

Pastor and People.

CROSSING THE BAR.

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me,
And may there be no moaning of the bar
When I put out to sea.

But such a tide as moving seems asleep—
Too full for sound or foam—
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark,
And may there be no sadness of farewell
When I embark—

For though from out our bourne of time and
place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to meet my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar.

—Tennyson.

KEY-WORDS OF THE APOSTLE JOHN.

BY REV. W. G. JORDAN, B.A.

The Apostle John has been called the "theologian" or the "divine." Some may think that the name may be more appropriately applied to Paul, the first and one of the greatest of Christian theologians; but without discussing now the work of Paul, we may venture to say that "the disciple whom Jesus loved" is also a teacher of the first rank. Though he was gentle he was not effeminate; he had an intense hatred of error, and a fervent zeal for the pure truth of God. He was not argumentative in the common sense of that word, and he could not be fairly represented as a builder of systems or creator of creeds. He broods over the deepest truths of revelation and has a keen feeling for the spiritual power and eternal influence of the gospel. The writings of John are for children and for philosophers, or in other words they present the gospel in terms which suit either the simplest faith or the loftiest thought. Truths which are not to be proved in any small technical fashion or fully explained by finite thought he expresses in short striking sentences. Although he does not aim at forming a little system of his own, there is an orderliness in his statements because he is ever seeking the highest truth which comes from the one God, and reveals the one eternal life. The teaching which expresses the life-thought of a great man—his view of God, Christ, and humanity—cannot be put into a few words. But every teacher and preacher of any original power has favorite words which indicate the type and trend of his thought.

Some men spend their lives fighting over small words; narrow, sectarian symbols or party words. Note then how much of this apostle's thought is gathered round the two words "light" and "love." These are sample words—we do not ask for a definition of them,—and yet who can fathom them? We do not go to the dictionary for their explanation but out into the great world of nature and of life, and down deep into our own souls. John has preserved for us the Master's great statement "God is a Spirit," and whether he is arranging the facts of the life of Christ or formulating his own teaching, he is always thinking of the eternal spirit manifested in the realm of light and love. We are inclined to say that light is a natural force and love a spiritual force, but these little divisions of ours tend to break down either in the presence of a strong faith or a subtle thoughtfulness. "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness has shined in our hearts," says Paul in a chapter which, while it dwells upon the present contrasts between the inward and outward life, looks forward to a real and abiding unity. The light of truth and purity, and the love which rejoices in the giving of self, this is the eternal life that we need; this is the power which through Christ must bind our little lives to their real home in God.

(1) God.—God is love. God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. This is the central point of faith. We may not be able to solve all the mysteries of life, and place these statements at the end of a perfectly reasoned system of thought, but this is the alpha and omega of Christian faith; that God is light and God is love.

(2) The Christ.—In Him was light and the light was the life of men. In the presence of the poor blind man He declares Himself to be the light of the world. To His own disciples He says: Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are My friends if ye do whatsoever I command you. He who lives the lowliest life manifests in human words and deeds the light and love of God.

(3) Man.—But the end of this is that we may be raised to the same sphere. It is in His school that we learn in the deepest, widest and purest sense to love. We love because He first loved us, and it is the destiny of the trusting, loving soul to walk in the light. So out of light and love is built up for us the ladder that unites earth and heaven, and the angels of God ascend and descend upon the Son of Man.

Strathroy.

METHODS OF QUARTERLY REVIEWS OF SABBATH-SCHOOL LESSONS.—III.

The day for the quarterly review of lessons in the Sabbath school is one which gives constant anxiety to the officers and teachers of the school. To know how best to spend the time allotted to the lessons is a very puzzling inquiry. If the review be not well done, the time may not be spent in either an interesting or profitable way. If it be effectively conducted, this exercise may be made the very best lesson hour of the whole quarter. We venture to offer a few suggestions.

First of all, the aim of the review should be, not to simply repeat the substance of the lessons in order, as they were gone over Sabbath by Sabbath. The time is too short to make this of very much service. If the work has been well done in the different classes during the quarter, the main facts of the lessons will be in the minds of most of the scholars. The aim of the review should be, as far as possible, to bind the lessons together into unity according to some plan or principle which may enable the person conducting the review to set the lessons in new and pertinent relations, and thus bring out in a fresh and interesting way the deeper teaching of the lessons. Leading ideas and salient points alone need be seized upon.

As to the plan to be followed, it may be well not to follow any single plan regularly. There are three plans, any one of which may be adopted.

First. The classes may pursue the review of the lessons throughout under their teachers. This plan preserves the usual order of the school exercises, and each class, with its teacher, devotes the time given to lesson study to the work of review. According to this method, each teacher is free to pursue the review in any way deemed best. This plan has the advantage of enlisting all the teachers in the work, so that no one of them is tempted to take a day off when the review day comes round. This also enables the review exercise to be adapted to the various grades in the school in any easy, natural way, and to fix the golden texts in memory.

Secondly. The lessons may be divided into three or four groups, and one group of three or four lessons assigned to each of those who are selected to conduct the review. In order to secure unity of treatment, those who undertake the review according to this plan should confer together and go over the lessons beforehand, so as to secure the best results. Then during the review each one entrusted with the treatment of a group of lessons should occupy only a given time, say ten minutes, so that

the whole scheme of lessons may be gone over. A hymn sung between each group will add to the interest of the exercise. This plan has many things in its favor. It gives variety, it shares the work among a larger number of workers, it gives to each scholar some new aspect of the lessons, and serves as a good training for all who take part in it.

The third plan is for the pastor, superintendent, or any efficient teacher to take the whole burden of the review, and, with the main body of the school before him, conduct the review according to some well digested and carefully conducted plan. This secures the most complete unity in the work, and if efficiently done may prove helpful, but it lays the whole burden upon one, and this burden should be shared in turn by the leaders of the school. It is well to have a hymn sung about the middle of the exercise to give relief and variety.

In connection with these plans which may be adopted from time to time to give variety, a few additional suggestions may be made.

All the teachers should be careful to be present on review day. If they are absent it is likely that the scholars will follow their example. The pastor should look in upon the school as often as possible, and be present on review day regularly if he can.

Special preparations should be made for the review exercises. Such exercises fail more frequently from lack of careful, painstaking preparation than from any other reason. The general preparation given the lessons during the quarter is not enough. Special preparation, and much time and prayerful study must be put upon the exercise in order to make it helpful. Beaten oil is needed here as in the pulpit.

It will generally be best for the Bible Class and the infant class to pursue the review by themselves according to any of the plans suggested. It is almost impossible to make the same review equally useful to these extremes of the school. But the main body of the other classes may be thrown together for the review, and teachers and classes all unite heartily in it.

Lastly, the review should not be merely a kind of a lecture, but should be interspersed by pointed questions asked of the school. In this way the greater interest will be elicited, and the person reviewing will know how far he is carrying the school with him. By careful thought, patient labor, and earnest prayer the review exercise may be made the crowning day of all the quarter.—*Rev. Francis R. Beattie in Christian Observer.*

DEAN FARRAR ON PREACHING.

"My severest critic," says Dean Farrar, "could hardly rank me lower as a preacher than I rank myself. My conception of what a preacher should be is so high, and my consciousness of the immensity by which I fall short of that ideal is so keen that I never had the faintest tendency to vanity on that subject. What should the preacher be? He should stand, as it were, upon a watchtower, like the Hebrew prophets of old, and sway the destinies of nations, breaking down and building up; he should be like a heavenly archer and hurl into the dark heart his arrows of lightning. He should be in his measure a statesman, and sometimes like Phocion, or like Hannibal after Zama, or like Thiers after Sedan, he should fire despairing nations with constancy and hope; sometimes, like Oatham or Pitt, he should teach them to be of good cheer and hurl defiance at their foes. He should be the enemy of the oppressor, the champion of the oppressed. Like Isaiah and Savonarola, he should make guilty cities tremble in the midst of their sensual festivities. Like the Lord and Master, he should be as dew to the scorched wilderness; he should undo the heavy burden and let the oppressed go free; he should always 'smite the hoary head' of inveterate abuse, but never break the bruised reed or quench the smoking flax. What largeness of sympathy, what

tenderness of compassion, what keenness of insight, what dauntless courage does he require? How must he be prepared to sacrifice everything to conscience and to truth; to confront the clinched antagonism of immoral and exasperated interests; to face the banded conspiracies of the world, and to denounce the agreements with death and the covenants with hell when he sees the Church walking amicably arm-in-arm with the flesh and the devil."

LOVE UNTO DEATH.

Professor Henry Drummond has been conducting a series of revival meetings in Edinburgh University. On one occasion he touched his audience deeply by the following anecdote reported by the *London Christian*:

"Some years ago, in the University, there was a fine, manly fellow, a medical student, a very Hercules in strength, but as gentle and loveable as he was strong. He was immensely popular, the captain of the foot-ball club, and not a cricket match was considered complete without him. He was a man of good intellectual gifts as well. He caught typhoid fever while attending the Royal Infirmary, and soon he lay dying in a private ward. One of the house physicians, an earnest Christian and successful soul-winner, spoke to him about God and eternity. The dear fellow listened, became anxious, and eagerly heard the story of redeeming love.

"Will you give yourself to Jesus?" asked the doctor.

"He did not answer for a space, and then earnestly regarding the man of God he said, 'But don't you think it would be awfully mean just to make it up now, at my last gasp, with One I have rejected all my life?'

"Yes it would be mean; but, dear fellow, it would be far meaner not to do it. He wants you to do it now, for He has made you willing, and it would be doubly mean to reject a love that is pursuing you even to death."

"The dying man saw the point, and apprehending the excess of that exceeding love, he launched his soul into the ocean of it."

WORTH KEEPING.

These "keep texts" are all in the Bible. Find them and learn them, and so make them yours.

"Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

"Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile."

"Keep thee far from a false matter."

"He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life."

"Take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently."

"Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

"My son, keep thy father's commandments."

"My son, keep sound wisdom and discretion."

The suggestion that I had sought to Anglicize the army in the United States is at once a falsehood and a calumny. You who have heard me plead the claims of the lost world know it is. You have stood with me near the cross, and you know that under the shadow of that tree I have pledged you to devote your lives to no less a purpose than that for which the bleeding victim died—the salvation of every nation.—*General Booth.*

Flippancy or even familiarity, is not fitting in the presence of the King of kings and Lord of lords. Our ministers do not forget that public prayer is "common"; that they voice the feelings and aspirations, the sorrows and joys of their people. They stand between the people and the prayer-hearing God. This makes flippancy, levity, or mere monologue forever impossible to the faithful minister.—*Presbyterian Witness.*