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SERMONIC.

SACRIFICE AND RECOMPENSE.

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[Translated by Rev. G. F. Behringer, Brooklyn.]

Then Peter began to say unto him: Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.—Mark x: 28-30.

Two grand ideas may be drawn from these words: the one, of an absolute abandonment of the apostles to their

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[Many of the full sermons and condensations published in this MONTHLY are printed from the authors' manuscripts; others are specially reported for this publication. Great care is taken to make these reports correct. The condensations are carefully made under our editorial supervision. All the sermons of the "International Sunday-School Service" are written expressly for THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY.—Ed.]

Master; and the other, of an infinite compensation promised by Jesus Christ to the apostles. It is to these two thoughts that I wish, with the help of God, to direct your attention to-day.

I. "*We have left all, and have followed thee.*" Let us first direct our attention to Him to whom these words are addressed. There is a tendency, at the present time, to reduce the manifestation of the Gospel to the proportions of an ordinary historic fact. It is desired, so it is said, to render Jesus Christ more human, more accessible to our understandings; and, with this end in view, His divine origin is effaced, or explained away, by misconstruing all the passages in which His divine nature is maintained. Nothing else is seen in Him than the sublime originator of the law of charity. Indeed, I presume that soon even these declarations will be effaced. Yet there will remain two facts, because of which the Gospel cannot be made to disappear. The first is, that Jesus Christ demanded of His disciples that they should give themselves up entirely, not only to His doctrine, but to His person, in sacrificing to Him all their possessions. The second is, that Jesus Christ is become, in

Him, saying: "Here am I, sow me; sow me in thy field which is the world; let me die the death to self and sin, that I may be in thy hand and in thy keeping for the good of thy field." Then first shall we live the life which hath and which is immortality. Then first shall we know love; the love of God first, and then the love of the brethren, and then the love of mankind.

Lastly, I would draw from the heart of this whole congregation one responsive echo to the mighty word of the text: "*He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man.*" Where, if not in His Church, shall Christ receive the honor due to His name? The world passes Him by, even upon His cross; thinks lightly of Him and will have none of Him; and yet, poor world, thou hast great need of Him! There is that in thee, wouldst thou but know it, which sighs and cries out for Him. Never wilt thou know peace till thou take it from Him, from that outstretched hand which has still the print of the nails in it! But the Church confesses this want of the world, and has come together into one place for the very purpose of drinking of the life-giving stream. Oh! let it honor Him; honor Him by one united voice of thanksgiving to Him that so loved that He died and that He lives for us; honor Him by seeing Him still as the one Sower of the divine seed—seed of the Word in hearts—seed of men, Christian, holy, humble men in that field which is the world. Let us say to Him, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to be seen, honored, and glorified, and blessed. Thou hast loved and hast redeemed us to God by thy passion. Thou livest to make intercession: Thou shalt come again to take us unto Thyself." Blessed are they who, having not seen, can love—yea, who cry to Thee in all the capacities of a soul created for adoration, created for communion, created for love, "**MY LORD AND MY GOD.**"

WHAT IS ELOQUENCE?—Eloquence is logic set on fire. This is what is wanted to melt and burn away the empire of Satan.—VINET.

GOD'S GREAT SACRIFICE.

By T. D. WITHERSPOON, D.D., IN THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, LOUISVILLE, KY.

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?—Rom. viii: 32.

THERE is an ignoble element in our nature which tends to render that which is familiar more or less commonplace. There are countries in the north of Europe where the sun does not rise for six months of the year, and on the morning of his annual reappearance, we are told that the people climb at early dawn to the summits of the tall cliffs that overlook the cold northern sea, and there amidst ice and snow await the coming of the king of day; and when at length his warm beams illumine the horizon and bathe the peaks around them in crimson, they lift up a psalm of thanksgiving to God that resounds through all the glens and fords of their wintry home. But with us, where the sun rises every twenty-four hours, the event is so commonplace that we scarcely give it a moment's thought. And so there are truths the most wonderful that can be conceived, and yet so familiar to our ears that they make no impression upon us. One of these is contained in the former part of the text: "God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all." We have been familiar with it from childhood, have heard it a thousand times; it is one of the commonplaces of theology. But suppose a cultivated heathen, a man of refined sensibility and generous emotion, without that prejudice against the Gospel which seems to be characteristic of all cultivated heathen, to hear for the first time this great truth of the God of heaven giving His eternal Son to die for the sins of the world, what an impression it must make on him!

This is the truth which the apostle here states, for the sake of emphasis, both positively and negatively. God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all.

I. Let us dwell upon the negative aspect first: God spared not His own Son. How many and what weighty reasons that He should spare Him: (a) He was His Son, and all the feelings of the Father's heart cried, Spare Him! (b) He was such a Son! Every element and quality that could endear. (c) And then He was His only Son. Heaven was emptied; the royal palace was desolated; He who made all its light and joy was no more. Think to what He was delivered up! Consider the ignominy, the shame, the suffering, the accursed death. How could He thus deliver Him up! I know there is a current metaphysical view of the Godhead which includes intelligence and will, but excludes that wealth of emotion which makes the beauty of human character. But against all such conception I place the manifold declarations of sacred Scripture and the fact that man's nature is made in the image of God; and I contend that the giving of Christ to death involved a personal sacrifice akin to that made by an earthly parent in giving up a child to the grave. A sacrifice, too, commensurate in its intensity and power with the infirmity of the nature that is subjected to it. Take all this into consideration, and what an emphasis in the words of the text!

II. But let us pass from the great fact stated to the apostle's inference from it: "How shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" The argument is manifold and irresistible. The greater always includes the less.

1. Since the gift already bestowed is inconceivably the most costly that could be demanded, the giver will not withhold less costly ones that may be required to secure the end contemplated in bestowing the first. 2. This first gift is the test and measure of a love so boundless that no barrier of unworthiness or difficulty can arrest its course. It has scaled the mountain, and will not be deterred by the molehill. 3. The first gift really includes all the rest. As the stream contains only what was in the fountain-head, so all spiritual blessing is an outflow of

Christ. He was "made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." The Spirit stands, so to speak, by the fountain, and parts its waters into different streams; but the old hymn expresses the delightful truth:

"Thou, O Christ, art all I want;
All in all in Thee I find."

CONCLUSION. — Here is security for those who would enter upon a religious life. He who has done so much for your salvation will hold you up and help you to the end. Here is comfort, too, for those in anxiety in reference to temporal want: "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Be of good cheer: all things are yours, whether life or death, or things present or things to come, all are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

SACRAMENTAL MEDITATIONS.

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I thirst.—John xix: 28.

CHRIST is nearing the end. God alone can fathom the mystery of this, the Passion of His Son. Yet we may reverently study the scene.

1. *There was physical thirst* coming from physical torture. It was suffered with full consciousness, for He refused the wine and myrrh that might have dulled pain. His thirst was intense. Think of a sunken ship and a boat-load of survivors floating hither and thither unseen, surrounded by the black and pitiless sea, moaning and crying for water; or those who traverse a vast desert, where the sun seems a ball of fire, the air tremulous as the blue flame of a furnace, and the journey a torrid purgatory; or of the burning fever which makes the sick man cry out that his flesh is dry as a potsherd and his tongue cleaveth to the roof of his mouth. These give some idea of the thirst occasioned by crucifixion.

2. *There was spiritual thirst.* The believer knows what it is to thirst for the vision of God. "As the hart panteth for the waterbrooks," etc. But the aw-