

"IN, BUT NOT OF."

BY REV. A. M'ELROY WYLIE.

Such is the brief Christ-delineation of the believer's attitude in the world. There is a vast difference between the position of a vessel *in* (or *on*) and *within* the sea—in the sea, moving through it upon her transmarine errand of profit toward the expectant harbor; or down beneath the wave, submerged, sunken, dead to all the designs cherished by builder, owner and passengers. "In" or on upon the one side and "of" on the other, furnishes the contrast between the voyage of triumph and the run of disaster. In the one case the vessel, as a living thing, uses the tides beneath to insure her progress; in the other case the tides, breaking over and within, carry her down into the depths of death. The world, kept without, the believer may ride over in safety; admitted within he is betrayed and weighed down to his eternal undoing.

"Of!"—how short, yet how significant! Of the same nature, same sympathies, same aims, ready to respond, ready to associate with, ready to seek the same profit, ready to seek the same sources of honor and pleasure. So, as the Master sums it up, loved by the world and sought for as its own. Here there are no distinctions in color; no antagonism; in currents, but all mingle in friendly harmony and move in the same direction.

But "in and not of" reveals, at once, a different attitude. This may be looked at from two different view-points.

That of the world itself. The world at once levels its examination at the position of one who has gone into the church. It approaches with a little caution to see whether the new professor unfurls the banner of challenge. In most cases the world finds only "barker" guns. There is nothing to fear. The form is set up, but mettle, and force, and fire are all wanting. It soon discovers that the profession is only a setting up of painted logs for guns, and the enlisted one has no serious notion of antagonizing his former friends. They are just as welcome now as they ever were, and are not made doubtful by any aggressive devices whatever.

The world is not slow at discovering this and is quite willing to be on good terms with a profession whose life and tes-

timony have, manifestly, undergone no change whatever.

But how quickly the front and visage are altered when the disciple shows, "with blood earnestness," that he is "in, but not of." "Ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you. If ye were of the world would love its own."

No deeper explanation, and yet one more simple, could be given. The world is just as prompt to discover in this case as in the other, and just as prompt to reveal its want of harmony which will soon develop into hatred before that Christly spirit that knows no compromise.

Then there is the standpoint of the believer's own heart and inner nature. He expects to arouse the world's opposition; he expects to break with former friends; he carries within himself the consciousness that the world and he cannot be reconciled. He knows he is appointed to pass through the world and yet not be of the world. So, as a most comfortable consequence, his soul is more and more weaned from the world and he settles into that attitude of content which looks forward, calmly, to an entrance into that home and inheritance where both his society and possessions shall all produce the most perfect harmony, and call out the freest and most unrestricted play of sympathy and affection, which compose the communion of the blest.

Meanwhile he takes comfort in this thought that the most dangerous place is the debatable ground between the contending lines, and he keeps well away from this whole region in question. We often wonder why compromising Christians are not deeply impressed with this view, that the ground in dispute is far better avoided—better for safety; better for happiness; better for one's influence for good. Is it any harm to patronize the theatre, the opera, the dance? Any harm to take a hand at cards? Or to attend the parties where fashion and frivolity reign? It is quite sufficient to reply, *it will be no harm to let them alone*, while peril is incurred by him who forgets that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." The safe, as well as both the happy and useful course, is to deal in no compromise whatever—get away from the lukewarm attitude—be in the world, but *not of the world*.

Prayer is the work of the soul, and not of the lips only.