RIGHTEOUS AND UNRIGHTEOUS ANGER

BY THEODORE L. CUYLER, D. D.

"Be ye angry and sin not," is found in the same chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians with the admonition, "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice." This may puzzle some readers as if there were a contradiction, but there is nothing of the sort. In the first text the Greek word employed is the same one which describes the feeling of Jesus Christ toward certain hard-hearted and bigoted Jews. We are told that Christ "looked on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts." He felt an intense displeasure at the conduct of these bigots, yet it was unalloyed with any malignity, for, while he condemned their sin, he pitied them as sinners. Both these feelings were consistent with his divine holiness.

Frequently in the Scriptures God is spoken of as being "angry" with evildoers. His attributes compel this; God is a "consuming fire"—of love; of love so ardent that, in its flame, no evil can abide; of love so holy that it consumes all iniquity. And when that flame shoots up in terror to fright his sinning children from their sins, it is but another manifestation of that ineffable love which sent his only-begotten Son into this world to die for sinners. We cannot conceive of a perfectly holy God who should not frown with stern est displeasure upon everything unclean, everything unjust and everything unholy, nor can we conceive of a pure and godly man who can steel his heart against the emotions of righteous indignation which a wicked deed is calculated to inspire. It is not the bad side of him, but the best side of him that is on fire. The noblest instincts of young Abraham Lincoln's heart were stirred when he saw the poor slave girl on the auction-block in New Orleans, and exclaimed, "If the time ever comes that I can hit this thing, I'll hit it hard." Indignation at cruelty, injustice, ingratitude, and kindred sins, is a wholesome symptom, and the more are we approximating that divine exemplar who abhorred every species of iniquity. It is to the shame of us who profess and call ourselves Christians that we do not oftener flame up into holy indignations.

It is related of that eminent Brooklyn pastor, the late Dr. I. S. Spencer, that one of his parishioners met him walking rapidly down the street, with his face flushed and a peculiar look in that keen, gray eye. When his friend stopped him with the inquiry, "How are you today, doctor?" his curt reply was, "I am mad." He went on to say: "I have just found a little child standing by her goods thrown into the street. She could not pay her month's rent, and her landlord turned her and her sick child out. That man is a member of the church! I told her to take her things back again; I am on my way to see that man." I have often thought that when Dr. Spencer got hold of that skinflint landlord, his talk was about as Calvinistic as his sermons, and was not exactly a dish of peaches and cream.

If the expression of righteous indignation against wrong-doing be commendable—especially when it takes a practical form as in the case of the incensed Brooklyn pastor—yet there is another sort of anger that has more of the "old Adam" in it than of the new man in Christ Jesus. Look, for instance, at the conduct of the father or mother whose child has committed some act of carelessness, or, perhaps, of disobedience. The child has knocked over a beautiful piece of Parian and shattered it into fragments. The enraged parent breaks into a tempest of passion and perhaps strikes a violent blow that savors not of wholesome discipline, but of revenge. Love is never to be "easily provoked;" love must never give the rod over into hands of vengeance. Better that every bit of rare porcelain in your house were smashed than to strike one malicious blow at your own child. The moment that indignation sours into malice, and punishment savors of revenge, the parent sinks into the brute. No parent is fit to correct a child, however great the provocation, until anger has cooled off and love has assumed the throne. Love can listen to explanations, and weigh apologies and win honest penitential confession. Malicious anger is deaf and blind and inexorable, and often is positively devilish. Love chastens and corrects a child, as our Heavenly Father chastens his children, "for their profit," but many a wayward boy has been ten times more wayward by a passionate father's angry unreasoning brutality. If the apostle commends holy hatred of wrong, he earnestly exhorts that "all bitterness and wrath and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice."

It is a very common thing that people, Christian people sometimes also, who make others unhappy by their violent ebullitions, ex use themselves on the ground that they have naturally a very "high temper." As an excuse this is of no more value than that of the drunkard that he has a natural appetite for liquor, or of the libertine that he has strong animal propensities. A bad temper can be tamed if its possessor really wants to do it. One of the most courteous, calm, well-poised men I ever knew, told me that in his youth his temper was fearfully violent; he set to work and broke it as he would break a vicious horse into a harness. A bad temper is more than an infirmity; it is a sin, to be resisted and prayed against and fought down as much as any sin.

When our house takes fire the impulse is to go for a bucket of water. But if temper takes fire the first impulse with most people is to throw on more fuel. Now the best water-bucket in most for an inflammable temper is resolute silence. If, whenever a provoking word were spoken to us, or an irritating act were done, or an injury struck us, we should firmly seal our lips for a few minutes, we would save ourselves many a quarrel, many a heart burn, many a mortification, and many a disgrace to our Christian profession. Hasty speech is often explosive and shattering. Silence is cooling. It cools us off and cools other people also. "If any man seem to be religious and bridle not his tongue, that man's religion is vain." Good old Matthew Henry tells us of a married couple who were both naturally passionate, but who lived very happily together by conscientiously observing the rule never to be both angry at the same time.

If the holy indignation that is awakened in a poor heart against wrong is majestic and Godlike, then the anger that is born of selfishness is abominable and damnable. Some tempers flash up like powder and it is over with in a minute. But the anger on which the sun is allowed to go down—which stews and simmers on over the hot coals of malice, scorching and scalding everything it touches, is literally "set on fire of hell." There are people who have buried parents and children and buried schemes and hopes and projects and yet the fetid remains of an old animosity (like an unburied corpse) are still haunting the caverns of the heart. The great Apostle as if he would be charitable toward those whose tempers are naturally excitable, puts in the gentle caution, "Let not the sun go down on your paroxism." That is the literal meaning of the word which our Version renders "wrath." The man who conquers a violent temper, and bridles a hasty tongue, and ruleth his own spirit and gives the soft answer that turneth away wrath, is to my mind quite as conspicuous an example of the grace of God as if he had delivered the most soul-converting sermon, or consecrated his money to any work of Christian obedience.

AN IDEAL IN TEACHING BENEVOLENCE.

BY REV. S. G. SARGENT.

Among the many ways of teaching benevolence (for there are many), the ideal, to me, fell under my observation some years ago as follows: I was at work in the eastern part of Maine visiting the churches, all of them small, but not all feeble, as is too often said of the small rural churches. Some of these, though few in numbers, are really strong. I preached on the Sabbath and collected funds, by contribution and from house to house, for our mission. In those days this way of work seemed the best. It was of necessity more of a house to house work then, than now, for the double purpose of visiting scattered people and collecting domestic mission funds—and in caring for the people they cared for me.

In the town of ——— I spent a night with a family composed of grandfather and grandmother, son and wife, and several children. The grandfather was a lay preacher, who now preached only on special occasions, not because of age, but of feeble health. In the morning after family devotion, the son's wife said to me, "Before you leave we will hand you our gifts for the mission." I had not asked for any; the family method forestalled this. The grandfather, grandmother, son, wife and children came into the room and from the oldest to the youngest brought their offering. When little Tot came with hers, she put it into my hand, and when she saw I had it, breathing more freely, she said, "There," and turned to her mother's arms,—a scene the more beautiful for its rareness. This was by no means a wealthy family; it possessed a competency and that was all, the same as many other families about it, and such as compose many of our rural churches.

Let benevolence be taught and practised in this way in all the families composing these churches. They may remain small, but never feeble, as is true of far too many of them now. Such would be few in numbers, but rich in faith also, in gifts for every good cause; I do not say that they would possess treasuries full, "pressed down and running over," but I do say it would be a vast improvement on the present condition of things among them for all benevolent purposes. To my mind it is an ideal method; its excellence consists in its method. The influence of its practice in the example above named permeated the whole religious character and life of the family, its benign influence fashioned all its conduct.

In this case, it not only gave the church an excellent method of benevolence, but one of our best ministers.

It is now a number of years since the above narrated facts came under my observation, and there are now many choice methods of teaching this divine precept and an idea to one may not be to all. My pet scheme may in the opinion of others, fall far below some other plan of teaching here. Yet I am compelled to believe that our beautiful idea lays the axe at the root of the tree, begins the lesson when and where it should, in the home, with the children, by the parents, and makes it a family life work. Here the fruit will be golden abundant, perennial.

Mr. T. J. Humes, Columbus, Ohio, writes: "I have been afflicted for some time with Kidney and Liver Complaint, and find Parmelee's Pills the best medicine for these diseases. These Pills do not cause pain or griping, and should be used when a cathartic is required. They are Gelatine Coated, and rolled in the Flour of Liquorice to preserve their purity, and give them a pleasant, agreeable taste.

He who undervalues himself is justly undervalued by others.—Hallitt.

HAD LAGRIPPE.—Mr. A. Nickerson, Farmer, Dutton, writes: "Last winter I had La Grippe and it left me with a severe pain in the small of my back and hip that used to catch me whenever I tried to climb a fence. This lasted for about two months when I bought a bottle of Dr. Thomas' Eclectric Oil and used it both internally and externally, morning and evening, for three days, at the expiration of which time I was completely cured."

He who is to bless the Israel of God must dwell near to the God of Israel.—Matthew Henry.

COLIC AND KIDNEY DIFFICULTY.—Mr. J. W. Wilder, J. P., Lafargeville, N.Y., writes; "I am subject to severe attacks of Colic and Kidney Difficulty, and find Parmelee's Pills afford me great relief, while all other remedies have failed. They are the best medicine I have ever used." In fact so great is the power of this medicine to cleanse and purify, that disease of almost every name and nature are driven from the body.

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS IN INDIA.

For Boys and Girls in Canada.

DEAR GIRLS AND BOYS:

See that crow on the roof of Bimli Mission Bungalow! If he should spread his raven wings, and fly straight for the north star, his course would be almost fair over Vizianagram and Bobbili,—especially if the wind were blowing gently from the east, just enough to drive him a little to the westward, in his flight, as a ship is beaten to the leeward by the wind at sea. So exactly are these three towns in range, that if you draw a straight line, from Bimli to Bobbili, it will pass through the middle of Vizianagram.

Though Bobbili is directly north and seems to be right under the pole-star, yet it is not so far away as the north pole. At least nobody thinks himself in Greenland when he has to live there during the month of May. Just how far it is, we can each reckon for ourselves, as Vizianagram is sixteen miles north of Bimli and Bobbili is thirty-seven miles north of Vizianagram.

This is Friday, July nineteenth. I am off for Bobbili. The feet of the coolies patter over sixteen miles of road to Vizianagram in four hours. Here rest and refreshment are found with Mr. and Mrs. Corey.

As Mr. Corey's jinrickshs is lighter than mine, he has lent it to me for the rest of the journey. The night has fallen and there is no moon. A lantern is lighted and tied to the shafts. A fresh band of coolies has arrived. The clock is striking nine. The coolies take their places. The passenger is aboard.

Now we have turned out of the gate toward the north and are rolling along over the British roads toward the Arctic Ocean. The lantern sheds its kindly rays on all sides and keeps the coolies from stepping on snakes or running into holes or upsetting me in the ditch, or colliding with the hundreds of oxcarts that are met and passed on the way. We have gone now about four miles. On the right side of the road a light is shining out of a rude hut. As the villagers along the way were fast asleep, this is the first light with which we have been greeted, except our own lantern and the matches of passing teamsters who were lighting their cigars. Out of this illuminated shed comes a man to stop us. Who is he? Is he a highway robber? No. This is a toll-gate,—although there is no gate. However there is toll, and the man himself will be the gate if you do not pay it. Two annas—about four cents—for the use of the road. That is all right. We would be glad to pay more for good roads if we could get them for less. The roads are not kept in repair here by "Statute Labor" as they are at home. All is done with Government money and travellers pay tollfor their share of the expenses. Of course, in corporate towns, the work is done with municipal money, while all travellers pay toll and residents are taxed.

Now we wade through a river and the coolies lose the road in climbing up the opposite bank. Now we find the road again and soon call fresh coolies. Nine miles more and new coolies come again.

The east begins to break and glimmers with the beginning of dawn. Gradually on the left hand, something like great black clouds looms up against the sky, which, as the darkness is driven off, soon prove to be rugged hills. Then, as by degrees, the beams of morning steal over the heavens, massive boulders of black rock jut out against the firmament and green shrubbery, glassy with the dew of night, robes the hills giant sides. Broad fields of grain and oil plants spread out in all directions, like the ocean, adorning the face of the earth with emerald waves, and loving the foot of every hill. Large orchards of mango trees, which look like apple orchards in the distance, fringe the road, and cast the shade of their luxuriant foliage over the passing traveller.

The lantern is extinguished and the first mile-stone that can be read, by the morning light, has on it the number twenty-five. That means we have come twenty-five miles from Vizianagram, and have therefore only how many miles to Bobbili?

Did any of us ever tell you that all of the public roads here have mile-stones? Each stone is about as tall as a four-year-old boy. Then between each mile-stone there are seven smaller stones to mark each furlong, and you can tell exactly how many miles and furlongs you have gone. This is very convenient in settling with coolies, as they are paid by the mile. But these stones are meant, mainly, I think, for the convenience of Government Officials, to write down just exactly those parts of the road that need to be repaired, etc. As the Bible is divided into chapters and verses so that we may refer to any passage of scripture by simply naming the chapter and verse, so the officer can refer exactly to any part of the road by naming the mile and the furlong.

One more toll-gate! One more river with muddy banks! Five more miles! and we are in the verdant land of Bobbili. Ahead of us, on the right, through the leafy screen of the mango trees, the white walls of the mission Bungalow greet the glad eye. Now we are turning in at the gate, and Mrs. Churchill, coming out upon the verandah, smiles through her spectacles a good, motherly, missionary welcome. Mr. Churchill comes in from the town and we sit down to our Chota Hasri, i. e., Little Breakfast.

Coming through all the dark country, as dark as the night lit up a little by my lantern, it was a joy to know that ahead of me was a mission station, whence the light of the gospel was kept shining. And if one should ask, what is one light-house in such a broad sea of immortal souls dashing daily upon the rocks? We can only reply, Bring this one light-house to Jesus and He can multiply its light as He multiplied the loaves and fishes and made them suffice for a multitude.

The time would fail to tell if all the sights and sounds in this large town; of the swarming population, smeared and drenched and steeped in the most ignorant idolatry and the bitterest prejudice; or of the Rajah, with his palaces and horses and wealth and influence that overtops the influence of the missionary and arrays against him the focused force of the world, the flesh and the devil.

Neither is there room this time to tell of Mrs. Churchill's Castle Girls' School, with its numerous pupils, whose bright eyes, responsive minds and intense interest in the story of the cross, make you feel that some of them are not far from the kingdom of heaven; nor of Mr. Churchill's new chapel in the heart of the town, where it will be so useful, when it is finished.

One night the Rajah sent us a carriage and a span of horses. We drove over to his new mansion and ascended to its highest tower. There, far-stretching on ever side, we saw as much to stir our hearts as if we had seen all the kingdoms of the world. The Vizianagram Hill, thirty-seven miles to the south, was plainly visible, and beyond it the plains spread out in the mist toward Bimlipitam. Southeastward lay Chicacole, but too far away to be seen, while northeastward, invisible in the distance, beat the thousand hearts in Paris Kimedy.

There, in the twilight of the cloudy evening, we took off our hats and prayed to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for this vast country; for all the missionaries and Telugu christians; for those in the home land whose representatives we are; and for the Rajah upon the tower of whose palace we were standing. Then drops of rain began to fall and we trust that showers from heaven may descend upon this dry and thirsty land.

I would like to write also about the young men who came to the Mission House to talk with the Missionaries. In some of them there is evidently a serious interest in the gospel of Jesus.

One thing I cannot forget. In the northwest corner of the front yard, half hidden under weeping branches, so that you must stoop to look at them, are two little, marble tombstones, side by side. On one you may spell out the name of "Willie" and on the other of "Georgie". These two dear boys fell victims to the awful fever of India, smitten down in a day. As I looked on their memorials and their mothers tears, I felt that they had died for the heathen, into whose inclement clime their parents had come with the story of the Cross. Even in tender childhood, the name of Jesus was precious to them and His presence was real. His love and claims were vivid to their child-like faith; and the fear of God was before their eyes, and the love of God was in their hearts almost from infancy. They ripened early to be plucked by the gentle hand of their Father, to be borne to His happy home and lovely mansions, amid gardens and fountains, where "God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes."

Yours truly,

L. D. MORSE.

Bimlipatam, India, Aug. 12.

THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.

(Reprinted by request.)

The church and the world walked far apart,
On the changing shores of time;
The world was singing a giddy song,
And the church a hymn sublime.
Come give me your hand, cried the merry world
And walk with me this way;
But the good church hid her snowy hand
And solemnly answered, Nay,
I will not give you my hands at all,
And I will not walk with you;
Your way is the way of endless death;
Your words are all untrue.

Nay, walk with me but a little space,
Said the world with a kindly air;
The road I walk is a pleasant road,
And the sun shines always there;
Your path is thorny and rough and rude,
And mine is broad and plain;
My road is paved with flowers and gems,
And yours with tears and pain;
The sky above me is always blue;
No want, no toil I know;
The sky above you is always dark;
Your lot is a lot of woe;
My path, you see, is a broad, fair path
And my gate is high and wide;
There is room enough for you and for me
To travel side by side.

Half shyly the church approached the world,
And gave him her hand of snow;
The old world grasped it and walked along,
Saying in accents low,
Your dress is too simple to please my taste;
I will give you pearls to wear,
Rich velvet and silks for your graceful form,
And diamonds to deck your hair.
The church looked down at her plain white robes,
And then at the dazzling world,
And blushed as she saw his handsome lip
With a smile contemptuous curled.
I will change my dress for a costlier one,
Said the church with a smile of grace,
Then her pure white garments drifted away,
And the world gave in their place
Beautiful satins and shining silks,
And roses and gems and pearls;
And over her forehead her bright hair fell
Crisped in a thousand curls.

Your house is too plain said the proud old world,
I'll build you one like mine;
Carpets of Brussels and curtains of lace,
And furniture ever so fine.
So he built her a costly and beautiful house;
Splendid it was too behold;
Her sons and her beautiful daughters dwelt there,
Gleaming in purple and gold;
And fairs and shows in the halls were held,
And the world and his children were there,
And laughter and music and feasts were heard
In the place that was meant for prayer.

She had cushioned pews for the rich and the great
To sit in their pomp and pride
While the poor folks, clad in their shabby suits,
Sat meekly down outside.

The angel of mercy flew over the church
And whispered, I know thy sin,
The church looked back with a sigh, and longed
To gather her children in.
But some were off in the midnight ball,
And some were off at the play,
And some were drinking in gay saloons;
So she quietly went her way.

The sly world gallantly said to her,
Your children mean no harm—
Merely indulging in innocent sports,
So she leaned on his proffered arm,
And smiled, and chatted, and gathered flowers
As she walked along with the world,
While millions and millions of deathless souls
To the horrible pit were hurled.

Your preachers are all too old and plain,
Said the gay old world with a sneer;
They frighten my children with dreadful tales,
Which I like not for them to hear;
They talk of brimstone and fire and pain,
And the horrors of endless night;
They talk of a place that should not be
Mentioned to ears polite.
I will send you some of the better stamp,
Brilliant and gay and fast,
Who will tell them that people may live as they list,
And go to heaven at last.
The Father is merciful great and good,
Tender and true and kind;
Do you think He would take one child to heaven
And leave the rest behind?
So he filled her house with gay divines,
Gifted and great and learned;
And the plain old men that preached the cross
Were out of the pulpit turned.

You give too much too the poor, said the world,
Far more than you ought to do;
If the poor need shelter and food and clothes,
Why need it trouble you?
Go take your money and buy rich robes,
And homes and carriages fine,
And pearls and jewels and dainty food,
And the rarest and costliest wine;
My children they dote on all such things,
And if you their love would win,
You must do as they do, and walk in the ways
That they are walking in.
The church held tightly the strings of her purse,
And gracefully lowered her head,
And simpered, I've given too much away;
I'll do six, as you have said.

So the poor were turned from her door in scorn
And she heard not the orphan's cry;
And she drew her beautiful robes aside,
As the widows went weeping by;
The sons of the world and the sons of the church
Walked closely hand and heart,
And only the Master who knoweth all
Could tell the two apart.
Then the church sat down at her ease and said,
I am rich, and in goods increased;
I have need of nothing and nought to do,
But to laugh and dance and feast;
The sly world heard her and laughed in his sleeve,
And mockingly said aside,
The church is fallen, the beautiful church,
And her shame is her boast and pride!

The angel drew near to the mercy-seat,
And whispered in sighs her name,
And the saints their anthems of rapture hushed,
And covered their heads with shame,
And a voice came down through the hush of heaven
From Him who sat on the throne,
I know thy work, and how thou hast said,
I am rich; and hast not known
That thou art naked and poor and blind,
And wretched before My face;
Therefore from My presence I cast thee out.
And blot thy name from its place!

—Selected.

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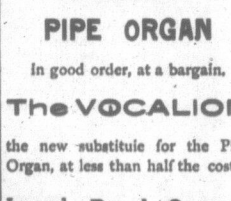

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