of a Presbyterian Hall at Ann Arbor, which should be a home for Presbyterian students, Mrs. H. Louise Sackett of the Ann Arbor church, in furtherance of this design and in memory of her deceased son, deeded a most eligible house and lot, 100 by 200 feet, of the value of \$15,000, on condition that a hall be erected on the premises within five years from the date of the deed, (Nov. 4, 1887.) For the purpose of holding this and any additional property, "The Tappan

Presbyterian Association" was organized and incorporated under the laws of the State, whose "object shall be to bring the Presbyterian students of the University of Michigan into closer acquaintance and communion with each other, to confirm the faith of students coming from Presbyterian families, to promote the spiritual welfare of its members, and increase their influence in advancing the cause of Christianity, etc." Of the board of trustees four are appointed by the synod, and four by the session of the Ann Arbor church. Rev. Wallace Radcliffe, D. D., became the first president.

Mrs. Sackett died March 27, 1892, and yet lives in the monumental presence of her gift and in its increasing ministry of gladness and beneficence to our Zion. Sackett Hall, with its facilities for class rooms, offices, and students' dormitories, was supplemented 1891 by McMillan Hall, the gift of Senator James McMillan; having a frontage of 80 feet, in the colonial style of brick and stone, harmonious with Sackett Hall and communicating therewith by cloisters; containing gymnasium, reception and reading rooms, library and assembly hall, and erected at a cost of \$20,000. This hall was opened with appropriate ceremonies May 23, 1891, during the sittings of General Assembly at Detroit, by Dr. Green, Moderator, and others.

The work being done at Ann Arbor through the McMillan and Sackett Halls is of the very greatest importance. To solve the problem of positive Christian influence at the University, and to give anything like pastoral oversight to the student body, nothing has been suggested that approaches the plan of the "Guild Halls." Over 500 of the 3000 students are from Presbyterian homes. There are many Christian influences about the University, but none can be distinctively de-

nominal. The stronger the criticism as to the religious influence of the University, the more persuasive becomes the argument for Tappan Association. Whatever educational theories we adopt, the condition confronts us. We may lament the number of Presbyterian students at the University; and yet our wisdom will consist, not in criticising, but in making the best of their presence there. They can be lost to, or saved for, the church; may be ignored or recognized, neglected or trained; which is wisdom?

The library numbers some 12,000 volumes, including the 7,000 of the Duffield, Atterbury and Jones libraries, classified and indexed for ready reference. There is need of \$5,000 endowment for the library. There is a training course for teaching our doctrine, history and methods, and to fit for practical intelligent service. An endowment of at least \$10,000 for this is a necessity. The lectureship contemplates a foundation by means of which a series of lectures will be delivered by specialists on Christian faith and life. An endowment of \$15,000 is necessary in order to command the best service here and abroad. Then, too, for the purposes of meeting the general expenses an additional endowment of \$10,000 is needed.

L. B. B.

ALMA COLLEGE.

The doors of Alma College, Rev. George F. Hunting, D. D., President, were opened to receive students Sept. 12, 1887. Thirty-four students registered the first day, ninety-five the first year, 280 for the year ending April 1, 1898. It embraces six departments of instruction. The Academic and Collegiate Depts. have each four courses of study of four years each, the Classical, Philosophical, Scientific and Literary. In all four the Bible and religion are specially emphasized. "Since the religious faculties are the highest and noblest, their training has been given the place of first importance. The instruction here given is in the broadest sense Christian. Nothing of a sectarian character is admitted. The purpose is to build up intelligent Christian manhood. We believe this is the greatest need of our time." The Kindergarten Training Dept. and the Commercial Dept. have each a two years' course, with the Bible in each. The Dept. of Music, three years, and the Art Dept., four years, complete a curriculum which for fullness, thoroughness and religiousness has made this college in one decade-one of the first educational institutions of the State. It has a faculty of seventeen trained specialists of large experience, a library of 15,000 volumes, new gymnasium and museum, and well equipped physical and chemical laboratories; while the total expenses per year are only from \$100 to \$150 for the student.

There are four college buildings on the campus.



The main building contains the chapel and study hall, laboratories, art and music departments. The Ladies' Hall has reception rooms, dining room and suites for 30 students. The Gymnasium and Museum building contains the Hood museum, fitted with elegant moth and dust proof cases of the latest approved design, making the large and valuable collections now accessible to students; and the gymnasium, which occupies the entire upper floor of the edifice, and which, with its equipment of scientific apparatus, furnishes adequate facilities for athletic training. Daily classes in physical culture under competent instruction offer opportunity for that systematic exercise of the body which is so essential to the health of the student. The Library building is a real gem, handsomely finished in hardwood, fire proof, and with shelf room for 30,000 volumes. The books and reviews, which make up the best assorted collection in the State, are classified and arranged according to the Dewey system, and a complete index of authors, titles and subjects places their contents at the command of all in search of information on any subject. These four buildings are of brick and stone, have a pleasing architectural appearance, and, with one exception, are heated by steam from a central heating plant.

As early as 1837 an attempt was made to found a Presbyterian college at Marshall. The financial crash and the competition of the University made the attempt a failure. Not again till 1885 did the synod, acting on an overture from the Presbytery of Lansing, appoint a committee of nine to consider the establishing of a Presbyterian college in this State. On the recommendation of this committee, Oct. 14, 1886, in Westminster Church, Grand Rapids, synod "Resolved, That in view of all the facts brought before us, we will, with God's help, establish and endow a college within our bounds."

The college now has grounds, buildings and endowments to the value of over \$200,000, and is wholly under synodical control. It surrounds young men with those moral and religious influences that point in the direction of the ministry for a life calling. All the students are under the personal watch-care of the president and faculty. The same opportunities of instruction are furnished to both sexes on the same conditions. It is happily located in the center of the State, in the flourishing village of Alma, 36 miles west of Saginaw, at the junction of the Ann Arbor and the Detroit, Grand Rapids and Western railroads. The town has good sewerage, an excellent system of water works, and is exceedingly healthful. The moral tone of the community is high, its church privileges abundant and its public school system most efficient.

The future of the Presbyterian church in Michigan is bound up with this college. Upon the Presbyterians of Michigan depend the continued existence and wide usefulness of the collége. To them alone can it look for its needed endowment and the chief portion of its students. Let them pray for it unceasingly, that a truly consecrated learning may ever be found there.

L. B. B.

Michigan Presbyterian

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"MICHIGAN FOR CHRIST."

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DETROIT, MICH., APRIL 7, 1898.

Our contributors this week have been so busy in our review in Boston from an article by the P. S. C. E. that coverage through an agency, that editorial matter is confined to a large extent.

Some time ago we received an offer for publication that a certain address would allow the right with a view to the following model. It came to us unexpectedly and we were somewhat at a loss with the person in partnership. He seemed to be one of the most successful men from one who was doing the best to get rid of the person. He talked about the person and we were somewhat at a loss with the person. He talked about the person and we were somewhat at a loss with the person.



A Cathedral at Wash
BY WILLIAM T. BUSH

In a recent number of *Forway* we saw a picture of a new building of the Presbyterian Church in Washington, D. C. It is a fine example of modern architecture and is a credit to the church.

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THE MICHIGAN PRESBYTERIAN.

On June 16, 1894, appeared Vol. 1, No. 1, of "The Detroit Presbyterian, the official organ of Detroit Presbyterian churches." The editorial committee in charge, appointed by the Presbyterian Ministers' Association of Detroit, were Revs. J. F. Dickie, W. D. Sexton, R. A. Carnahan, and Messrs. C. S. Pitkin and E. A. Fraser. July 9th the Presbyterian Alliance of Detroit adopted it as their organ. July 28th the following item appeared: "Pastors outside Detroit are invited to send in news from their fields of labor. We are sending The Presbyterian through the entire State. It is your paper, brethren. Use it freely." Only one result could follow this State distribution. Requests came in to make it a State paper. These requests were accompanied by subscription lists. The synod of 1894, at Alma, Oct. 11, on recommendation of its special committee on "The Detroit Presbyterian," adopted the following report:

1. "We believe in the possibility and advisability of publishing a Presbyterian paper, which shall represent the synod of Michigan."

2. "That a committee be appointed, a member from each Presbytery, to consider propositions from the Wilton Smith Co. for the enlargement of the Detroit Presbyterian."

The issue of Oct. 27, No. 20, appeared as "The Michigan Presbyterian," paying most graceful compliments to the State. Nov. 22, Rev. William Bryant, of

Mt. Clemens, became editor, supplanting the editorial committee of five. After four years it is interesting to read his salutatory: "There is an advantage in the limitations of space: condensation is necessary. In eight pages very much may be said, if said in the fewest words: in thirty-two pages there is a temptation to spread matters very thin, sometimes. The government canal on Lake St. Clair is not as wide as the St. Clair Flats, but it is more suitable for the purpose intended. It is cruel to cut down a good article; it is sometimes more cruel to publish it in full." Later "Arthur Langguth, Manager," becomes associated with the editor. Then, Sept. 26, 1895, "The New Home of the Michigan Presbyterian" was introduced to the State.

We believe in evolution, from "The Detroit" to "The Michigan Presbyterian;" from five editors to one; from 11 West Atwater St. to 22 Witherell St., Detroit. So did the synod, 1895, which "Resolved, That the synod of Michigan takes great pleasure in the fact that we have published within our bounds a paper under thorough Presbyterian management and control, representing our synod's interests, and that we commend the Michigan Presbyterian to the cordial support of all our churches." Everything good is a growth. The paper has grown with the editor, and the editor with the paper, and the constituents have grown with both. Michigan Presbyterians and Michigan Presbyterianism are better and stronger than four years ago. Printers' ink has cost but a dollar a year—it has paid beyond computation.

"Michigan for Christ" is the motto of the paper, and through it has become more than ever the motto of Michigan Presbyterians. Through its columns the richer churches have looked into the fields of the poorer and seen the struggles endured for Christ's sake; and

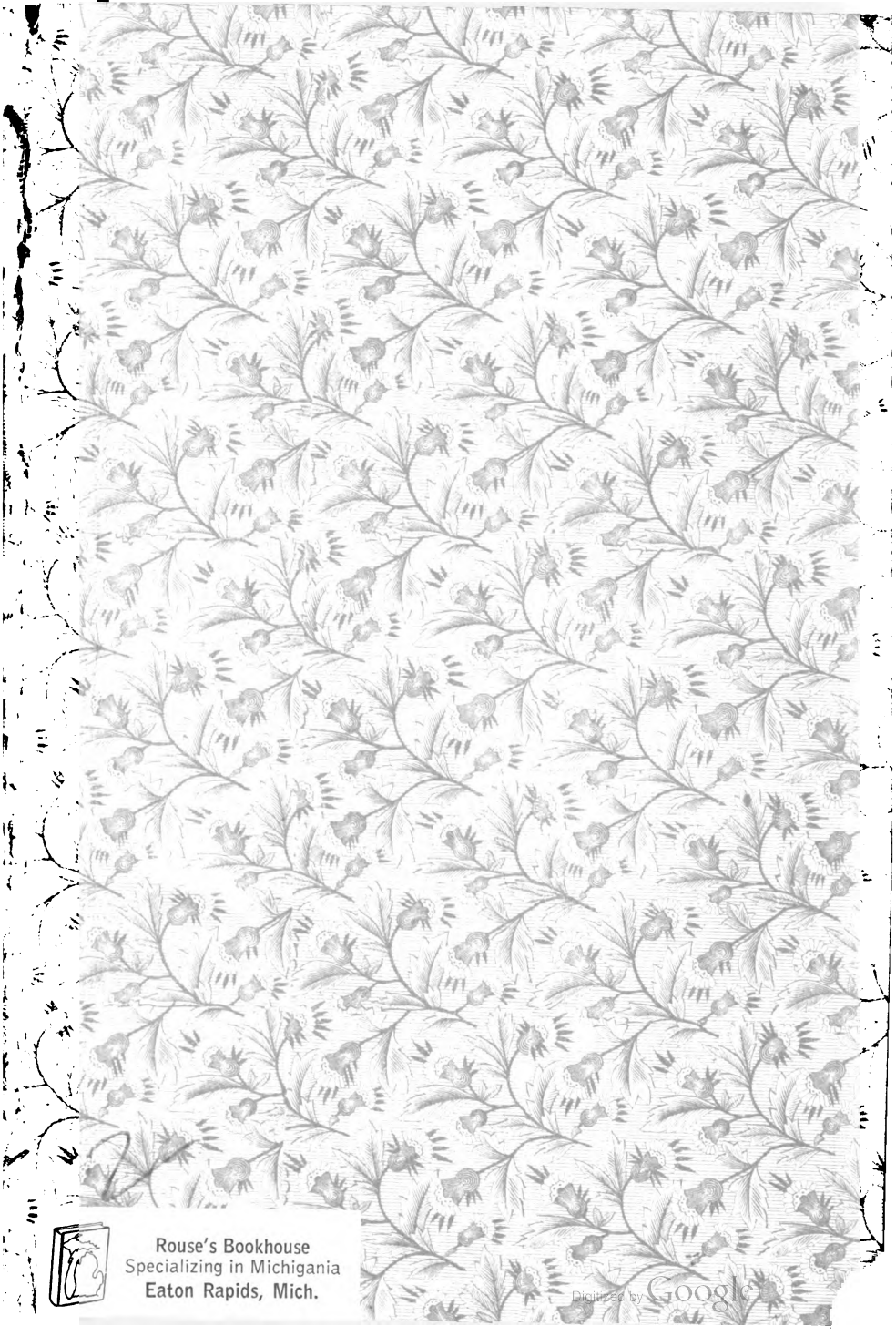
the poorer have looked into the richer to see energy and self-sacrifice for the same Master. Synodical meetings are not confined to the commissioners in attendance, but enter thousands of homes to instruct and inspire. It is the ever watchful eye through which one looks upon the synod in its entirety. Having a field of its own, it is the only occupant of that field and has been true to its interests. Matters of national and world-wide interest are also treated in a Christian spirit and a breadth of view and a conciseness of expression that are helpful and taking. It is well its editor is also a busy pastor, who is looking for that which is sermonic to the preacher, helpful to the church, stimulating to the Christian. An elder in this synod, deep in business affairs, thinking to save expense by cutting down his list of periodicals, put the Michigan Presbyterian on the reserved list with the remark, "It's the only paper coming into this house that is read from beginning to end, and always with satisfaction." This is the common verdict of its readers.

L. B. B.

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