

Messenger and Visitor

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Spirituality.

Spirituality is not a matter of forms, or moods, or shibboleths. The man who carries a Bible under his arm, whose pockets bulge out with tracts, who breaks into pious ejaculations at the slightest provocation, who assails his fellow-citizens with religious exhortation and warning, may or may not be a spiritually minded man. Spirituality goes fathoms deeper than any of these things. It has to do with the undercurrent of a man's life. Spirituality is the conscious response of the soul to God. The carnally minded man is the man ruled by the flesh, so that his chief concern is for food, drink, clothing, riches, office, fame, or whatsoever things promise to condition him for greatest material comfort. The spiritually minded man is the man ruled from above, so that his supreme concern is for righteousness, truth, love, and whatsoever things of the Spirit promise most for life in the fellowship and favor of God. To be spiritually minded is to be impregnated with God, as the sea is impregnated with salt. From the vast fulness of the ocean you cannot dip a single drop without the saline flavor. From the life of a spiritually minded man you cannot select a single day which does not taste of God. A regard for God pervades his activities. It runs in all his tides of feeling, flows in all his currents of thought, flashes in all the foam of his pleasures, glistens in all the spray of his mirth. He may not frequently lift up his voice in religious assemblies; he may never learn to talk through his nose in pious platitudes; but wherever you find him, on street or wharf, in workshop or counting-house, in home or sanctuary, if he responds to God, is dominated by God, is pervaded by a regard for God, he is genuinely and profoundly spiritual.

Spirituality is not a vain thing for man because it is his life. "To be spiritually minded is life." And this is the supreme gift of God to man. Christ came that we "may have life and may have it more abundantly." "In him was life and the life was the light of men." "He that hath the Son hath life." Jesus Christ is the mediating organ of spiritual life for the race. He is the true vine-stock bringing us into correspondence with all the life-feeding elements of the universe. Apart from him we are as branches severed from the vine, lying withered and dead upon the ground.

Thus through Christ the deepest yearnings of the human heart are met. For,

'Tis life of which our nerves are scant,
'Tis life, not death, for which we pant,
More life and fuller that we want.

Every man should covet for himself the abundant life. He need not feel dwarfed or dissatisfied by viewing his neighbor's larger possessions, but he should find himself stirred by a noble discontent whenever he meets a man with a larger, richer, fuller life than he.

Spirituality is also the condition of peace. To be spiritually minded is life and peace. It is peace because it is life. Vitality is the secret of repose everywhere. The full stream runs with noiseless current. It is the shallow brook that brawls and brables. A low physical vitality means constant restlessness and sense of weariness. More life would still the throbbing nerves. The same principle holds in the spiritual realm. The life-full soul is the peaceful soul. Spiritual vitalities impart a strength, a calmness, a poise, a satisfaction which stay the soul. By the great facts of human sin and a divine redemption we are called to "the strenuous life." But a strenuous life need not be a strained or starved life. The output of thought and sym-

pathy need not bring the sense of exhaustion and emptiness. If our springs are in God and we go to our tasks with a full-fed spiritual life, we shall do our work with growing strength and ease.

Many methods have been tried for the attainment of spirituality. From time immemorial the ascetic method has been in vogue. The priests of Baal, the Franciscan friars, the oriental fakiers all represent this thought. There was a touch of asceticism about the Puritan. Spirituality was supposed to look askance at youth and strength and beauty, and to gravitate toward ugliness, feebleness and old age. The element of truth in the ascetic idea is the recognition of the necessity of subordinating the physical to the spiritual. Its error lies in supposing that subordination to the spirit can be brought about by the mutilation of the body. It is not by de-vitalizing the body but re-vitalizing the Spirit that the end we seek is to be reached.

The aesthetic method has also been advised. Music, poetry and art have been recommended as the spiritualizers of mankind. Doubtless they are of value in working refinement of thought and delicacy of feeling, but they cannot achieve the spiritual mind. They substitute beauty as the end in view in place of virtue. They exchange conscience for taste. They take no thought of the sinfulness of sin but only of its grossness. They leave God out. Aestheticism, weighed in the balance of history has been found wanting. Greece rotted under it and so did Rome, and the Italy of Leo 10th, and the France of Louis 14th, and the England of Charles the 2nd. The artistic temperament is not the spiritual mind. We have all known men and women, full of poetry and music who were yet the bond-servants of the flesh.

Another method pressing to the front in these days, may be styled the anaesthetic method. Christian Science, falsely so called, proposes to administer an anaesthetic that will bring the spiritual into ascendancy by putting the material out of consciousness. It is the ostrich method of evading the huntsman by hiding the head in the sand. The attempt to achieve spirituality by the denial of materiality is mischievous and absurd.

There is no other way of achieving spirituality but the good old gospel way. Jesus Christ is Lord of the spiritual realm. All its potencies centre in Him. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes us free from the law of sin and of death. "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Spirituality is the fruit of Christ's indwelling.

Thou of life the fountain art,
Freely let me take of Thee.
Spring Thou up within my heart,
Rise to all eternity.

J. D. F.

McMaster University.

The Baptist schools in Toronto have entered upon the work of the year under favorable conditions and with highly encouraging prospects. McMaster and Moulton are institutions of which the denomination may well be proud. They are doing for the Baptists of Ontario a work quite similar to that which our schools at Wolfville are doing for our people of the Maritime Provinces, and their influence for good is incalculable. It was the writer's privilege to spend a couple of hours one day last week at McMaster Hall, where he met Chancellor Wallace with a number of the members of the Faculty, and the students of the institution assembled at morning prayers. Chancellor Wallace and two of his coadjutors—Dr. Welton and Dr. Goodspeed—are Maritime men, well and most favorably known to many readers of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR. The impression made on the writer by the other members of the Faculty, most of whom he met for the first time, was also most favorable. Judging not from this casual meeting only, but from all reports, he is inclined to believe that the McMaster Faculty is one of exceptional strength. The University has recently lost an able man from its Faculty in the resignation of Dr. A. H. Newman, the Professor in Church History, but it is felt that the acquisition made in his successor, Dr. Cross, is of such a character that the teaching strength of the Faculty has been in no respect diminished. McMaster Hall is a fine building and its appointments

impress the visitor most favorably. Its class rooms are light and cheerful, and the students who have residence in the building must find themselves in very pleasant and comfortable quarters. There is however at present room for scarcely half of the two hundred students in attendance. An inspection of the building from top to bottom, including the dining room and cuisine, gave the impression of excellent system well administered. The Chancellor and the Professors speak highly of the students, as embodying a high average of ability and earnestness, and the graduates of McMaster stand high in the competition with those of other colleges. As at Acadia, there is among the students a good sprinkling of young women who are quite able to hold their own in competition with the young men. An important addition is now being made to McMaster's plant in a new building connected with McMaster Hall at its eastern end. The lower part of the building will afford a fire-proof library and the upper part a chapel. In size these rooms will amply meet the present and prospective needs of the University, and will form a most important addition to its equipment. It had been hoped that the new building would be ready for occupation at the beginning of the college year, but unavoidable delays will prevent its completion before Christmas. The very considerable outlay which the new building involves has made an appeal to the constituencies of McMaster necessary, and Chancellor Wallace reports that he has found a general willingness to respond to his appeal. McMaster will however soon need still more roomy quarters, and among the things which the chancellor forecasts is a large building adjoining McMaster Hall on the west and forming with the present buildings a half quadrangle.

S. McC. B.

Moulton College.

Moulton College is the Baptist Ladies' School of Toronto. It is at present presided over by Mrs. Wells, widow of the late Dr. J. E. Wells, so well known as an educationalist and journalist. Besides being an educationalist of recognized ability, Mrs. Wells is a lady whose culture, refinement and attractive personality appear to confer special fitness for her present position. The building of Moulton College was originally the residence of Senator McMaster, and was donated to the denomination for the purpose to which it is now being devoted. An addition to the building was made to meet the needs of the school. Both McMaster and Moulton are situated on Bloor street in the northern part of the city and within about half a mile of each other. The frescos and other wall and ceiling decorations of the McMaster mansion are said to have cost \$10,000. These elegantly finished rooms are now the parlors, reception room, chapel etc., of the College. Mrs. Wells is supported by a large staff of teachers, and, judging not only from a casual meeting but from what the writer has been told of the school by those who are acquainted with its work, it may be concluded that the staff is a highly efficient one. More than ninety students are enrolled this year in the college, besides some who come in for lessons in music or other special subjects. McMaster has the advantage of having its musical department under the superintendency of Professor Vogt, who has a standing, it is said, second to none in his profession in the city. Professor Vogt is a Baptist. The students impress one as being a bright and intelligent class of young ladies, who are happy in their surroundings and are not failing to make good use of the excellent opportunities which the school affords. Moulton is under the same Board of Management as McMaster, and Chancellor Wallace exercises a paternal oversight on its behalf. A visit to these schools has strongly confirmed the writer in the conviction that they are doing very important service in the cause of Christian education, and that the Baptists of Ontario have every reason to be proud of them and grateful for them.

S. McC. B.

Editorial Notes.

—We had intended the article signed T. T. for our editorial page this week, but owing to a misunderstanding it appears elsewhere. Let no one overlook it!

—The thanks of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR are due to a journalistic friend of this city for the greater part of the excellent paragraphs upon current events which have appeared upon our first page of late.

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