

The Breeze.

THEY RECEIVED THE WORD WITH ALL READINESS OF MIND, AND SEARCHED THE SCRIPTURES DAILY, WHETHER THOSE THINGS WERE SO.—ACTS XVII. 11.

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[Vol. I.]

LONGING FOR HOME.

PSALM CXXXVII.

Far from my heavenly home,
Far from my Father's breast,
Fainting I cry, blest Spirit, come,
And speed me to my rest!

Upon the willows long,
My harp has silent hung;
How should I sing a cheerful song,
Till thou inspire my tongue?

My spirit homeward turns,
And fain would thither flee.
My heart, O Zion, droops and yearns,
When I remember thee.

To thee, to thee, I press,
A dark and toilsome road.
When shall I pass the wilderness,
And reach the saints' abode?

God of my life, be near!
On thee my hopes I cast:
O, guide me through the desert here,
And bring me home at last!

REV. H. F. LYTH.

MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY.

SERMON PREACHED BY THE RIGHT REV. C. P. McILVAINE, D. D., BISHOP OF ONTO, AT THE CONSECRATION OF THE REV. ALFRED LEE, D. D., TO BE BISHOP OF DELAWARE.

CONCLUDED.

"Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."—1 TIMOTHY IV. 16.

But let us bring the injunction of the text within more definite bounds. Our first application of it then is—

"Take heed to thyself," that thou be a genuine disciple of Christ, truly converted unto God. What an awful thing for a man to say that he trusts he is "inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost" to this office and ministry, if he have no reason to trust that he has ever so far received the Holy Ghost as to have repented of his sins and become, except in sacramental profession, a child of God. But that such cases do occur, it were not charity, but blindness, to question. Alas! to preach to others, and even be instrumental in bringing some of them to Christ for ever, and then ourselves be cast away! Did even St. Paul feel the need of the greatest care lest such should be his case? How much more should we take heed that it be not ours. "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith!" There are circumstances which render a minister peculiarly liable to put a favourable estimate on his state. That busy employment and familiar contact with spiritual things which, if we are alive towards God, promotes our growth in grace, will, if we are living in a merely formal state, but confirm our formality. That which one may be doing only as a minister, he may easily be persuaded is done as a Christian; mere professional consistency may easily appear as if it were pious obedience; a certain degree of interest in the ministry and love for the church, for her dignified order and venerable forms of worship, which may arise from no higher source than our being personally identified therewith, or their being associated with a long retrospect of centuries and the history of a noble army of martyrs; this, joined to a reverential familiarity with the Scriptures, a blameless life before men, a ready sympathy in the cause of humanity, a zeal for what we think true doctrine, and to bring others to its adoption, and then its being taken for granted by those around us that we are truly Christian men because Christian ministers—all this may easily persuade us that all is well within, while in the sight of God, there may be no spiritual life in us. Oh, let us fear lest, while distributing bread to the poor, we perish with want; lest while inviting sinners to put on the righteousness of Christ, by faith, we should not touch so much as the hem of his garment. To worship an unknown God, preach an unknown Saviour, and yet be answerable for the whole work of an ambassador of Christ, what a fearful state! Our Lord has warned us that in the great day there will be many who will be found in this condemnation—men who, when the door is shut and they shall be standing without, dreadfully dismayed, will plead their ministry:—"Have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works?" but to whom will issue the irrevocable sentence—"Depart, all ye workers of iniquity." Their fall will be from "the pinnacle of the temple"; their plunge the deeper into everlasting fire. God grant unto us, not only that we may always preach the whole Gospel, but in doing so, may speak what we do personally know, and testify what we have seen, and felt, and followed.

But the minister of Christ must take heed unto himself that he be not only a man of true piety, but of eminent piety: not only in grace, but growing in grace—a lively and flourishing Christian. I would, therefore, urge the unspeakable importance that men of God, standing in the holy place of his temple, and charged with all his messages to mankind, should aim at exalted attainments in grace. And in doing this, I would confine my remarks to the necessity of high attainments in piety, for the faithful, persevering, successful prosecution of the various duties of the ministry.

The tide of our faithfulness, in the main channel, and in all the minor branches and inlets of duty, will ebb and flow precisely as the well of living water which is in us, from Christ, shall spring up, feebly, or vigorously, unto everlasting life. Is the heart of our piety beating strongly for God? Every sermon, every pastoral duty will feel its bounding

pulse. Baxter said, "I publish to my flock the distempers of my own soul. When I let my heart grow cold, my preaching is cold; and when it is confused, my preaching is confused. We are the nurses of Christ's little ones. If we forbear taking food ourselves, we shall famish them. If we let our love decline, we are not likely to raise theirs." It requires but little reflection to perceive, not only that all the parts of divine truth must be greatly affected in our conceptions, and representations, and applications of them, by the state of religion in our hearts, but that a very large and most interesting portion of the subject matter of our preaching must be presented so formally and artificially, except our religious affections be in a tender, earnest, growing state, that for the most part it will be left out, and other matter more easily treated by a cold heart, will be substituted. To exhibit the commandments and penalties of the law, with the great outlines of the way of salvation, by the Gospel; to depict, in general terms, the wisdom, excellence, and benefit of a religious life; to warn the impenitent by the terrors of the Lord; to vindicate Christian doctrine, exhort to diligence in all duty, speak of the shortness and uncertainty of human life, and describe the awfulness of an unrepented sinner; to do all this, and much more of the same kind, with force, feeling, plainness, usefulness, is comparatively easy where there is real piety, though it be not a piety of much life. But when we come to the more secret ways and dealings of the Lord with his people: when the object is to lead the Christian believer within the inner veil, and show him that interior sanctuary of the grace of God into which the natural man cannot look; when the promises of God, in all their fulness of love and consolation, and the privileges of the sons of God in all their glory, are to be displayed; when, not in the thunder, nor the earthquake, nor the blast of the trumpet, the Christian is to be made to hear the words of his covenant God, but in "the still, small voice," of divine compassion and tenderness; when the duty is to encourage the timid, revive the desponding, strengthen the weak, persuade the unwilling, by such arguments as spring from the amazing love of Christ to sinners, and his being "able to do for us exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us," then to speak "the truth as it is in Jesus," requires a kind of intimacy therewith which nothing but close, habitual, affectionate intercourse of heart can give. These are notes which only the higher strings of our harp, and those fresh tuned and high strung to the praise of God, can reach. These are the secrets of the Lord, of which words can only reveal the types and shadows; and of which we can only speak as the Lord would have us speak, in proportion as, like the angels, we are constantly "desiring to look" into them, and for this purpose are much "with God in the mount," and so become "filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." Hence it is that we have not a larger proportion of such preaching: that the tenderness of God's compassion and love to draw the hearts of sinners is not often used, instead of the awfulness of his wrath: that Christian duties are not often set out in the company of the Christian's privileges: that divine commandments are not more enforced by divine promises: the barrenness of the wilderness of our pilgrimage displayed as connected with the fulness of that Rock that follows us, and which makes streams in the desert: the duty of implicit obedience and daily self denial, associated with the equal duty of rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, the shepherd often ascending with his flock to some mount of blessing, and contemplating with them "the rest that remaineth for the people of God." A heart in spiritual dulness and languor has no skill for the handling of such themes, and is afraid of them. There may remain all our wonted powers of reasoning, force of description, liveliness of imagination, readiness in exposition; but all lacking the only wing that can float in that higher element of spiritual truth. Many a popular and awakening preacher, never attains that height. But what a large part of the whole counsel of God must needs be kept back, or delivered most defectively; how much of the glory of God, which it is his people's privilege, "with open face," to behold in the Gospel, must be held in reserve: how much of the bread provided of God for the daily feeding of his people, must be kept under the hand of the Priest within the veil, if there be not an unction, an aptness of heart, for the treatment of these themes, arising out of a near intimacy of experience with them.

What is most required for such views, and their appropriate exhibition and cordial enforcement, is a deep experience of the power of divine things upon our own affections, hopes, and spiritual enjoyment; a deep sense of the preciousness of the several parts of Gospel truth; as they all centre in Christ. Eminent is it true of such views that "they are spiritually discerned." According to St. Paul, we must be "rooted and grounded in love," that we "may be able to comprehend what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge." The deep places of contrition and of humility are most fruitful aids in such contemplations. We see the stars in the day time, by going down into a pit. How full of instruction concerning the preparation of spirit for the hearing of the message of the Gospel, is that chapter wherein Isaiah speaks of his seeing the Lord, with the seraphim, standing before him. The Lord had a message to be delivered to his

people Israel. But, before the prophet could be prepared to be the bearer thereof, he must be cast down in self abasement as a sinner, unworthy of any such honour. The way to this was a view of God in his infinite majesty and holiness. He "saw the Lord, high and lifted up," his train filling the temple, and before him the winged and veiled seraphim, crying one to another, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts." The prophet could not bear the view. Self abasement at once appeared. "If I am I, send me." Oh! my brethren, the more we see of the holiness of God, and the more we are led by the view to humble ourselves before him, as miserable sinners, and continually to find consolation in the sacrifice of Christ alone, through the coming down of the Holy Spirit, taking of the things of Christ, and showing and applying them to our hearts, the more we shall be prepared for the work of the Lord, and be ready with alacrity of spirit to say, in view of any duty, "Here am I, send me."

But this part of our subject is too wide, and I am enlarging too far. Were there time, it would be profitable to consider how an earnest state of pious affections will contribute to furnish endless variety to our discourses, filling the mouth with arguments, which otherwise would not be thought of; causing us to see passages of Scripture in various aspects and applications, in a beauty and richness of interest which otherwise would not appear; making old views to return with fresh interest, by being seen through a growing engagedness of heart, and from ever changing and higher positions in the way of our pilgrimage.

Then, again, opportunities of usefulness, how do they multiply, how ingenious we become in discovering and making them, when once we are all alive to their value and improvement! Trials and discouragements, such as we have constantly to meet in carrying our messages to a world lying in wickedness; all those frosts and mists under which we are so tempted to complain and despond, to seek little and expect less, how is their evil changed to good, by the alchemy of a truly spiritual mind; how will a heart animated and buoyant with faith and love, mount over all waves of opposition or affliction, as a life boat in a storm! What lightness and alacrity will it have in all duty! "I will run the way of thy commandments (saith David) when thou hast enlarged my heart." Yes, verily, the secret of all diligence, energy, pleasure, success in duty, is a heart enlarged by the love of God. Then are the crooked ways made straight, and the rough ways plain, "the lame man leaps as the hart," "the tongue of the dumb sings." "For the love of Christ constraineth us." Oh! that golden chain of perfect freedom; that binding yoke of most sweet and willing bondage! See St. Paul, the bondsman of Christ, going out to his daily service of labours and perils, chanting his morning song, and saying, "Most gladly will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Yea, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake, for when I am weak, then am I strong." "Strong in the Lord and in the power of his might," was St. Paul. But his strength was the strength of faith. And his strong faith worked by constraining, overcoming love, and thus he was "fruitful in every good work and ever increasing in the knowledge of God, strengthened with all might according to God's glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness." What a poor thing, in the ministry of the gospel, is the man of great learning and eloquence and force of argument, whose preaching wants the vital warmth and spiritual earnestness of a single zeal for Christ and love for the souls of men. Weigh him in the balance of the sanctuary! Estimate him in view of the judgment day! Think of him as he will appear when he and all are receiving the fruits of embracing or rejecting the Gospel! Compare him, before God, with the man of far inferior gifts, who to the Master's work unites the Master's spirit, and does with all his heart, as though God did beseech men by him, pray them to be reconciled to God. With how many tongues does the latter preach. If any forget his words, none can forget his evident sincerity and solemn earnestness. The sermon from the lips may not be retained. The sermon preached by the whole spirit of the man, as of one realizing the weight of his message, and the worth of souls, cannot pass away.

Think, moreover, of the power of the daily example of one who thus lives under the impression of the word he preaches, feeding upon the bread, relying upon the hopes, maintaining the daily walk with God which he treats others to adopt. His sermons are only occasional. His example is always. His sermons are only in the church. His example is wherever he goes. His sermons all may not fully understand. His example is a universal language. The child, the man, the gainsayer and the believer, alike understand it and must read it, and take impressions from it, concerning the soul, and eternity, and Christ, and holiness.

Think, moreover, of the unseen influence, added to the public ministry of such a man of God, from his nearness to the throne of grace, and his greater faith and constancy in prayers for those that hear him. He has them, as St. Paul had the Philippians, in his heart; so that they all are partakers of his grace, and he longs after them all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. Thus the weapons of his warfare

become "mighty through God," and many are added to the Lord.

But I must conclude, not however without a few words upon the precious assurance of the text—"In so doing thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." Thou shalt save thyself! What a motive to diligence, faithfulness, earnestness, constancy till death! Think, dear brethren, of the blessedness of that day, when the Lord and Head of the Church shall say to each of us, if found faithful, "Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Let us animate our hearts with thoughts of such bliss; especially when the burden is great, and the trials of patience are many, and the temptation is strong to yield to the current of worldliness around us, and do our Master's work coldly, negligently, living unto ourselves, seeking our own ease; then let us think of our own souls, and look forward to what God hath prepared in his kingdom for faithful servants, till our hearts burn within us for "the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

But, "them that hear thee" shalt thou also save. Thou shalt be the instrument, under God, of saving them from eternal anguish; and making them partakers of everlasting joy. Oh! the flood of joy that will come over the soul of the faithful minister of Christ, when after having found his own election sure, he shall see the many blessed, glorified saints, in the same inheritance, whom his ministry, through grace, did bring there, and when next to the honour they render unto him who washed them in his blood, they shall come about him to call him blessed, and acknowledge the sweet fruits of his labours to their souls. Ah! we know not what we shall be. Little can we conceive of such bliss. We know something now of the joy of beholding a sinner turned unto God through our ministry. But our love to the souls of men, our estimate of their value, our benevolence, is so feeble. How little we know what is done, when a soul is saved. But then, when we shall have gone to Christ, "we shall be like him;" like him in the tenderness of his compassion and the fulness of his love; like him in the joy with which he will behold the multitudes without number of his redeemed and glorified Church. Then shall we know the blessedness of having been instrumental in saving them that heard us. We shall meet them ever and ever, for eternity, in their glory, and every new sight of them will be to us fresh fulness of joy. Such the motive of faithfulness in our work! Such the argument for taking heed to ourselves and our doctrine! The Lord help us! The Lord bless his word at our lips! The Lord look down from heaven upon his servant, now to be made a shepherd of his shepherds and his flocks, under him the chief "Shepherd and Bishop of souls," and grant him grace for all his work, so that in spite of all the opposition of the devil, the flesh and the world, he may both save his own soul and the souls of them that hear him, through the in-working Spirit, and the interceding righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ!

To whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

MISSIONARY INSTRUCTIONS.

to the Rev. Messrs. Miles and Taylor, from the Prot. Episcopal Church in the U. S. to MESOPOTAMIA, December 16, 1843.

• • • • • We must impress upon you our deep conviction—a conviction in which we are confirmed by the experience of the missionary already spoken of, that the great instrument of this reformation must be the preaching of the Gospel.

The circulation of the Scriptures, and of their ancient Liturgy, the education of the young, the preparation of sound religious works, are all most important means, which may be profitably used in the work of religious reformation, and may hereafter claim your attention; but they are subordinate to the grand ordinance appointed by God—the preaching of the Gospel.

The sooner you can press on the work of preaching the Gospel, the sooner will you be enabled to bring into operation these other modes for the religious improvement of the people.

It was by the preaching of Cranmer, and Latimer, and Ridley, and Hooper, and Jewel, and others, that the minds of our British forefathers were enlightened; by which they were led to wise and temperate reform; which paved the way for the translation and circulation of the Scriptures, the revisions of the Liturgy, and the publication of sound and learned treatises on religion.

And, as we have already observed, the importance of thus giving yourselves to preaching, is pressed upon us very earnestly by our first missionary to that region.

He speaks of the "want of preaching, as among the great wants of the Syrian Church. This ordinance, so eminently blessed of God, for the salvation of those that believe, if not lost among the Syrians, prevails to an exceedingly limited extent, and is wholly without life or productiveness."

"I have commonly heard," says Mr. Southgate, in one of his letters, "of such subjects as fasting, and frequent communion; and the bestowing of alms, and the moral virtues being insisted upon—all excellent in their place, and important, but not enough when presented alone, and even dangerous when presented exclusively. It is such preaching as this which makes the Syrians run too much about in the beaten circle of ex-

• • • • • The Rev. H. Southgate, now Missionary Bishop for Turkey.

ternal performances; while the heart is not fed, and the whole man grows not up towards a perfect stature in Christ. Man's ruin, and the Saviour's love, purity of heart, and growth in grace, sorrow for sin and repentance before God, devotion to His service, and an entire surrender to His will, the joy of heaven and the miseries of hell, the deep depravity and deceit of the human heart, the work of the Spirit, and faith in Christ working by love,—these," says he, "are strange themes to a Syrian audience."

And brethren, these are the very themes upon which we urge you to dilate.

Not to run in vain, but by all means, to save some, being your grand object; and the chief instrument, under God, of attaining it, being the preaching of these truths, prepare yourselves, while prudently considering all the peculiarities of your position, to be perpetual preachers. In season and out of season—to the learned and the unlearned—to the rich and the poor—in the church, or in your own house, or in the homes of the people—to the crowd, or to the individual—everywhere, but with wisdom, be ready to spread the knowledge of salvation. Press forward, as did St. Paul, wherever opportunity may offer, ever ready to testify both to small and great—to clergy and people—the things which belong to the kingdom of God.

And, in preaching, we need not say to you, that there is no book with which to begin, continue, and end your instructions, except the Bible.

In all the missions of the Church of Rome, so famed for the number, ability, learning, boldness, and perseverance of the labourers employed, there was "one grand principle wanting"—that of drawing directly from the sacred oracles, and communicating, by means of them, directly, the knowledge of Divine truth. They have failed because they were "Missionaries without the Bible."

If, confessedly, the Gospel is to be preached to every creature, as certainly it is the word which is to be preached. Draw, then, your instructions directly from the sacred volume, which should be ever in your hands and on your lips. This will be acknowledged as authority by those whom you address; and when you would press upon their hearts and consciences the duty of repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ—when you would turn them from idols to serve the living God—when you would bring them to worship God, not only with outward rites, but with the homage of the heart—when you would urge upon them the solemn truth, that without holiness no man shall see the Lord, you will speak as men having authority, if like St. Paul, you "reason with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging" that those things are so.

RELIGION ALTOGETHER A WORK OF DIVINE GRACE.

Grace must be given to all who diligently seek for it. But, if we attend to the Scripture account of every man, woman, and child by nature, we shall find that this seeking also is the effect following upon grace received; not the cause producing it. By this I mean to say, that the very act of seeking grace proves that we have received grace already; and that the very ability to seek, is itself the free gift of God's sovereign grace. If "every thought of man's heart is evil, and that continually," surely it is not out of that heart that the first desire of any good thing can spring. If, by nature "there is none that seeketh after God," whence can the first attempt to seek him arise, but from free grace drawing us contrary to nature? Freely must grace be given to enable us to seek at first; and freely must it be continued, to enable us to go on seeking.

I know none shall seek the Lord in vain; none who come shall be cast out; none who believe shall come short of everlasting life; none who choose the better part shall have it taken from them; but then, none can seek the Lord unless he first seek them; none can come, except it be given them of the Father; none can believe, save as many as are ordained to eternal life; none can choose Christ, except he first choose them. If, again, we consider the magnitude of the change which must take place in every sinner's heart, before he can truly and earnestly seek God, we shall be convinced that no part of it is properly his own. He "must be born again;" must become a "new creature;" "old things must pass away, all things must become new;" he must "pass from death unto life;" "from darkness to light; from the power of Satan unto God; from "going about to establish his own righteousness, to submit himself to the righteousness of God;" and this, to a proud, carnal heart is the most difficult of all. And who is sufficient for these things? Who but He that first formed us in the womb, can cause us to be born again of the Spirit? Who but He that originally created us, is able to "create us anew in Christ Jesus?" Who but the Giver of natural life can give us spiritual life, and quicken those that were "dead in trespasses and sins?"

When the Lord of life stood by the grave of Lazarus, and said, "Lazarus, come forth," who would say, that his act of lifting up himself was the cause of his being able to lift up himself? It is thus, when Jesus, by his word and Spirit, says to "the heart of a sinner, 'Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.'" Instantly that dead soul arises, and its first act is seeking, or prayer; but this same act of seeking is the effect of spiritual life, not the cause. We pray because we are alive, not that we may live. We cannot quicken ourselves when dead in sin, any more than we