

THE WOUNDS OF CHRIST.

By Rev. J. Luther Sieber.

It is a generally accepted truth that every man carries with him the marks of his ownership. Sitting in his dungeon at Rome, the Apostle Paul saw about him the marks of ownership. The chains that bound his wrists without a cause had on them the marks of the king. The bricks of the floor had carved in them the initials of Caesar. The slaves who brought him his food had upon their foreheads the sign of the king whom they served. Musing on all these things, the scarred hero exclaims, "Let no man trouble me; for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."

As we look to the cross on which the Christ hangs we see that he bears in his body certain marks or wounds. We can not fully understand the meaning of that death nor feel the power of it in our own lives until we know what ownership these wounds of Christ signify.

—We see first of all that there is upon the head of Christ a crown of thorns, pressed so tightly upon his brow that great wounds are opened up and the blood of his brain runs down. These are the wounds which show the ownership of God's will over his. The great temptation that came to Jesus was the continual appeal of the world to abandon his tasks and fling off his filial submission to God. Physical craving for food is not sin, but the devil tempted Jesus to make bread of the stones of the desert and so refuse to depend upon God for his physical existence. To hurl yourself into danger when duty calls is the highest courage, but the devil tempted Christ to hurl himself into unnecessary danger when God did not command, a thing that is not heroic, but self-will. To have the world for his own was the great ambition of the Christ, but the devil tempted him to win it in an easier way than the "via dolorosa" of the cross. So Christ was tempted in the beginning of his life, and the temptation was ever before him until in the agonies of the garden great drops of blood stood upon his brow, and with the words "not my will but thine be done," he bowed his will to the will of his Father. This same struggle has ever raged in the hearts of men. This struggle of man's will with the will of the Infinite is what John Newman means when he writes:

"I was not ever thou, nor prayed that thou

Shouldst lead me on:

I loved to choose and see my path, but now

Lead thou me on:

I loved the garish day, and, spite of tears,

Pride ruled my will. Remember not past years."

And, again as we look to the cross we see that the hands and feet of Christ are pierced with wounds. These wounds are the marks of service. "He came not to be ministered unto but to minister." Those hands that "blessed the little children, that healed the sick, opened the eyes of the blind, made the deaf to hear, raised the dead. Those feet that tramped across the land from one swift mission of service to another. Those hands and feet show the marks of service. I stood not long since by the casket of a dear friend. The thing that drew my attention most was not her face—it was hushed in silence, but my eyes were drawn to her hands. Those hands always so busy, always so ready to help bear the burden of life, were folded at last, and they carried with them to the throne of God a great testimony, for they bore the marks of service.

And once again we see in the side of Christ a great wound. This is the wound of a broken heart, and shows the ownership of a love that "beareth all things,

believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things and never faileth." The thing that made Christ a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief was not the difficulty and hardships of life. It was because he was despised and rejected of men. That perfect purity of Christ must have been hurt by the sins of men as none else have ever been. That loving heart, yearning for the solace of an answering heart, must have felt a sharper pang of unrequited love than ever pained another. That spirit, to which the things that are seen are shadows, and the Father's house the ever present, only realities, must have felt itself parted from the men, whose portion was in this life, by a gulf wider than ever separated any other two souls that shared together human life. The more pure and lofty a nature, the keener its sensitiveness, the more exquisite its delights and the sharper its pains. The more loving and unselfish a heart the greater its longing for companionship, and the greater the aching void of loneliness. The wound in the side of Christ was a heart broken by the sinfulness and selfishness of the world, but so full of conquering love that it would not let men go, but cried out in the agonies of death: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

RAILWAYS VS. OTHER PUBLIC SERVICE CORPORATIONS.

The present business situation throws into clear relief one important difference between railways and most other public service corporations. Street railways, waterworks, lighting concerns, etc., feel more or less the effects of fluctuations in general business, but they do not suffer acutely from such changes because the number of people in a city does not decrease and the extent to which they must use street cars, water and light does not greatly diminish, even when industrial depression becomes pronounced. But railways bear such a relation to industrial and commercial enterprises of all kinds that every crop failure, every panic that shuts down factories and reduces the sales of wholesale merchants, reacts violently on traffic. The freight business of the railways of the United States has decreased enormously as compared with the corresponding period a year ago. The railway cannot, like the manufactory, reduce its operations in proportion to the decline in its business. To shut down entirely would be to sacrifice its franchises and railroad commissions and the public protest violently against reductions in service, especially passenger service, even when they are nowhere near in proportion to declines in earnings. Since railways are exposed to such violent fluctuations in business it is essential that in times of prosperity they should be permitted to earn much larger profits than most other concerns whose charges are subject to public regulation in order to make good the losses sustained in periods of depression. This consideration was advanced by transportation experts before almost every legislature and commission in the country last year as an argument against adjusting rates solely with regard to the traffic being handled at that time, but usually the argument was 'suntily dismissed with the gratuitous assurance that the country's prosperity was established on such a firm foundation that nothing could happen that would hurt the business of the carriers. Subsequent events show clearly who was right. It is to be hoped that the lesson will teach public authorities to adjust rates in future with more regard to theories formulated with a cheerful ignorance of or contempt for facts and probable developments.—*Railway Age* February 14, 1908.

SPARKS FROM OTHER ANVILS.

Presbyterian Witness: It becomes Christian people to insist more and more earnestly on holding forth the Law of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Whoever tramples on law and justice and righteousness is so far from an ally of anarchism. Whoever flings defiance or dishonor on an ordinance of God is breeding confusion.

The West-Land: The Church is facing enterprises of proportions that are inspiring and of a kind that challenge both faith and nerve. If new life is longed for, it is hardly conceivable that it could be found better than in the path of service provided by these new opportunities. It is time, perhaps, that we longed less and worked more.

Canadian Baptist: The remembrance of home with its loved ones often proves to be a saving shelter when the soul is sore pressed. Will not the influence be even greater, the aid imparted surer if with the thought of home there is always joined the memory of the open Book, the prayer of father or mother, the praise in which all voices join.

Dominion Churchman: The vocation of every man is holiness. And holiness means a great deal more than rendering unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's. We must render a perfect obedience to the law, the will of God. Many of the laws and statutes of men are opposed to the spirit and letter of God's eternal law. God's requirement is the highest. It is that we walk as the Lord Jesus Christ walked.

British Weekly: It is well that so strong and earnest a desire for union should prevail among the churches of Christ, and it is significant that nearly all, if not all, the unions that have taken place have been of much advantage to the general Christian cause. Federation is not a substitution for union, but a step toward it. True Christian union can only be effected between Christians, between those who hold that the Church is the Body of Christ, the company of believers who profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christian Guardian: Let us away forever with foolish pride, that lessens manhood and limits our development. If the world bows reverently before the altar of the golden calf, at least the church should refuse to bend. Freedom and safety alike point toward the simple life, where Poverty sits down to feast with Joy. And in the struggles of our day, as we bend our backs to the burden, let us be wise and bear our own, for in that burden will be found all of others' burdens that we can well carry; and as we carry that burden, let us follow Him whose light fails not, and whose strength and grace are still sufficient for men.

Lutheran Observer: Most of us are workers, and the hardest workers are not always those who labor with their hands. The frequency with which men who are at the head of our great commercial and industrial enterprises, or in the lead of their professions, break down in mid-career is evidence enough that there are more exhausting employments than physical labor.

Herald and Presbyter: The success of any man or of any church or of a Brotherhood or other society, depends on its persistent subordination of every other object to its chief end—the glory of God in the salvation of men.

It is announced that the King and Queen will not cruise in the Mediterranean this spring. After leaving Biarritz, the King will be joined by the Queen in Paris, and they will then proceed to Denmark and Norway. The Princess of Wales, it is said, will not accompany the Prince when he goes to Canada in July.