

Pastor and People.

DR. BONAR'S LAST LINES.

"IN ME YE SHALL HAVE PEACE."

The following beautiful and affecting lines were found among Dr. Bonar's papers, after his death. It is believed they were the last he ever wrote :

Long days and nights upon this restless bed,
Of daily, nightly weariness and pain!
Yet Thou art here, my ever-gracious Lord,
Thy well-known voice speaks not to me in vain ;—
" In Me ye shall have peace ! "

The darkness seemeth long, and even the light
No respite brings with it ; no soothing rest
For this worn frame ; yet in the midst of all
Thy love revives. Father, Thy will is best.
" In Me ye shall have peace ! "

Sleep cometh not, when most I seem to need
Its kindly balm. O Father, be to me
Better than sleep ; and let these sleepless hours
Be hours of blessed fellowship with Thee.
" In Me ye shall have peace ! "

Not always seen the wisdom and the love ;
And sometimes hard to be believed, when pain
Wrestles with faith, and almost overcomes.
Yet even in conflict Thy sure words sustain ;—
" In Me ye shall have peace ! "

Father, the flesh is weak ; tain would I rise
Above its weakness into things unseen.
Lift Thou me up ; give me the open ear,
To hear the voice that speaketh from within :—
" In Me ye shall have peace ! "

Father, the hour is come ; the hour when I
Shall with these fading eyes behold Thy face ;
And drink in all the fulness of Thy love ;—
Till then, oh speak to me thy words of grace ;—
" In Me ye shall have peace ! "

DR. MUNROE GIBSON ON PREACHING.

Dr. Gibson, during his recent visit to Montreal, addressed the students of the Presbyterian College. The following summary of his racy address is from the *Witness* :

" My dear young friends, whatever you do, don't drone." And then Dr. Gibson, assuming an air of dreadful lugubriousness, droned in the most excruciating manner, " Haven't you heard something like this before ? " And the doctor's keen blue eyes twinkled.

As it would have been irreverent to say " You bet," the students contented themselves with vigorously applauding. The applause meant a most emphatic " yes."

In short, Dr. Gibson's address to theological students in the David Morrice Hall of the Presbyterian College, yesterday afternoon, bristled with " good points." To a thrilling earnestness he adds a dry humour of infinite relish, and he caps both with something of the mimetic power of the actor. While you are moved with his intense earnestness, he leaves the desk, comes forward on the platform, deliberately removes his glasses, puts his hands in his pockets, and then, with a look of unearthly gravity hurls a shaft of lambent humour at you.

The subject was, " Concentration of effort and definiteness of aim." Jesus Christ might have been a poet or a great philosopher. His human intellect must have been tempted to penetrate the great mysteries of what we call life was made up. He composed no poem, nor did he leave any system of philosophy, but His illustrations showed His nature was poetic, while He touched philosophy as He passed by.

Jesus could have been a great man. He could have become famous upon the score of human intellect. But then mankind would never have been lifted up. He said, " For their sakes I sanctify Myself." Paul, who most resembled Him in " all-roundedness " of character, said, " I am determined to know nothing among men save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." " Those who succeed in this age," said Dr. Gibson, " must be experts. General culture is not enough. Competition demands that you be an expert. Give yourselves, then, wholly to the work. Let there be concentration ; let there be not only patience but persistence."

What did definiteness of aim mean ! It was hardly enough to say that it meant bringing souls to Christ. It meant that ; but it meant also the spiritual uplifting of men and women, making their lives brighter, purer, happier. That was a grand mission. Even heathen philosophy taught the grandeur of this spiritual uplifting. Epictetus said that it was nobler to exalt souls than to raise roofs. " That is a great truth," said Dr. Gibson ; " we might," he added, dryly, " apply it, say, to Chicago or Montreal."

" Let this definiteness of aim possess you," said the speaker ; " let it fill your whole being, and I guarantee (this very slowly and impressively) that it will be an effectual insurance against dull sermons. What a relief that would be to Canada and other places we know of ! (Laughter.) The sermon may not be masterly, or brilliant, or profound, but it will be eloquent. What is life ? Eloquence is life—speaking out. Put your life, your soul, the highest force of your being into your sermons. Don't make your sermons. There are too many made in the factory. Let them come from the life. ' I hear them talk,' said a poet once, ' about making poetry. I find I have to live mine.' That's worth thinking about."

" Don't," said Dr. Gibson, with a mock air of the deepest melancholy, " don't work out your subjects. Don't say to yourself, ' Ah, this is a good text ;' and then sit down to work

it out to please yourself. The object is better than the subject. Remember that. Let the object possess you, and not the subject, and the preaching will be hot with the breath of holy passion."

Then the doctor told of one of his early sermons. He was young and tremendously metaphysical. His theme was " Blessed are the pure in heart." " It was a good sermon, as sermons go. I had worked it out. I had elaborate ideas about purity. Beware, friends, of abstract ideas. There was nothing about the value of heart purity or the blessed vision of God. I am afraid no one was helped by it. I am afraid my own heart was not touched. Oh, it makes me sad to look back upon these experiences. I think if I could begin again how differently I would preach to men, women and children. Yes, I think I would preach a good deal more to the children." " Don't write out an elaborate essay," said Dr. Gibson, " and inflict it upon the public. The public read essays at home—perhaps better ones than yours. Oh, it is not words we want—it is the life, the soul of a man poured out—it is the uplifting of men and women by the Gospel of the blessed God."

" Mr Pakenham was once bathing, and Sir Francis Austin, his friend, looking over the side of the boat, said to him, ' Come back, or the sharks will seize you.' Mr. Pakenham said there was no danger. ' I tell you there is a blue species shark, and you are in great peril.' Mr. Pakenham did not mind, and was nearly lost. Why ? Sir Francis might have said there was a big shark or a dangerous shark, but when he could take time tell the species Mr. Pakenham couldn't believe there was any danger (laughter).

" The most beautiful theory in a sermon may ruin it, because," said Dr. Gibson, " it has no business to be there. You may have definiteness of aim, and yet, by turning aside to polish a little, the whole effect may be lost."

" Life is the one thing that makes a sermon," said the speaker impressively. " A French sculptor was once teaching his class. He had a model of an equestrian statue. It was full of anatomical faults which the lecturer pointed out. In another part of the room he had a model which he had prepared himself, and which was perfect in every detail. When he had exhibited them both he said, ' And yet that miserable thing (pointing to the faulty statue) has life, while my perfect model is dead ! ' Let there be life and power in your sermons and then they will not be

Faultily faultless,
Icily regular,
Splendidly dull."

There were many other admirable points. He protested against the " three head " system. " There should only be one head, with a face on it full of expression, full of individuality. It is the death of a good sermon when three subjects are dealt with from one text. The one neutralizes the other. There should be one head, one soul, one object. You should determine to achieve a distinct result.

" Then," said the lecturer, " avoid dullness in delivery. Don't read, or drone, or prose. We hear of a sermon being ' delivered.' What is delivery ? How does a man deliver a blow ? " (Dr. Gibson put himself into a sparring attitude and delivered a right-hander, which would have been no discredit to the " profession.") The sermon should be delivered like a shot from the heart of the speaker to the hearts of the audience.

" People who have no muscle and no nerve power," said Dr. Gibson, " should write for the press."

The lecturer poured fine scorn upon the self-consciousness which said, " How splendidly I'm doing," and deprecated the other extreme of, " How miserably I'm doing." He recommended the use of shorthand to those who wrote their sermons ; as it would enable them to keep up with the glow of feeling under which they wrote. He recommended extempore speaking where that could be employed.

The lecture throughout was a stirring plea for earnestness of purpose in preaching, rather than brilliancy of effect ; with the insistence that true eloquence was the product of soul feeling.

The Rev. Dr. Douglas opened with prayer. Dr. MacVicar occupied the chair and gracefully introduced the lecturer. Among those on the platform were Prof. Scrimger, Dr. Antliff, Dr. Mackay, Canon Henderson, Dr. Barbour, Prof. Cousirat, Prof. Campbell and Mr. Morrice. At the conclusion a cordial vote of thanks was passed to Dr. Gibson on the motion of Dr. Barbour, seconded by Dr. Henderson. Dr. Gibson replied very happily. " How I wish I were a student again ! " he said. " That cannot be, but I feel like one. I see my dear old friend, Principal Douglas (in the audience) representing the great Methodist body. His hair has grown and mine is growing grey, but I am glad to find that his grand voice has lost none of its power, while his face is still youthful. Long may he be spared to carry on his noble work." Dr. Gibson also gracefully referred to the great debt of gratitude that was due to Mr. Morrice. Dr. Antliff pronounced the benediction.

LOVE MIGHTIER THAN LOGIC.

You may hammer ice on the anvil or bray it in a mortar. What then ? It is pounded ice still, except for the little portion melted by heat of percussion, and it will soon congeal again. Melt it in the sun, and it flows down in sweet water, which mirrors the light which loosed its bands of cold. So hammer away at unbelief with your logical sledge-hammers, and you will change its shape perhaps ; but it is none the less unbelief because you have ground it to powder. It is a mightier agent that must melt it—the fire of God's love brought close by a heart ablaze with the sacred glow.

HOW LEISURE HAS BEEN WON.

BY REV. J. A. R. DICKSON, R.D.

One of the most encouraging chapters in the lives of successful men, especially for those who are just entering on life's duties—young men of generous impulses and of noble ambition—is that which shows how leisure for the accomplishment of a praise-worthy end has been won. Won by hard toil and bitter pain, to do deeds that have become monumental. Deeds that have made their names landmarks on the literary and scientific history of their country. Deeds that have immortalized them.

We must remember this, that it is not those who have had the largest opportunity nor the highest culture who have made the best use of their gifts. Great powers, like large estates, have too often been squandered in wanton riot. The very munificence of the gift has led them to trifle with it and treat it meanly, instead of working it to the utmost limit of its capacity, while those who have been endowed with inferior parts have diligently improved them and made the most skillful and judicious use of them. They have turned every moment into a means of advancement. Every event has become a source of help in the attainment of their object. Even the bitterest seasons have been turned into sweetness and blessing, not only to themselves but to all future generations, as was the case in Bunyan's imprisonment in Bedford gaol, Milton's blindness and Burns' poverty. Tennyson in his " In Memoriam " speaks of this with picturesque vividness in these lines :

As some divinely-gifted man,
Whose life in low estate began,
And on a simple village green :
Who breaths his birth's invidious bar ;
And grasps the skirts of happy chance,
And breaks the blows of circumstance,
And grapples with his evil star ;
Who makes by force his merit known,
And lives to clutch the golden keys,
To mould a mighty State's decrees,
And shape the whisper of a throne :
And moving up from high to higher,
Becomes, on Fortune's crowning slope,
The pillar of a people's hope,
The centre of a world's desire."

A common cry is : " I have no leisure, I have no time." To this cry the response may be made : " You have all the time that is going. Seize your opportunity. Make the most of it." Time comes in moments, and goes in moments. It is a stream of moments ever flowing on and on. There is no break in it—no pause. Unhasting yet unresting it moves ever onward. Ah, me, how solemn is the thought ! To find time is to seize it on the wing, and turn it to account. It is to employ its smallest spaces, filling them diligently with something that is useful, noble, true, beautiful, good. Many wait, like Micawber, for something to turn up. He who idly waits, loses. He who busily waits—filling up the fleeting moments with work, always wins.

The leisure many desire is won in divers ways, but one of the most important is that of early rising. Abridge the hours of sleep. Be in bed by ten o'clock, my young friend. No night later than that. Study this, arrange for it, make it a law, like those of the Medes and Persians, or as like them as may be—never or seldom to be broken. Then you can rise as early as you like, with cool, clear brain, and steady eye, and a memory that will grip like glue, so that what you commit to it will not easily be forgotten. There is little leakage of early morning work. Indeed, that comes back again and again with consciousness all through the day. It is a literal cud-chewing of the mind. That which first gains possession of the thoughts holds them fast, because at that time the mind is most vigorous, and it is not distracted with a multiplicity of things. An hour of work in the morning is worth more than an hour during any other part of the day. The leisure secured by early rising is therefore the most precious.

The Rev. Albert Barnes, whose commentaries are well known, is an illustrious example of early rising. He says : " Whatever I have accomplished in the way of commentary on the Scriptures is to be traced to the fact of rising at four in the morning, and to the time thus secured, which I thought might properly be employed in a work not immediately connected with my pastoral labours. That habit I have pursued now for many years ; rather, as far as my conscience advises me on the subject, because I loved the work itself, than from any idea of gain or of reputation, or, indeed, from any definite plan as to the work itself."

Dr. Doddridge, in reference to his " Paraphrases on the New Testament," tells us that " its being written at all was owing to the difference between rising at five and seven o'clock in the morning."

Such was the character of Matthew Henry : " He was always an early riser, and put a great value upon his morning time ; he would often be in his study at five o'clock in the morning, and sometimes by four, and continue there till seven or eight," etc.

Of Colonel Gardiner it is recorded that when his regiment had to march at six he was up at four ; and so of Hedley Vicars, and for the same purpose—that of having undisturbed communion with God. This is one of the best ways of winning leisure, and life too, and of making it every way a thousand times more desirable. Early prayer brings early blessing, and early study is the most prosperous and profitable. Another important means for winning leisure is the proper ordering of the duties of life. Have, as far as is possible a time for everything. Have a plan. Organize the work of