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Dawn.

BY P. M'ARTHUR.

Awake! Arise! and with the birds
We'll revel through the royal hours
Ere yet the robber sun has filched
The diamond doudrops from the flowers.

Brooklyn, N.Y.

Christ Crucified.

IT is the fashion just now to exalt the preaching of Christ; it is the custom to ignore Christ crucified. These wedded themes, inseparable in Gospel and Epistle, are divorced in the pulpit. And the revolution is carried on so silently, if not so unconsciously, that few even of those engaged in effecting it, realize how rapidly and how far the change has already proceeded.

Under the cover of loyalty to Christ the mission and purpose of the Messiah are obscured. That would be a strange biography of Abraham Lincoln which did not begin with some account of slavery; that would be a poor "life" of Christopher Columbus which made no mention of the new world discovered. It is hardly to preach Christ to tell the story of the birth at Bethlehem, and the miracle of the wine at Cana, and to leave man still in ignorance of the events which called the Prince of Glory down from heaven, and of the events which followed as legitimate results His death upon the cross. There are a thousand silver-tongued orators in the pulpit who can picture with sympathetic skill the great Teacher amid the lilies of Galilee, the dear Friend with children in his arms, but what means this Son of God upon the cross the world has never heard from their lips.

This might not be strange if the death of Jesus Christ were like the death of most men, an accident or vicissitude of fortune. In fact there are few things less characteristic of life than its usual close. It seems at times a part of that strange reversal of expectation which we call the irony of fate that gives to the hero an insignificant close of life and to the little soul a grand occasion. The conqueror of vast nations dies of a surfeit in his tent; and the greatest genius of the world of letters, from a pot of beer. A powerful senator is caught in a snow-squall, takes cold, and disappears, as if no more potent to resist the forces of nature than a girl; and a president of fifty millions of people falls beneath the senseless rage of a lunatic or a fool.

So far as the physical characteristics of Christ's death were concerned His death was no exception to this common rule. He did not die upon the field of glorious battle and win for Himself the pageant of a lordly sepulture. With reverence we may say it, there was nothing in the circumstances of His death themselves to place Him so high as Leonidas, or Winkleried, or our own brothers who fell supremely great at Gettysburg. If there were nothing to be told of Golgotha but the story of wagging heads and final cry, if nothing to be shown upon Calvary but the bloody nail and gory spear, better that we should pass it in silence and "preach Christ," but not "Him crucified."

Yet who can be blind to the fact that it was His death rather than His life which Jesus exalted? It was His being "lifted up" which should draw all men unto Him, not His

sweet discourse upon the slopes of Galilean hills, not His loving words by the table of His host, not His radiant glory in the holy mount when messengers returned from heaven held converse with Him amid radiant clouds. He of all the untold millions of the earth alone came to this sphere to die. We accept it as a penalty, He chose it as an end; and he said, "For this purpose came I unto this hour." That pulpit which does not present Christ crucified can not preach Christ.

Much of the popular Christology, therefore, is so faulty as to appear insincere. The characteristics of any man are not his sentiments, emotions and temperament; they are his aims, purposes and accomplished intents. It would be possible to write a biography of Abraham Lincoln which should be only a new jest book; or of General Grant which should only be a new manual of arms, but the life of each was centered in the unity of the nation and the liberties of man. The purpose of Jesus Christ was not simply to teach a higher code of ethics or to reveal more clearly the divine life in the soul, but to "save His people from their sins." It is something to have set before us the ideal of a great artist wrought in imperishable marble, but it is more to have the sentence of death within ourselves arrested, and to experience that new birth which is the guaranty of an immortal life.

It can never be forgotten, without a dismemberment of the living Gospel, that Jesus Christ "laid down" His own life. No man had power to take it from Him. He offered it because it was for this purpose He came into the world. His death was as diverse from ours as His life was superior to ours. It was not an accident of fortune but the completion of His priestly office. His self-surrender to His foes was not suicide, but sacrifice. To say that He lived our complete exemplar is to tell out one-half the story; He died as one who came "to make atonement for the sins of the people." It is not before the completion of that sacrificial work, as St Paul says, but after it that "being reconciled to God by the death of His Son, we shall be saved by His life." To preach Christ is to preach a perfect code of morals; to preach Christ crucified is to preach a perfect salvation from sin.

Accordingly we find in the Word that it is not the perfection of His obedience, but the acceptance of His offering which is made the basis of His heavenly intercession. It is this which is made the promise of that grand chapter in Hebrews when we are told that "now once in the end of the world hath He appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself;" and therefore He has entered "into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." It is not the cradle of Bethlehem but the cross of Calvary which gives Him His standing as our Advocate before the throne.

Let no one, therefore, think that he is "preaching Christ" who is not preaching as Paul did, "Christ and Him crucified." Up to the hour when Jesus went forth from the judgment hall bearing His cross, His life is indeed a sweet and moving story; but from that moment on it becomes "the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."—Interior.