

## The Home Mission Journal.

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### The Bible as Literature and Much More.

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#### XIV

(Continued from last issue.)

#### Harvey Anticipated

When we turn to Proverbs iv:23, we have these words: "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." Here again we have a statement which challenges our thought and commands our respect. We are counselled "above all keeping" to guard the heart. This is sound advice. Every observant man knows how apt the affections are to go astray. The reason is assigned for keeping the heart above all other keeping: "For out of it are the issues of life." The Hebrew is here remarkably suggestive; it is *tolsoth chayim*: literally translated it is, "the goings out of lives." This is striking language. Its appropriateness is recognized to-day in the bright light which modern science has shed on the whole subject of physiology and anatomy. Discoveries touching this science are the most marked of our time. The discovery of the circulation of the blood has made William Harvey immortal. He was born at Folkestone, Kent, England, on April 1, 1578. His father was a sturdy yeoman. He himself was one of nine children, and five of his brothers became London merchants of considerable wealth and of acknowledged worth. When sixteen years of age, Harvey was matriculated at Caius College, Cambridge. His degree in arts was taken in 1597. The University of Padua was then the most celebrated school of medicine in the world, and thither Harvey went, upon his graduation, to study his profession. Five years he spent in his in this university, under the instruction of the most eminent men in the profession of medicine. In 1602 he received his doctor's diploma, and returned to England in the same year. Cambridge also gave him the doctor's degree. He then settled in London as a physician. In 1615 he was Lucian Lecturer at the College of Physicians. He was also appointed a physician to St. Bartholomew's Hospital. His first course of lectures was delivered in 1616, the year in which Shakespeare died, and about that time he suggested and explained the theories of the circulation of the blood which have made his name a household word in every civilized land. In 1619 he gave some publicity to his views, but it was not until 1628 that he gave them fully to the world. In the meantime he had freed his argument from the objections raised by the most skillful anatomists. He was appointed physician extraordinary to James I, and in 1632 to Charles I. In 1636 he publicly demonstrated to Caspar Hofman, the distinguished professor of Nuremberg, and one of the chief opponents of his views, the foundations upon which his views were founded. He died in his eightieth year, June 3, 1657. He expressed frankly his indebtedness to one of his former instructors, Fabricius, for his discovery. It appears certain that Cæsalpinus, who died at Rome about the time that Harvey left Italy, distinctly expressed, in one of his works, his conviction as to the circulation of the blood. But it is equally true that beyond the inductive method of research practiced by his Paduan professors and some results to which that method led, and their discovery of the valves in the veins, the credit of discovering

the circulation of the blood undoubtedly belongs to Harvey. In this case, as in the case of almost all discoveries, many men had their attention directed about the same time to the results which some one of them would give to the world. As early as the time of Linacre physicians knew that the blood was not stagnant in the body. Homer knew this; so did every augur who inspected the entrails of a victim. Plato uses expressions implicative of this knowledge; so does Shakespeare. But they had no conception of a continuous stream flowing from the heart and returning to its source. This discovery, the true circulation, Harvey made; and this it is the Bible anticipated. He for a time experienced the treatment which is given to all inventors or discoverers, and was looked upon with suspicion, by many and with contempt by some. But he enjoyed the intimacy of kings and of such men as Bacon, Hobbs, Cowley, and other persons of great note in England, and he lived to be considered the first anatomist and physician of his time, and to see his discoveries acknowledged by the ablest physicians throughout the civilized world.

#### Harvey and Solomon.

We give all credit to William Harvey: not one laurel would we pluck from the wreath which crowns his brow. But we are obliged to say that in this passage in Proverbs, as well as in some passages in the Epistles, and in still other parts of the Bible, Earpey's discovery was anticipated by inspired writers. This passage is a plain allusion to the arteries and to their functions in carrying the blood to the utmost extremities of the body. The heart is the secret source of power. So long as it is capable of receiving and propelling the blood, just so long will at least a reasonable degree of health be enjoyed. When the heart fails to discharge these functions, life must speedily end. Nothing in all the universe is more wonderful than the heart within our bodies. All the blood passes through it. It is stated that in a state of health the heart contracts itself at least sixty times a minute, and consequently 3,600 times in an hour; and that at each beat of the pulse it throws out about two ounces of blood, so that there passes through the heart every hour about three hundred and fifty pounds of blood. In order to throw out this quantity of blood so that it shall reach as far as two feet into the great arteries, the heart must resist a weight of 12,600 pounds. This marvellous instrument keeps on beating whether we wake or sleep, for eighty or one hundred or more years. We are brought into a kind of human sympathy with the throbbing engine in one of our great ocean steamers, as it throbs night and day for six or seven or eight consecutive days. But here is this wonderful mechanism within our own bodies, performing its marvellous functions every second for three score years and ten and more. Truly we are fearfully, wonderfully and gloriously made. The term "heart failure" is a convenient phrase to cover a multitude of sins as well as a great degree of ignorance.

Just as the heart is the fountain whence all the issues of life proceed, so the greatest care must be taken that it is preserved in its normal condition. It is not otherwise in spiritual things. The heart is the seat of the affections; the heart ought to be the throne of Jesus Christ. All the streams of spiritual activity must proceed from Him; all the faculties of the soul, when spiritually it is in good condition, show that God is in immediate control. We must, therefore, watch with the utmost care that this fountain and its connecting veins are kept in workable order. If the heart be pure and holy, all its purposes will be just and good; if it be defiled, impure, nothing can proceed from it but evil, and that continually. Well may the Scriptures exhort us in the words, "Son, give me thy heart."

Once more we may well ask. How came Solomon to be so wise as to anticipate the discovery of Harvey? How came Moses to be an authority in sanitary science as well as in cosmological knowledge? Medical science to-day, in certain important respects, has not reached the high point attained by Moses thousands of years ago. How can men explain these facts if they deny the inspiration of the writers of Holy Scripture? These are scientific facts; they are not the speculations

of a pulpit exegete. The time has come when atheism should be discreetly silent, or should honestly give glory to God, honor to His word, and reverence to Jesus Christ as the world's greatest Teacher.

### The Preaching Needed.

Several correspondents write us in substance that one reason for short pastorates and the unrest of ministers and people in the pastoral relation is to be found in the increasing secularization of sermons. In the attempt to be "up to the times" and interesting, it is said that ministers take their subjects from current political and social discussions, and the people feel that the preacher is not an expert in these matters, that he does not speak with authority. If they dissent from him they do not care to go to hear him, while, if they agree with him, they soon tire of his discussions.

There is some reason for this criticism; but as a matter of fact, we doubt if many ministers of the gospel choose these topics by deliberate preference. They see that preaching out of the Scriptures does not hold crowded congregations, and the demand is that churches be filled. Hence, against their sober judgement, they adopt the line of pulpit discourse that will draw a congregation immediately. When this device gives out they hope to find something else.

To meet this tendency two things are needed: Willingness on the part of the churches to sustain their pastors in Scriptural preaching, and a larger and stronger spiritual and moral grasp of Biblical truths on the part of ministers.

Suppose a minister does not draw a large congregation. Is it fair to test the success of his ministry by the numbers of persons who may be drawn to a church service by all sorts of worldly motives? Is it not rather the part of wisdom for the half-dozen or dozen men who really represent the church to come together, and say: "Our pastor preaches the gospel. We believe in the truths which he presents. Now we propose to give him a fair chance. We shall give him ample time to build up the church in a Biblical way. We shall not complain if the house is not full, or if there is a deficiency in the income at the end of the year. We purpose to sustain the pastor in his work of preaching the gospel." There are hundreds of pastors who would at once take heart, if they knew this was the attitude of the representative men of the church toward their work.

Still further, ministers need to do a great deal more of hard Bible study. The power of the gospel is in the appeal to the moral nature of man. Christianity has everything against it except the human conscience. The human conscience is on its side. The preachers who really succeed in bringing men to Christ and in building up strong churches, are men who have mastered the moral and spiritual ideas of the Bible, and have learned how to present them effectively in public discourse. It is amazing within what a narrow round of truth the preaching of the average minister is confined. For most of them there are whole undiscovered continents of Biblical truth. "Expansion" is the watchword of the day; but the kind of expansion that is needed in the Christian pulpit is an expansion of the range of preaching, and that is not to be gained by preaching the last week's news, but by broader and a deeper study of Bible ideas.

We believe that if churches would realize that it is their privilege to sustain the preaching of Biblical truth, and if ministers would give themselves to the work of exploring the Bible and mining for the truth as for hid treasure, it would not be more than three or four years when that kind of work would tell upon a community, bringing the people to church, and exerting a profound influence upon personal character, ideals, and conduct.

You cannot tell how much Christianity a man has by the noise he makes in church.