

The Quiet Hour.

Paul and Apollos.

S. S. Lesson, Mar. 1; Acts 18: 24 to 29:6.

Golden Text:—Luke 11: 13. If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?

BY REV. JAMES W. FALCONER, B.D., HALIFAX, N.S.

Apollos, v. 24. The gospel of Jesus Christ has from the beginning shown its power to attract men of diverse natures and nationalities. The divine Founder of our holy religion said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me," John 12: 32. There is no class or country which does not need Christ, or which cannot accept Him. Men find Him in various ways, but they all find in Him just the Saviour they need.

Eloquent, v. 24. Orators have been produced by other causes, but the gospel of Christ has created more great speakers than any other agency. It is so great a theme that it might almost make the dumb to speak. The love of God to the world in Christ is enough to put fire into the coldest voice, and to loosen all the hidden feeling that lurks in human nature. Eloquence is a gift worthy of cultivation, and exercises great sway over the hearts of men. The gospel relies largely for its increase upon persuasion by the spoken Word. The mightiest human means of spreading the kingdom of God is the speaking forth of God's salvation by His ambassadors in the most impressive way. Let it be remembered, however, that the saving power lies in the gospel itself, and will show itself even when the message is spoken by the stammering lips of the untrained man, as well as when uttered by a master of oratory.

Mighty in the scriptures, v. 24. The food of the word of God is very strong and makes giants. When the teaching of the Bible is not only stored up in our memory, but worked into the very fibre of our thinking and feeling, we shall be clothed in armor which the fiery darts of temptation cannot pierce, and have in our hands a sword before which the hosts of evil will be put to flight.

Fervent in spirit, v. 24. A train of freight cars, if it be started down an incline, will go of itself, till it reaches the bottom. But it requires an engine with a full head of steam to draw it to the top again. It is easy to work, so long as nothing opposes us and things go smoothly. It is a great thing to be able to speak well, but a far greater thing to face a hard task with cheerful courage and dauntless determination.

Expounded unto him, v. 26. It is safe to say that there is no one from whom we cannot learn something. We may know a great deal more about most things than our companions, but there is sure to be something about which they are better informed than we. Pride in our own learning and contempt for the ignorance of others are alike foolish, because they shut the door in the face of those who can increase our knowledge. The treasures of knowledge are open to all, and if another had made a discovery hidden from us, we should be ready to learn from him.

Mightily convinced the Jews, v. 28. The storm at sea shows whether or not the sailor has learned his trade. The battle is the occasion for putting into practice the lessons

learned on the parade ground, and the soldier who has slighted his drill will then make a poor appearance. It is those who have been thoroughly trained in the use of the scriptures, who will walk in the right path while others go astray, and be able to drive back the temptations which attack them.

Shewing by the scriptures, v. 28. Men have often supposed that they had discovered gold or silver, until it has been brought to the assayer, whose test has shown it to be some metal of far less worth. The scriptures supply a sure test of our opinions and actions. If these agree with the teachings of the sacred book, they are pure gold. But, if they are contrary to its teachings, they are but base and worthless metal.

Apollos Paul, v. 1. The great Builder has a place in his work of building the spiritual temple for laborers of varied characters and abilities. The task in which one has failed may be taken up by another and carried through successfully. The one who has failed should not be jealous of the one who succeeds. So long as both are faithful, they will equally enjoy the smile of the Master.

Have ye received the Holy Ghost? v. 2. If we have received the Holy Ghost, the fact cannot be hid. The fruit of the Spirit will be seen in our lives. The list is given in Gal 5: 22, 23. These fruits we cannot have, unless the Holy Ghost is dwelling in our hearts. The apple is the outgrowth of the life in the tree. So the Christian virtues are the product of the life giving Spirit.

FOR DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN.

Bible Study: The Whole Chapter this Time.

Isaiah 55 as a Prophetic Photograph; Paper XI.

BY ANNA ROSS.

Prayer at the beginning. "Open Thine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law."

Some of us have been studying together this wonderful chapter in detail. It remains for us to stand back, and try to get a view of it as a whole. Leonard de Vinci's painting of the Last Supper may with profit be studied in detail—each figure examined, even the special attitude of each hand depicted may be considered—but no one can grasp the real purpose of the painter until he steps back far enough to take in the picture as a whole, and the relation of the different figures to each other.

There is to be found in God's word a remarkable series of prophetic photographs, thrown in bold outline, which agree so perfectly in those outlines, that this conclusion is irresistible. These photographs all mirror forth one and the same subject. The 55th chapter of Isaiah is one of these.

There are usually four distinct features in these prophetic pictures, though sometimes only three appear plainly. These four are: 1st. The King or Conqueror. 2nd. The weapon He uses. 3rd. His army. 4th. The results. In this 55th of Isaiah, all four are magnificently visible.

Verses 4 and 5 give the King. 1st. As God's Witness to the people. 2nd. As His Leader and Commander for the people. 3rd. As His Conqueror, with the nations who had not known Him "running unto Him."

Verses 10 and 11 give the King's weapon—the word of His mouth, the sword of the spirit. But the word in this chapter is not compared to a sword, an instrument of destruction, but to the rain, as an instrument of benediction. Still, it is the word of His mouth that is the King's weapon in each of the pictures, the instrument by means of which the pictured results are wrought.

Verse 12 addresses the army—not this time an army of soldiers for the destruction of evil, but a company of preachers led forth to publish with Divine power the King's word of glad tidings.

Verses 5, 12 and 13 give the results, in nations, not merely individuals running to the King: in the mountains of difficulty breaking forth into singing, and the forests of population clapping their hands; and in the thorns turned into fir trees and the briars into myrtle trees.

The thoughtful student of the Bible, who believes that God's promises are never larger than His performances, may well ask if this prophetic photograph has ever had its counterpart in reality.

Looking at the history of the Gospel either past or present, it is impossible to point anywhere to "nations running unto Him." Individuals, many of them, sometimes multitudes of them; but not even Scotland at her best times could be said as a nation to have started on that blessed "run" unto Jesus Christ. Germany, at the time of the Reformation, was moved to its depths, but she, at her best, was still the "company of two armies." So was Switzerland, and even Geneva, though so full of the Gospel, could never be said to be more.

Individual thorns have been turned into noble fir trees, even groups of them have risen heavenward, to be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." But never yet in any land have "all the trees of the fields clapped their hands" around God's messenger, under the transforming power of the mysterious word coming down upon them like rain from heaven.

But these things shall all be fulfilled. God's performances shall outdo His promises, not fall behind them. "The earth shall be covered with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

Isa. 40: 5. Study the three verses that follow, that promise, and see whether God means that there should be a shadow of a doubt as to the fulfilment of the same.

The millenium, which shall be ushered in 1st. By Christ's people believing these things, 2nd. By their boldly and persistently claiming them, and 3rd. By the zeal of the Lord of hosts gloriously fulfilling them—that millenium shall come, is coming, is perhaps even now nearer than many people think. The rapidly growing Prayer Circle for world wide revival is a sign of the times that means much.

The next few papers of this series will take up some of these prophetic photographs of coming victory. Looking carefully at these varied and repeated pictures of the same great subject, drawn by no human pen or pencil, but by the Light that makes no mistake, we may attain to clearer ideas of what this climax of the world's history is to be and how it is to come.

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Ingratitude is a late frost in an orchard of pleasant fruits.