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Two Visions.

A Revelation and a Dream.

BY REV. A. FOSTER, HANKOW.

IT sometimes occurs to one to ask whether English-speaking Christians throughout the world have been more impressed and more influenced by the Revelation of John the Apostle or by the Dream of John Bunyan the Puritan. It is not too much to say that the average English Christian is far more familiar with the latter than with the former, and that he could give a much better outline of the contents of Pilgrim's Progress than he could give of the contents of the Apocalypse. I think one may go farther and say that, on the whole, the dream of the prisoner in Bedford gaol has done more to form modern popular theology than the Revelation given to St. John in his exile in Patmos. By 'modern popular theology' I do not mean the theology of the last quarter of the 19th century, but the popular theology of Christians living in the last two centuries, as contrasted with the theology of the Christian church in apostolic days. In as far as this is true, the loss to the church in our own time must be unspeakable, and none would lament it more than the great English seer if he were still amongst us. It is no disparagement of him to say that he was a man of the age in which he lived and one who shared the religious outlook of that age and of the people by whom he was surrounded. We must always think of Bunyan as of every other great teacher of later days, as writing under limitations which were not shared by the beloved disciple and companion of the Lord. The writer expressed in striking language thoughts and ideals that were current among some of the best and most godly Christians of his day, and in thus expressing them he perpetuated them and handed them on to subsequent generations to mould their thinking and their interpreta-

Rev. S. I. Woodbridge.

Dr. Rankin.



THE LATE REV. D. C. RANKIN, D.D.

on religion, forgetting that most of their hearers are ignorant of the fundamentals of morality.

That people should accuse missionaries of plucking out hearts and eyes, is of small consequence, but that scholars should charge them with neglecting to teach patriotism and filial piety, is a more serious matter.

If the Church of Christ is to make head way in China its preachers must lay more stress on morals as the foundation of the structure. To teach reverence for the Supreme Ruler, let them begin by teaching loyalty to the Emperor. To teach the service of our heavenly Father, let them begin by insisting on the service of earthly parents. If they omit these points of moral order, they will hear again and again the question that we have taken for our text.

MOMO.

Rev. David Cyrus Rankin, D.D.

Born, North Carolina, U. S. A., September 25th, 1847.

"Asleep," Pyeng-yang, Korea, December 27th, 1902.

THE subject of this sketch was Editor of the missionary periodicals of the Presbyterian Church in the United States; and was sent by the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions at Nashville, Tennessee, to visit Japan, China and Korea with a view to study on the ground, the conditions, problems and methods of missionary work. In this way it was thought he could by personal contact and experience prepare himself the better for the high office of awakening, encouraging and directing an intelligent interest in Foreign Missions on the part of the Church at home.

For this work Dr. Rankin was abundantly qualified. From youth he had been interested in carrying the Gospel to the heathen and only bodily frailty had prevented him from going to the foreign field. He had been educated in the best institutions of learning and had equipped himself with an extensive and accurate scholarship. Cultured, refined and gifted, he was a nobleman by nature, and grace had rounded off his character and shaped his life into the image of the gentle Man of Galilee. He received the

Divine call to preach the Gospel and prepared himself most assiduously for the ministry, graduating from the Columbia Theological Seminary in 1875.

His labors, first as pastor and afterwards as professor, enriched his knowledge and added experience to his faith. In 1888, the General Assembly elected him Assistant Secretary of Foreign Missions and he was finally made editor of *The Missionary*. Under his management this periodical became a conspicuous success and thus greatly promoted the cause that was nearest his heart.

Dr. Rankin arrived in China early in September last and at once began the work of visiting the mission stations. This was no irksome task for him. It was a joyful love of labor, and labor of love. He was in his element, buoyant and hilarious as a boy. He astonished us all by his accurate knowledge not only of the work in general but of each particular mission in its minutest details. His eagerness to discover new facts, which seemed almost too persistent at times, was unbounded, and his zeal in gathering fresh material never flagged. He wished to see everything, and did see as much as was possible for any traveller in the same length of time. It was a pleasure to show him around, and his numerous friends vied with each other to obtain the privilege. For we knew that he would mould his facts into urgent and powerful appeals to God's people in the homeland to lend a hand to these poor, Godless, Christless people lying prone and helpless, blind and dying in the dark.

But God took him. Just before leaving China, while on his way to Hankow, he was attacked with cholera, and his life was barely saved by the timely assistance of the ship's captain. He recovered from this disease, and a few weeks after left Shanghai on a little Russian steamer bound for Chemulpo. "You can never know," he wrote from Port Arthur, just before his death, "how I heartily enjoyed my home-life with you all. Perhaps that is why I so fell in love with Shanghai and feel as if I'd like to live there, like William Patterson, *till I go to heaven*. My love to all at the Press—how I was drawn to those good brethren!"

Our brother was well only a few days in Korea, but during this time he preached most effectively to the native Christians; and, after he was taken ill with pneumonia, which ended his life, eight hundred Korean Christians in the Methodist Mission and twenty-three hundred or more in the Presbyterian Mission prostrated themselves in prayer to God for the recovery of the man who had encouraged and helped them by his loving words, spoken doubtless in the midst of suffering when his frame was weakened by illness and fatigue, although they knew it not. "Rankin Asleep" were the

words that flashed over the ocean wires to carry the message to his loved ones far away. From the land of "morning calm," hermit now no more, and tenderly cared for by beloved brethren in the Lord, he passed to his everlasting rest to obtain his inheritance with the saints in light.

But although he is gone from earth, Dr. Rankin still stands as the exponent of Foreign Missions. The whole church has been saddened by his death. But this points to the heathen land where the body of this servant of God awaits the resurrection. In the midst of our mingled grief and surprise that there should be so much apparent waste—so emphatically does God show us that His ways are not our ways—we can still believe that even equipped as he was far above the most of us, Dr. Rankin by his death has accomplished more to glorify God than he could possibly have done by his life. His demise has evoked the most loving condolence from the people of many denominations of Christians. Letters of sympathy have been pouring into the Foreign Mission Office. And this sympathy will not terminate on him; it will widen and broaden until it reaches the uttermost parts of the earth where the people whom Dr. Rankin loved, still sit in darkness. Had he known what a cloud of grief would have overshadowed the Church, to burst into tears of sorrow and pity for the heathen, he would have preferred to die in a strange land; even though he was far away from his self-sacrificing companion and wife who had temporarily, they thought, given him up to make this journey for Christ.

"The true quality of men's lives," writes Bishop O. P. Fitzgerald of the Methodist Church, "may not be known until they stand before the searcher of hearts at the final judgment; but I feel safe in saying that if ever I have known a man whose daily life would bear the most rigid scrutiny, Dr. Rankin was that man. He lost no opportunity to do good to all that came within his reach. Like his Master, he went about doing good; his gifts and his service being measured only by his ability.

"I am glad that God blessed my life with the friendship of such a man. I am thankful for the help he gave me in Christian living. I rejoice in the hope that through the unfailing mercy of God I shall meet him where we shall know even as we are known."

S. ISETT WOODBRIDGE.
