

SPECIAL
ARTICLES

Our Contributors

BOOK
REVIEWS

THE PREJUDICE OF COLOR.

Rev. Joseph Hamilton, Author of "Our Own and Other Worlds," "The Spirit World," Etc., Etc..

Certainly the prejudice of color is strong. No doubt it is essentially a primitive and vulgar instinct; but it is a strong instinct, even in the case of refined and educated people.

One day in San Francisco I saw a funeral procession passing along the street. I joined the procession, and when it went into the church I went in also and took a seat near the door. Then for the first time I saw that all the company were negroes. The minister, who was a negro, gave out the hymn—

"Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe on his gentle breast,
Where by his love o'ershadowed,
Sweetly my soul shall rest."

It was sung with the fervor and zest of the negro race. As it proceeded, a strange thought struck me for the first time. How could the negroes find rest on the bosom of one of quite another color? It was a natural thought, for the color prejudice is strong even when we think of Christ, we think of his color, which certainly was not the same color as these worshippers. Yet evidently, they found rest on His bosom, and in His arms.

Then suddenly another thought struck me. If Christ was not black, neither was he white. In fact He was brown; about midway between black and white. So He was really as near to the negroes, as He is to the white race. But we have no difficulty in thinking of Him as being very close to ourselves. By faith we can recline on His breast, and in His arms, and feel at home, and so can the negro. He is as near to Christ in color as we are. So there was nothing anomalous in that company's safety and joy in reclining on His gentle breast. I thought it a very happy discovery; perhaps even a discovery.

But then, another thought quickly followed. What if Christ took this central place, even as to color, of set purpose? He could then appeal more directly to the whole human race, and more naturally draw all men to himself. Yes, even as to color, the divine wisdom may have taken that central position. We can conceive that if we had come to the world as a black man, the white races would not so easily be attracted by Him, and if He had come as a very white man, the black races would not be so easily attracted. But He came as a brown man, and I hazard the conjecture that He deliberately took that color that He might be the central attraction of the world, and so draw all men to Himself.

So, whatever may be the prejudice of color, it must be overcome. And it can be overcome. Close contact, and time, and above all christian character will overcome it. I know a missionary in China who, after a short residence there wrote home to his brother that he thought he could never love the Chinese as he loved white men. After a time, however, he wrote again to say that now he loved the Chinese as well as ever he loved white men.

And I suppose negroes are worse; and perhaps because they are farther removed from white, the blacker they are, the worse we like them. It takes longer and closer contact, and more time, and higher Christian principle, to assuete with the negro. Such, at least, is my own experience.

Why do negroes look up to white men? I believe there is no natural cause for it; but there are three artificial causes. First, they have been in a condition of servitude for generations, until a crawling and cringing manner has become to them almost a second nature. Then they have less property than the whites; and account for it, as we will, we have a tendency to respect people of property. Back of all this, the whites have generally more education; and education commands respect. Of course this combination may not be present in negro's mind consciously; it is there.

I believe that color prejudice in the last analysis is unnatural. There are plenty of causes outside of color for the difference that exists. Just turn the scales, and give the negro race all the advantages of antecedents and surroundings that have been the heritage of the white man, and see if he will not look down on the white man with all the superiority and pomposity with which the white man now looks down on him.

We have to remember that we are brethren sprung from the same stock. Color is a mere incident of climate. Humanity is more than color, and love is the greatest thing in the world.

THE MASTER'S TOUCH.

"He touched her hand and the fever left her."

O, we need His touch on our fevered hands!

The cool, still touch of the Man of sorrows,
Who knows us and loves us, and understands.

So many a life is one long fever!
A fever of anxious suspense and care,
A fever of getting, a fever of fretting,
A fever of hurrying here and there.

O Lord! thou knowest us altogether,
Each heart's sore sickness, whatever it be;

Touch thou our hands! Let the fever leave us,

And so shall we minister unto thee.

MOST UNHAPPY.

The one who is incapable of happiness is the most to be pitied of mortals. It seems strange that there should be, in this beautiful world, souls so dark that neither by night nor by day is there star or sun. But there are those out of whose lives the sweetness has gone for this world, and the only joy they have is in looking forward to the day of rest in the grave. Life to them has lost its clear outlines. They are in the haze of the final twilight, and there is only the mist that follows the sunset. This is not the will of God. It is neither with his purpose nor man's mission. It is neither a tribute to this world nor a rightful preparation for the next. The sad of heart should consider again the cry of the Psalmist: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul; and why art thou disquieted in me?" Out of that shadow he lifted his eyes into the sunlight: "Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the help of my countenance, and my God."
—Selected.

In an act of forgiveness you must burn, not the arrow alone, but the bow, too; you must not only refrain from retaliation, but you must get rid of the desire to retaliate.

JESUS AND THE OLD TESTAMENT.

By Rev. R. M. Hall.

In the time of Christ the Jews possessed a body of writings which they called their sacred books. There were substantially the same that we have in the Old Testament. Christ refers to these writings at least seventy-one times, always speaking of them with great respect. In the Sermon on the Mount he corrects some things that were "said by them of old time"; but it is evident that by the term "Them of old time," he does not refer to the writers of the Old Testament. When he speaks of the writings of the Old Testament, he calls them the Scriptures, or "Moses and the prophets," or "Moses and the prophets and the psalms," or he says "it is written," or "how readest thou?" but here he says, "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time." And some of these sayings, as "Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy," are not found in the Old Testament. Doubtless he is here speaking of the precepts of the Jewish rabbies.

But when speaking of the Old Testament, Christ says that he did not come to destroy the law, or the prophets, but to fulfill their prophecies; that he to fulfill their prophecies; that the contents of these are enduring, "till heaven and earth pass one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled"; that we are to keep and to teach their commandments: "Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven." He teaches that if men will not believe the Old Testament, they would not believe the word of one who came direct from heaven. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." One would have supposed that when the Son of God came into this world bringing the full light of spiritual day, he would have eclipsed the dim light of the Old Testament, and permitted it to fade out of view; but it was not so; he continually taught from the Old Testament, and even after he had risen from the dead "he opened their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures"; and, beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

Again, Christ indorses the truth of the Old Testament. It seems as if he had indorsed the truth of those passages, especially, whose truth was most liable to be denied. Is the destruction of the world by the waters of a flood denied? He says that in the days of Noah they ate, they drank, they married wives "until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all." Is it denied that Sodom was burned with fire and brimstone? He says "The same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all." Is the story of the destruction of Lot's wife scoffed at? He says, "Remember Lot's wife." And so of the record of God's interview with Moses at the burning bush, Christ says, "Have ye not read in the book of Moses, how, in the bush God spake unto him, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?'" And he tells us that David "entered into the house of God, and did eat the shew bread, which was not lawful for him to eat, but only for the priests"; and that the queen of the south "came from the ut-