

ago when as a young man he began his career at Manchester. People looked for great things from him, and even then it was stated that his sermons were the result of reflection and faith.

He is perhaps best known in this country by his volumes of sermons. The printed lectures pertaining to Colossians and the Epistle to Philemon are deemed most excellent. Those that Dr. Maclaren considers his best are two sermons entitled, 'David's Cry for Pardon' and 'Cry for Purity,' and an address delivered before the National Bible Society from the text, 'It is time for thee to work.'

One nowadays rarely picks up a religious paper that is circulated among English-speaking people without seeing a quotation from the pen of Alexander Maclaren.

Just a few lines are sufficient for him in which to present a thought in a pointed and able manner. Take this for example:

'The out-and-out Christian is a joyful Christian. The half-and-half Christian is the kind of a Christian that a great many of you are—little acquainted with the Lord. Why should we live half way up the hill, and swathed in mists, when we might have an unclouded sky and a visible sun over our heads if we would climb higher and walk in the light of His face?'

Our attention has been especially directed to this noted divine by reason of the grand ministerial jubilee that was accorded to him in Manchester, the field of his labors for thirty-eight years. Any one who was present on that occasion could not question the unbounded respect, love and reverence that are his portion wherever he goes.

Not long after the celebration of this anniversary a breakfast was tendered him in London. Many of the most prominent Baptists were present to do him honor, as well as eminent members of other denominations. All recognize the universal good work he is doing. In answer to a speech addressed to him at that time it is said his reply was 'remarkable for its reticence and modesty, not less than for its literary grace.'

Nobility of character, strength of purpose, Christian fortitude, and implicit trust in God have been telling factors in this quiet yet strong life.

Christians and the Theatre.

The Rev. Dr. Theodore L. Cuyler has been giving the religious papers an expression of his views on the old but ever new subject, 'Ought Christians to patronize the theatre?' Dr. Cuyler gives a number of reasons why he thinks they ought not. One reason is because the theatre 'constantly unsexes woman by presenting her before the public gaze in masculine attire.' Another reason adduced is that 'a very large proportion of the plays presented in the average theatre contain more or less of immoral teaching.' Dr. Cuyler also adduces the testimony of Fanny Kemble, the actress, William D. Howells, and other notable people in the theatrical world and out of it, in support of his contention that the theatre is a vicious and demoralizing agency. For a further view from the same source we quote from Dr. Cuyler's article as it appears in 'The North-western Christian Advocate':

'If the theatre is a school of morals, as its defenders constantly contend, then the teachers in that school ought not only to learn their own lessons, but to bear the most high and irreproachable character. I do not affirm that every actor is immoral nor every actress is impure; but I have no doubt that the best of them would confess that if they manage to preserve a delicate purity of heart they do so in the face of terrible temptations. A celebrated actress told a friend

of mine that she "only enters a theatre to enact her own part, and has as little association as possible with the members of her profession." An actor who had quit the stage from conscientious convictions once said to me, when we passed the playhouse in which he had often performed, "Behind those curtains lies Sodom!" It is notorious that a very large proportion of the plays presented in the average theatre contains more or less of immoral teaching; and the exhibition which the theatre makes of itself in the pictorial advertisements that cover the dead walls is enough to reveal its true character. The theatre, as I have already remarked, is a public institution to be estimated by the sum total of its influence, just as the pulpit is. And if a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ bestows his pecuniary patronage upon the theatre, then is he to that degree responsible for it, and in a moral partnership with it.

'There is an old and plausible theory that if Christian people would all agree to sustain an entirely unexceptionable drama by unexceptionable performers, the theatre would be regenerated. It is a lamentable fact that this has proved to be an "iridescent dream." The experiment has not proved successful when fairly attempted. The theatre manager is not a professional philanthropist; he "runs" his business simply and solely to make money. He produces what pays best; and if he can spice his evening entertainments with a plot that turns on some sort of sexual depravity, or burlesque of evangelical religion, or a shameless exposure of physical beauty, the temptation to fill his coffers is too strong to be resisted. The licentious stage and the Sabbath-breaking press are both conducted for filthy lucre; and the Christian who contributes to the support of either or of both is responsible for the spiritual mischief that they work.'

Where It Began.

One of our busy bankers, ever ready to turn a listening ear to the cry of a soul for light, however pressing his secular work, was interrupted by a mechanic who entered his office, evidently borne down by a heavy burden. His first remark was: 'Mr. —, I am bad off. I'm broke. I must have help.'

Of course, our banker expected to be asked for pecuniary aid. 'Tell me what you need. Are you in financial straits?'

'Worse than that,' was the reply; 'I am a spiritual bankrupt!' and tears and sobs shook the strong man as he sat in the presence of his friend the personification of grief.

The story he told has its thousands of counterparts. Said he:

'Myself and wife are members of — Church. We have not been inside its walls for more than two years. I have drifted out and away into darkness, and I am at unrest. Will you, can you, help me?'

'But tell me the cause of this backsliding. Where did the departure begin, and what has brought you to me in such a condition?'

'Well,' said he, 'my little girls were at the Sabbath-school concert last Sabbath. On their return I asked as to the lesson of the evening. Their reply was, "Prayer," and turning to me, one of the dear pets said, with such an appealing look: "Papa, you used to pray with us; why don't you now?" This question for three days has sounded in my ears day and night. I cannot sleep. I am at unrest. What shall I do?'

'Where did you leave off?'

'With the omission of family prayer. At first morning devotions were omitted. I was in haste to get to my work. I excused

myself because of the lack of time. Then at evening I gradually left off the habit on the plea of weariness or some other excuse. The neglect of Sabbath service followed, till at last I am here, with no rest, no comfort, no peace. Neither my wife nor myself has been to church for two years.'

The practical answer of the banker was:

'Begin where you left off. Commence to-night. Call your family together and pray with them.'

'But I cannot; it is far harder than at first.'

'Very well, if you will not do this you will have no rest, and I hope you will continue in this condition till you again resume the duty which you never should have laid aside.'

With a few kindly words they parted; but not till the tired soul had made the promise desired. The burden was taken up, duty became a pleasure, new life and joy came to the household, and, with loving harmony, the family are now walking upward toward their Father's house.—'Congregationalist.'

Honorable Defeat.

No one living but dreads defeat. Yet if you can only win your point by dishonorable actions, then defeat is an honor. Points may be lost, but character is won. Character is the only thing we can take with us out of this life, and is the chief thing worth striving for here. William Wetmore Story puts it well in his 'Io Victis':

I sing the hymn of the conquered, who fell
in the battle of life,
The hymn of the wounded, the beaten, who
died overwhelmed in the strife;
Not the jubilant song of the victors, for
whom the resounding acclaim
Of nations was lifted in chorus, whose brow
wore the chaplet of fame,
But the hymn of the low and the humble,
the weary, the broken in heart,
Who strove, and who failed, acting bravely
a silent but desperate part,
Whose youth bore no flower in its branches,
whose hope burned in ashes away;
Whose hand slipped the prize they had
grasped at; who stood at the dying of
day,
With the work of their life all around them
unpitied, unheeded, alone,
With death swooping down on their fall
and all but their faith overthrown
When the voice of the world shouts its
rus, its paean for those who have
When the trumpet is sounding triumph
and high to the breeze and the
Gay banners are waving, hands
and hurrying feet
Thronging after the laurel-crowned
I stand on the field of defeat
In the shadow 'mongst those who
and wounded and dying, a
Chant a requiem low, lay my head
pain-knotted brow, breath
Hold the hand that is helpless,
They only the victory win
Who have fought the good fight
vanquished the demon that
within,
Who have held to their faith un
the prize that the world hold
Who have dared for a high cause
resist, fight, if need be to die
Speak, history, who are life's victo
thy long annals and say,
Are they those whom the world
victors, who have won the
a day?
The martyrs or Nero? The Sp
fell at Thermopylae's tryst
Or the Persians or Xerxes? h
Socrates? Pilate or Chr