

SUNDAY AFTERNOON ADDRESSES.

On Sunday, Feb. 11th, the Rev. Thomas C. Hall, of Chicago, gave the first of the series arranged by the students. Convocation Hall, both in the gallery and on the floor, was packed by an intensely interested congregation. Below we give a short and we fear very inadequate synopsis of the sermon.

FAITH AND REASON IN RELIGION.

Every man has a Faith by which he lives, though perhaps no one man's Faith reduced to its elements would exactly correspond with that of another. When speaking of Christian Faith it is highly desirable to discover what Christ meant when he used the term, Faith. In the synoptic gospels the word never means a system of Truth. The Faith He commends is simply an attitude of life towards Him. The Samaritan woman knew little of Messianic hope, of Christ's teaching, of Christ's mission, yet her Faith was great.

Church history reveals how sadly Christ's view of Faith degraded into "a system of Faith." Christ's mission was the reconciliation of hostile, or indifferent, men and women, to God, so naturally it happened that "conduct" was first changed. The early church sought to identify the Christian Faith with rules of moral conduct.

But a second degradation happened when Faith came into connection with Gentile Philosophy. Pious souls gifted with more or less rationalizing power sought to identify Christian Faith with a set of metaphysical propositions.

A third degradation happened when journeying westward on its world conquest, Christianity left the speculation of Greece and came to Rome. But Faith is more than conduct, more than philosophy, more than government, more than all these combined; Christ never associated it with a final code of ethics, with a final philosophy, with a final authority in government and thought.

If we are to realize the kingdom of God here on earth something else, viz., Reason, is to walk hand in hand with Faith. We are to be Christian Rationalists. The heart that has Faith in God reveals it in love, but Reason must at times mercilessly criticize Love's conduct. Faith touches our lives at every point but only as Reason is inspired and redeemed can it save the soul from extreme fanaticism and degrading superstition. In the realm of philosophy we must notice that systems are tentative. Neither that of Paul, or Augustine, or Calvin, was final. The church of to-day has no philosophy, though redeemed Reason must ever strive to find a system that will answer our soul's intellectual yearnings. It is on the basis of historical research and reverent criticism that redeemed Reason must meet antagonists. But we need never despair. Faith is ever to be our guiding star, it accepts as a basis

for all life and conduct and thought a new personal relationship between the soul and God. Many things are yet wrong in conduct, in the church, in the state. On us has fallen the end of the ages, manfully we are to do our duty, strong in the strength of Christ we are never to falter. We are to labor to bring about the second incarnation of God in a church to be without spot or blemish—the holy bride of Christ.

Y. M. C. A.

On Friday, 2nd inst., the subject of "Forgiveness" was dealt with in a most practical manner by J. H. Turnbull. He pointed out that, as a rule, we receive from our fellowmen exactly what we give to them. He who is stingy, crusty, and miserable in his life and dealings, will, like Dickens' Scrooge, always find plenty to annoy him. Let him change his tactics, accost people good naturedly and treat them generously, and he will be surprised to see what a change has come over the world. We to a great extent make our own little world, and he who is always ready to forgive finds least that needs forgiveness.

In his sermon on the Mount Christ says, "Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy." He here teaches not that we must absolutely forgive others, before God will forgive us, but that if God's love and kindly dealings with a man do not awaken in him a like spirit towards his fellowmen, he is not in reality a child of God, but is still in his sins. The unmerciful servant, who had been forgiven much and would not forgive little, was cast into prison until he should pay all, and the parable ends with an impressive warning: "*So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother his trespasses.*"

One great reason why we should be willing to forgive others, is the fact that we have similar weaknesses to theirs. We ought, therefore, to sympathize with them and to be slow to condemn. We can easily conceive of a man who has never seen sin in its true light, who has never realized that he is a debtor, refusing to forgive his fellowmen, but those who profess to have been freely forgiven, by God of their great debt must surely be ready freely to forgive others.

This means giving up all desire to injure the one that has wronged us. But it also goes further, and expresses itself positively in a desire to do any kindness we can to the forgiven one, just as if he had never injured us. In this, as in other respects, Christ is our ideal, who set no limit to his willingness to forgive and to help. This forgiving, charitable spirit is the real test of a man's Christianity, for "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

The remainder of the time was occupied with one of the most profitable discussions of the session.