

A Ministry of Power the Ministry of the Times

Dr. Clifford gave a paper on this topic at the late session of the Baptist Union of Great Britain. We give some selections from it below. Let our pastors read them, for they are full of force.

But the more solemn scene on earth is a long, unbroken, unrelenting, unperforated, and a tremendous manifestation of God's eternal truth to hungry and starving men. Nothing more sad or gayer can exist. Surely, if strength, in its imperious calm, inflexible will, serene patience, quick vision and conquering boldness should reign unbroken anywhere, it is a vocation which owes its origin to the infinite love and mercy of Almighty God, receives its impulse from the free working of the Holy Spirit, proclaims the limitless power of the Lord Jesus Christ to heal, and embraces an enterprise as broad as man's wants and as enduring as his race.

Life is power, and life is manifold; but for the most part its forces flow forth gently as the dew falls, and stealthily as the stars descend, in fragrances. Power, however, by the diversity of its manifestations. It thinks in the scholar, sings in the poet, legislates in the statesman, rebukes in the reformer, feeds and nourishes in the pastor, preaches in the prophet, and builds through all. It is the power that makes the world, and it is the power that makes the world to be a world. It is the power that makes the world to be a world, and it is the power that makes the world to be a world.

CHARACTER AS A PREACHING FORCE. But mightier than the radiant glow of feelings, the skillful reading of human nature, the most capable exposition of Gospel fact, and the most Christ-like ideal, in the character, the spiritual personality of the man. This is the supreme secret. Indeed, it is the power that tells its spirit of God, and against our will, insensibly betrays itself in the hard metallic tone. Uprightness is exposed in our want of freshness and invention, directness and passion. The soul cannot be hidden. We do not preach better than we are. Our inward life, in its entire purity, absolute unselfishness, and sublime abandon, is the real measure of our achievement. It floods every service, overflows in every act, it is the subtle force of every sermon, it is the shining light of every life, and it is the power that makes the world to be a world.

The supernatural holiness of Jesus is the crowning miracle of the Gospels, and the secret of his marvellous authority as a speaker, of his impressive and captivating personality. He sought not his own will; he sought to do the will of his Father. He is the power that tells its spirit of God, and against our will, insensibly betrays itself in the hard metallic tone. Uprightness is exposed in our want of freshness and invention, directness and passion. The soul cannot be hidden. We do not preach better than we are. Our inward life, in its entire purity, absolute unselfishness, and sublime abandon, is the real measure of our achievement.

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new language, and it gets it, and grows in usefulness. Shine on us as if we are in the light of the sun, and the truth of the Revelation into the speech of the household, the school and the daily press. Chemists are all alert and eager to use the results of their work in adding to the comfort and happiness of life. Shall we be less strenuous in getting the forces of the Gospel work in the entire abolition of war and drunkenness, covetousness and impurity, in securing the universal recognition of the infinite value of the human unit in all democracies, and infusing a spirit of justice and charity into all trade, and establishing a kingdom of righteousness and truth throughout the world? The ministry we need is one that will get Christ and his ideas and laws and spirit enthroned in the social life of the world! And to do this we must have the most effective of methods and means.

There is no doing much good without feeling, or without a free and natural outlet for it. It is the heart that moves others. Every feeling is contagious. Fire spreads. Every preacher has been taught that a few sentences spoken in the fulness of the heart, with the ring of conviction, and a burning love for the salvation of souls, even though wholly unprepared, have a far better chance of entering men's hearts than elaborate exposition and fine writing. Getting to the heart is the main thing; and to do it a man must have a heart, and speak from its profound depths. With a heart filled at the centre, and to its utmost fibre, with the passion to exalt and glorify Christ, marvels will be wrought on the most hard and selfish men. We need the sacred fire upon us, and then we shall burn till others are warmed by our heat. This will bring pathos, urgency, the "tear in the voice," success. A high state of religious feeling, freely flowing out, is the Christian worker's power in pulpit and school, at home and abroad.

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"I should think," said Bob, looking gravely into the fire he had stirred into a feeble blaze, "that rich folks would try all the more to give poor folks work, such times."

"They say they can't, somehow," said his mother. "I said, Kit," said Kit, "they wouldn't have enough money themselves to last till hard times was gone, if they did."

"P'p's so," said Bob. "Never mind," he added briskly, "the lady I'm to sew for gets lots of wood, and maybe she'll hire me again, and maybe you'll get more sewing; maybe, and then we'll get the mattress from the pawnshop, and buy some stuff to make Kitty well; and then it won't be hard times any longer, will it?"

"I'll take an hour to show it out," said Bob, as the light of the following morn he broke into pieces with a hatchet the corn-bread, frozen to the solidity of a stone.

"There'll be warm water soon, and then I can soak it, Bobby."

"I guess I'd better not wait though," he said, cringing between his teeth some of the flinty morsels. "You see it's most a day's work, and I want to show 'em that I'm equal to it, so I'll be the surer of gettin' more. Now, I'll move your machine by the stove, another—it's queer how the poor thing seems to get the folks, and want to be put in the kitchen."

"Too bad, Kitty, and I want to show 'em that I'm equal to it, so I'll be the surer of gettin' more. Now, I'll move your machine by the stove, another—it's queer how the poor thing seems to get the folks, and want to be put in the kitchen."

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the doctor, kindly, holding to his lips something he had poured into a cup. "Clear case of starvation," he said whispering to Mrs. Brainard as he came to offer her a chair. "Plenty of such cases this winter, you know. God only knows how these poor bear so much in the way of hunger and cold. And what hard work is added, nature is strained to her last point of endurance—sometimes beyond it."

"And what then?" asked Mrs. Brainard, with her face turning a little pale. "Death," he laid a coin on the sewing machine, and hurried away, after saying to his mother—

"Give him something nourishing—in small quantities at first."

"Stop!" said Mrs. Brainard, laying her hand on the woman's arm, as she again pressed upon Bob the uninviting-looking corn-bread.

"Wait a few moments," she went on. "Let me bring him something."

"If that boy had died I should have been his murderer," said Mrs. Brainard, her eyes now opened to the extent of dealing fairly and mercifully with her own shortcomings.

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A Glimpse at the Future.

Now let us just look at the future. At the end of 1881 the Christian community in India was 417,000. It has grown on an average during the last decade at the rate of 82 per cent.—that is, about 81 per cent. every year. At that rate two years ago (1884) the nominal Christian population ought to have been half a million. It increases at the rate of 81 per cent. every year, and therefore, about doubles itself every twelve years. Beginning with half a million two years ago, in 1886 there ought to be a million; at the end of the next period of twelve years there ought to be two million, and so on. At the present rate of increase at the end of nine of these periods, the nominal Christian population in India ought to number 256,000,000, that is the whole country. The whole of India ought to be Christianised in 108 years. I can hardly believe it, but there is no doubt about it. You see, therefore, we may take encouragement from what has already been done, and from our prospects of the future.

But do not let us as students. There are half a million nominal Christians in India, that means simply one in five hundred of all the people; fifty are Mahomedans, and the rest are Hindus. And then think how the powers of evil are overwhelming themselves; think how infidelity is assailing the people; think how that accursed drink is coming in and threatening to destroy the people of India; see what mighty foes we have. It is still true, as of old, that a great door is open before us, but there are many adversaries.

The work is great and grand, the success is sure, the promise is clear. Oh, let us go on then doing the work that God has given us to do. Let us hear our Saviour's command, "Go ye and make disciples of the nations," and remember that with that command he ever joins the promise, "Lo, I am with you always. All power is given unto me to heaven and in earth. And as we march forward to this great enterprise, under the great Captain of our salvation, let us feel that we are sure to conquer; let us be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for we know that our labor shall not be in vain.

Men are saved by word and by example. One drives the nail, the other clinches it. To withhold experience is to hide the gift of God which he designs for the enlightenment and purifying of the world. Many a blessing is lost because it will not be hidden. It grows imperceptible in the darkness, and hides itself from us as we have hidden it from others.

Brother, sister, tell your experience. Tell it to your next-door neighbour, to the church to the world. Tell the perishing what Jesus has done for your soul. Tell how sweetly he saves you, how completely he keeps you, and with what hope he carries you onward. Speak of his "loving kindness, O how great!"

There is a prodigious crowd confining the work of the Spirit of God. If the Lord has sworn through your mouth and the breezes of his love, and purified and adorned it with the graces of his Spirit, surely you are fitted for some humble place in the rainbow of his earthly glory. You say you are unworthy, and so you are. But it is a question not of worthiness—it is simply one of magnifying what God has done for and in you. Your sanctified soul must be a beacon of promise, and your words a glowing invitation, and your life a holy inspiration to lead the unsaved and un sanctified to Jesus. Hide your head if you must, but do not let the world see you hold up the Crucified and the Holy One to the world.

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