MOVED AWAY.

The tenant has moved away
From the house by which we stand,
Into a tenement better far,
In a sunny, summer land.
The blinds of the empty house
Are closed to the light of day;
And the beautiful walks seem strangely cold,
Since the tenant has moved away.

No more will the glow of life
Illumine the windows fair—
No more will the voice we loved so well
Float out to us on the air.
But the spirit of gloom is here,
Like a shadow chill and gray;
And we gaze on the silent house with awe,
Since the tenant has moved away.

We know she is living now
In a brighter home than ours;
We know she is free to roam at will
In the midst of fadeless flowers.
It is not for the vanished form
That our tears fall fast today;
But oh! for the sad hearts left behind,
Since the tenant has moved away.

In the city where she dwells
There are mansions for us all,
And we shall journey to that blest land,
When we hear the Master's call.
So we leave this structure fair
To the hand of slow decay;
For what is the empty house to us
Since the tenant has moved away?
—*Mrs. E. E. Brown in Christian Leader.*

SERMON BY DR. MACLAREN.

Sunday Morning, May 27, 1894.

PATIENCE AND HER WORK.

A Sermon Delivered at Union Chapel, Manchester, on Sunday Morning, May 27, 1894, by the Rev. Alexander Maclaren, D. D.

"But let patience have her perfect work, that we may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."—James i: 4.

It does not appear from the rest of this letter that the persons to whom it was addressed were under the pressure of any particular trouble or affliction. Seeing that they are "the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad," the width of that superscription makes it improbable that the recipients were undergoing any common experience. It is the more noteworthy, therefore, that at the very outset James gives this exhortation bearing upon trials and troubles. Clearly it is not, as we often take it to be, a counsel only for the sorrowful, or an address only to a certain class of persons, but it is a general exhortation applicable to all sorts of people in all conditions of life, and indispensable, as he goes on to say, for any progress in Christian character.

"Let patience have her perfect work" is an advice not only for sad hearts, or for those who may be bowed down under any special present trouble, but for us all. And it is the condition on which it is possible, and without which it is impossible, that any Christian man should be "perfect and entire, wanting nothing." So I want you to look with me this morning, first, at *what* is the scope of this counsel; and then at *how* it can be obtained; and then *why* it is so important. What—how—why.

I.—First, then, what is the meaning of the counsel to "let patience have its perfect work"?

Notice that the very language of the text puts aside the common notion that patience is a passive thing. The "patience" of my text does "work." It is an active thing, whether that work be the virtue that it produces, or, as is more probable, its own preservation, in unbroken activity. In any case, the patience that James would have us all cultivate is an intensely active energy, and not a mere passive endurance. Of course, I know that it takes a great deal of active energy passively to endure. There is a terrible strain upon the nerves in lying still on the operating-table without wincing, and letting the surgeon's knife cut deep without shrinking or screaming. There is much force that goes to standing motionless when the wind is blowing. But, for all that, the more bearing of trouble by no means covers the whole ground of this royal and supreme virtue to which my text is here exhorting us. For, as I have often had occasion to say, the conception of "patience" in the New Testament includes, indeed, that which is generally supposed to be its sole significance—viz., bearing unresistingly and unmurmuring, and with the full consent of the yielding will, whatever pains, sorrows, losses, troubles or disappointments may come into our lives. But it includes more than that. It is the fixed determination, to "hate not one jot of heart or hope, but still bear up, and steer right onwards, in spite of all hindrances and antagonisms which may storm against us. It is perseverance in the teeth of the wind, and not merely keeping our place in spite of it, that James exhorts us to here. The ship that lies at anchor with a strong cable and a firm grip of the flukes in a good holding-ground, and rides out any storm without stirring one fathom's length from its place, exhibits one form of this perseverance—that is patience. The ship, with sails wisely set, and a firm hand at the tiller, and a keen eye on the compass, that uses the utmost blast to bear it nearer its desired haven, and never yaws one hair's breadth from the course that is marked out for it, exhibits the other, and the higher form. And that is the kind of thing that the Apostle is here recommending to us—not merely passive endurance, but a brave active persevrance, in spite of antagonism, in the course that conscience, illuminated by God, has bidden us to run.

And if you want instances of it I will give you two. "He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem." All through Christ's life the shadow of the Cross closed His view; and, unfaltering, unswerving, unresting, unreluctant, He measured every step of the path, and was turned aside by nothing; because "for that hour He came into the world," and could not blench because He loved.

I will give you another, lower, and yet like, caught from and kindled by, the supreme example of persistence in duty. "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear to myself, that I might finish my course with joy." The Apostle that was warned on all sides by voices of prophets, and by tears and by supplications of friends, had his path clearly marked out for him by his own conscience responsive to the will of God. And that path, whatsoever happened, he was resolved to tread. And that is the temper that my text commands us all to cultivate.

Beautiful and hard as bearing sorrows rightly may be, it is only a little corner of the grace that my text enjoins.

And so, dear friends, will you let me put the two or three words more that I have to say about this matter into the shape of counsel, not for the sake of dictating, but for the sake of giving point to my words? I would say, then, to every man, bear unmurmuring the burdens and sorrows that each of you have to bear. There are some of us this morning, no doubt, who have some special grief lying at our hearts. There are many of us, I doubt not, who know what it is to have for all the rest of our lives a wound that never can be healed to carry a weight that never can be lessened, and to walk in a darkness that never can be lighted. Irremediable losses and sorrows are the portion of some of my hearers. Let patience have her "perfect work"; and bow, bow to that supreme and loving will.

But, beyond that, do not let all your effort and energy be swallowed up in rightly enduring what you may have to endure. There are many of us that make some dissappointment, some loss, some grief, the excuse for shirking plain duty. There is nothing more selfish than sorrow, and there is nothing more absorbing, unless we guard against its tendency to monopolize. Work! Work for others, work for God, is our best comforter, next to the presence of God's Divine Spirit. There is nothing that so lightens the weight of a lifelong sorrow as to make it the stimulus to a lifelong devotion; and if our patience has its perfect work it will not make us sit with folded hands, weeping for the days that are no more, but it will drive us into heroic and energetic service, in the midst of which there will come some shadow of consolation or, at less, some blessed oblivion of sorrow.

Again, I would say, on a wider view of the meaning of this great exhortation, let no antagonism or opposition of any sort come between us and the plain path of Christian service and duty. And remember that the patience of my text has to be applied, not only in reference to the unswerving prosecution of the course which God and our own consciences dictate to us, in the face of difficulties, sorrows and losses, but also to the unswerving prosecution of that same path in the face of the opposite things—earthly delights and pleasures, and the seductions of the world, as well as the darknesses and sorrows of the world. He that lets his endurance have its perfect work will scorn delights as well as subdue sorrows. The clouds darken, but the sun dazzles. It is not only the rocks that threaten Ulysses and his crew, the syrens sit upon their island home, with their harps of gold, and trill their sweet songs. And no man understands what Christian endurance is who has not learned that he has to "endure" in the face of joys as well as in the face of sorrows, and that persistence in the Christian course means that we shall spurn the one and turn our backs upon the other when either of them threaten to draw us aside from the path.

I might gather all that I have to say about this great queenly virtue of perseverance in the face of antagonisms into the one word of the Apostle, "I count them but dung that I may win Christ." "Forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those that are before, I press toward the mark." "Let patience have her perfect work."

II.—And now, secondly, a word as to how this precept may best be carried out.

It is a precept. The perfecting of Christian endurance is not a thing that comes without effort. And so the Apostle puts it into the shape of an exhortation or an injunction. He does not specify methods, but I may venture to do so, in a few sentences.

And I put first and foremost here, as in all regions of Christian excellence and effort, the one specific which makes men like the Master—keeping near him. As the Epistle to the Hebrews puts it, "consider" (by way of comparison) "Him that endured, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin."

Oh, brethren, there is nothing that sucks the brightness out of our earthly joys when they threaten to interrupt our course, and dazzle our eyes, like turning our attention to Christ, and looking at Him. And there is nothing that takes the poison sting, and the irritation consequent on it, out of earthly sorrows like remembering the "Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." Am I to grumble when I think of Him? Shall I make a moan and a mourning for my sorrows when I remember His? Am I to say, "O Lord! Thou hast given me as much as I can manage in bearing this terrible blow which Thou hast aimed at me, without repining against Thee. I cannot do any work because I have got so much to bear?" Are we to say that when we remember how He counted not His life dear to Himself, and bore all, and did all, that He might accomplish the Father's will? Do not let us magnify our griefs, but measure them by the side of Christ's. Do not let us yield to our impatience, but rather let us think of Him. "Consider Him, and patience will have her perfect work."

Again, let me say, if we would possess in its highest degree this indispensable grace of persistent determination to pursue the Christian course in spite of all antagonisms, we must cultivate the habit of thinking of life, in all its vicissitudes, as mainly meant to make character. That is what the Apostle is saying in the context. He says, "Brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations." That is a paradox. It bids a man be glad because he has trouble and is sad. It seems ridiculous, but the next verse solves the paradox: "Knowing this, that the trial of your faith worketh patience." That is to say—if I rightly understand the meaning of this world in its bearing on myself, the intention of my whole life to make me what God would have me to be, then I shall not measure things by their capacity to delight and please taste, ambitions, desires, or sense, but only by their power to mould me into His likeness. If I understand that the meaning of sorrow and joy is one, that God intends the same thing when He gives and when He withdraws, that the fervid suns of autumn and the biting blasts of November equally tend to the production of the harvest, that day and night come from the same cause—the revolution of the earth; if I understand that life is but the scaffolding for building character, and that, if I take out of this world, with all its fading sweets and and its fleeting sadnesses, a soul enlarged, ennobled by difficulties and by gladnesses, then I shall welcome them both when they come, and neither the one nor the other will be able to deflect me from my course.

And so, lastly, about this matter, I would say bring the future into immediate connection with the present, and that will illuminate the dark places, will minimize the sorrows, will make the crooked things straight and the rough places plain, will prevent joy from being absorbing, and anxiety from being corroding, and sorrow from being monopolizing, and will enable us to understand how all that is here is but preparatory and disciplinary for that great and serene future. And so the light affliction, which is but for a moment, will not be so very hard to bear; and the efforts at likeness to Jesus Christ, the consequences of which will last through eternity, will not be so very difficult to keep up; and patience, fed by contemplation of the suffering Christ, and nurtured further by consideration of the purpose of life, and stimulated by the vision of the future to which life here is but the vestibule, will have "her perfect work."

III.—And, lastly, Why is this grace so important?

James says, with his favorite repetition of the same word, "Let her work be perfect that ye may be perfect." Such endurance is indispensable to growth in Christian character.

I do not need to enter, at this stage of my sermon, on the differences between "perfect" and "entire." The one describes the measure of the individual graces belonging to the man; the other describes the completeness of the assemblage of such graces. In each he is "perfect," and, having all that belongs to complete humanity, he is "entire." That is the ideal to which we have to press.

That is an ideal to which we may indefinitely approximate. There are people now—as there always have been—who are apt to substitute emotion and passivity for effort in the path of Christian perfection. I would take James' teaching. Let your perseverance have her perfect work, and by toil and by protracted effort, and by setting your teeth against all seductions, and by curbing and ruling your sorrows, you will reach the goal. God makes no man perfect without that man's diligent and continuous struggle and toil. Toil, indeed, based upon faith; toil, indeed, which receives the blessing, but toil all the same.

Nor need I remind you, I suppose, how, in both the narrower and the wider sense of this word, the perseverance of my text is indispensable to Christian character.

I daresay we all of us know, some chronic invalid say, on whose worn face there rest a gleam like that of the lawgiver when he came down from the mount, refined by sorrow rightly borne. If your troubles, be they great or small, do not do you good they do you harm. There is such a thing as being made obstinate, hard, more clinging to earth than before by reason of griefs. And there is such a thing as a sorrow rightly borne being the very strength of a life, and delivering it from many a sin. The alabaster sheet which is intended to be fitted into the lamp is pared very thin that the light may shine through. And God pares away much of our lives in order that through what is left there may gleam more clearly and lambently the light of an indwelling God.

There is nothing to be won in the perfecting of Christian character without quite seeing ourselves to it persistently, doggedly, continuously all through our lives. Brethren, be sure of this, you will never grow like Christ by mere wishing, by mere emotion, but only by continual faith, rigid self-control, and by continual struggle. And be as sure of this, you will never miss the mark if, "forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth to those that are before," you "let patience have her perfect work," and press towards Him who is Himself the Author and Finisher of our patience and of our faith.

"What! No Room in Heaven."

A lady who has visited Japan told to a gathering of ladies recently, an experience that came to her knowledge. A little child had come to a mission school. The contrast between the cheerlessness of her home and the very atmosphere of that Christian place, made it seem something more beautiful than she had ever known. Soon after she entered she commenced to ask for grandmamma. "Your grandmamma is not here." "She must be here. She has gone to heaven, and this is heaven; she must be here." Scarcely could she be persuaded by the teachers that the one she sought was not there. But the school was overcrowded, and the child could not be kept. As she was sent back to her home she was told that there was no room for her there. "What! no room? Grandmamma always said there was plenty of room in heaven, and this is heaven; there must be room for me."

Do the Christian people of America realize that reduced appropriation to the missions abroad mean "no room in heaven" to many an eager, anxious soul? Yet that is a simple fact. On every hand the doors are opening, are already wide open. From every side come stories of opportunities such as have been never known before, and the message that is sent back is 'Close the doors, ignore the opportunities; if souls perish, they perish."—*Independent.*

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Personal Relationship.

BY WAYLAND HOYT, D. D.

Private William Scott was a Vermont farm boy. He enlisted. It was in the time of the war. There had been a long march all day. That night, all night he had stood on picket guard. There had been a long march all the next day. That night a sick comrade was appointed on picket guard and he volunteered to take his place. He was not accustomed to be awake night, and the fatigue overwhelmed him and he slept on picket guard. But it was at Chain Bridge, and the army was in a dangerous neighborhood and discipline must be preserved. He was apprehended, tried by court-martial, sentenced to be shot, and was awaiting the day before his execution in his tent.

Meanwhile the patient President, Abraham Lincoln, had heard about it, and, as Private William Scott tells of it, he was surprised to see a great tall man standing before him in his tent. "I knew him," William Scott said, "because of the medal of him that I wore. He was so kind. I never had talked with a great man before, but he was so kind he did not frighten me. He began to ask all about me, about the school I had gone to, about the farm, about my mother. I was very glad I had a picture of my mother in my blouse, and I drew it out and handed it to him, and he looked at it and said to me: 'You ought to be very thankful you have a mother, and you ought never to do anything which would bring the blush of shame to her cheek.'"

Says Private William Scott: "I did not understand why he should be talking to me so when I knew I was to be shot to-morrow, and had made up my mind to ask him if he wouldn't just grant me the privilege of not being shot by the boys of my own regiment. I couldn't stand that. Just as I was going to ask him he stood up before me and said, 'William Scott, stand up!' And I stood up, and he put his hands on my shoulder and he said, William Scott, I have heard all about you. I don't believe you are a bad soldier. I believe you meant to do your very best. I am not going to have you shot. I am going to send you back to your ranks. But now, William Scott, who is going to pay my bill?'"

And William Scott said: "Mr. Lincoln, I am very much obliged to you; I am taken all aback. I don't know but we can manage to pay you if it isn't more than $500 or $600. There is the mortgage on the farm; there is the bounty money in the bank, and I think the boys will chip in on pay-day and help you out."

Said Lincoln: "William Scott, there is only one man who can pay my bill, and that man is William Scott. If from this time forward you are the soldier that you ought to be; if you are true to the old flag, and if at last I should be present when you died and you could say to me, 'Mr. Lincoln, I have kept this promise utterly,' then, William Scott, you would have paid my bill."

Thenceforward there never was such a soldier as William Scott. No man so obedient, no man so ready for difficult duty, no man so faithful. He refused promotion. There were the terrible battles of the Wilderness, and he performed deeds of valor. Officer after officer, wounded to the death, he carried to the rear and forced himself again to the front. He was struck with a great shot and torn all to pieces, and they bore him back. The battle was done, and his comrades gathered round him, and William Scott said: "Boys, I think you can say to my mother I tried to do my duty. Boys, I have fought my last battle; and, boys, if any of you should ever see Mr. Lincoln, won't you tell him that I was true to the promise I made in the tent when he gave me the privilege of dying on the battlefield like a soldier, and not being shot to death like a dog. Won't you tell him I was true?" And he crossed his hands on his breast and a bright smile overspread his face and he said, 'Good-bye, boys," and it was all over.

Now, I am sure it is perfectly easy to see how this personal relation established thus between William Scott and President Lincoln marshalled and intensified every patriotic principle and impulse in him. I am perfectly sure you can plainly see how this personal relation, thus established between William Scott and President Lincoln, made his service of patriotism but the more anxiously painstaking and the more accurately punctilious.

And now, this is precisely the way in which our Christianity acts; and this is the meaning of its once exacting and yet joyful empire. Undermost, topmost, foremost, it is a personal relation.

What is your fundamental definition of Christianity? Devotion to a creed? No; not that primarily. Devotion to rights? Not that primarily. Devotion to a church? No; not that primarily. Devotion to the Bible? No; not even that primarily. What is your fundamental definition of Christianity? Devotion to the person. Personal loyalty to the personal Christ; that is Christianity. The Christ whom the Bible discloses, the Christ whom the church owns as its head, the Christ whom right symbolizes, the Christ who is the heart and centre of its creed—Him, our Lord Jesus Christ, who when we were in darkness came with the granitic certainties of His replies to our quivering and anxious question. Who, when not Socrates nor Plato, nor Confucius, nor any one of the great teachers was able to be set before us the ideal and the exemplification of the perfect life, Himself came to stand before us and to say, "I am the way and the truth and the life." Our Christ, who when we were under the doom of sin and manacled by its slavery, by His cross, and then by His death, and by His glorious resurrection and ascension, and by the giving of the Holy Ghost, made us free.

The fundamental Christian is the man who has personal loyalty to the personal Christ, and therefore, to this Christ fidelity; and fidelity about everything, and fidelity about church joining. This is the undermost principle of Christian Endeavor—fidelity to the local church and to the particular denomination to which you belong; because fidelity here means fidelity to Him.—*Watchman.*

Man has a claim on God, a divine claim for any pain, want, disappointment or misery that will help to make him what he ought to be. He has a claim to be punished, and to be spared not one pang that may urge him toward repentance; yes, he has a claim to be compelled to repent; to be hedged in on every side, to have one after another of the strong, sharp-toothed sheepdogs of the Great Shepherd sent after him, to thwart him in any desire, foil him in any plan, frustrate him of any hope, until he comes to see at length that nothing will ease his pain, nothing make life a thing worth having, but the presence of the living God within him; that nothing is good but the will of God; nothing noble enough for the desire of the heart of man but oneness with the Eternal. For this God must make him yield his very being, that He Himself may enter in and dwell with him.—George Macdonald.

* * *

I can conceive no dying hour more awful than that of one who has aspired to *know* instead of to *love*, and finds himself at last amid a world of barren facts and lifeless theories living none and adoring nothing.—F. W. Robertson.

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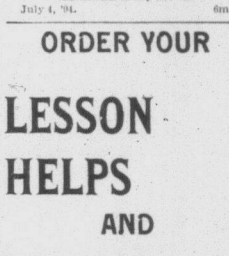

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