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# Canadian Epworth Era

A. C. CREWS, Editor.



WILLIAM BRIGGS, Publisher.

Vol. X.

TORONTO, JUNE, 1908

No. 6

## Dr. Theodore L. Cuyler

THE name of Dr. Theodore L. Cuyler, of Brooklyn, N.Y., is a familiar one in probably more Christian homes throughout the world than that of any other living man. What Charles H. Spurgeon was through his printed sermons to Christians of all denominations, Dr. Cuyler has been through his writings. They are so evangelical and spiritual in tone that no reader has ever thought of asking to what denomination he belongs. The *Northwestern Christian Advocate* furnishes the following information concerning his life work.

Dr. Cuyler was born in Aurora, N.Y., Jan. 10, 1822, and not long ago completed his 86th year. He entered Princeton College at the age of sixteen and graduated at nineteen. For eighteen months he was undecided between the law and the ministry. Upon his return from a visit to Europe one of his uncles invited him to attend an afternoon prayer service in a neighboring village, held in the parlor of a private house. He spoke for ten minutes, and when the meeting closed several persons came to him and said: "Your talk did me good." The thought flashed into his mind, "If ten minutes' talk to-day helped a few souls, why not preach all the time?" That thought decided the question of his future lifework.

The three years from 1843 to 1846 he spent at Princeton Theological Seminary. The day he received his diploma he left for Wyoming Valley in Pennsylvania, where he spent five months supplying the pulpit of Rev. Mr. Mitchell. Later he was invited to the pastorate of the Presbyterian Church at Burlington, N.J. The congregation was small and the work at first was attended by many discouragements. One day the wife of one of the two Church elders came to Dr. Cuyler and told him that her son had been awakened by the faithful talk of a young Christian girl who had brought some work to her husband's store. Mr. Cuyler said to the elder's wife: "The Holy Spirit is evidently working on one soul—let us have prayer meeting at your house to-night." Mr. Cuyler spent the afternoon in gathering his small congregation together, and when he got to the house it was packed to the door. "I have attended thousands of prayer meetings since then," said Dr. Cuyler, "but never one that had a more distinct resemblance to the pentecostal gathering in 'the upper room' at Jerusalem. The atmosphere seemed to be charged with a Divine electricity that affected almost everyone in the house. Three times over I closed the meeting with a benediction but it began again, and the people lingered until a very late hour, melted together by 'a baptism of fire.'" That wonderful meeting was followed by special services every night, and the Holy Spirit descended with great power. The little church was doubled in numbers. "That revival," says Dr. Cuyler, "was an illustration of the truth that a good work of grace often begins with the personal effort of one or two individuals. The Burlington awakening began with the little girl and the elder's wife. We ministers must never despise or neglect 'the day of small things.' Every pastor ought to be constantly on the watch, with open eye and ear for the first signs of an especial manifestation of the Spirit's presence." That was the beginning of the marvelous work of Dr. Cuyler as an evangelist and every church of which he has been pastor has been in an almost constant revival.

The same evangelistic spirit has characterized all Dr.

Cuyler's voluminous writings. Printer's ink, he says, stained his fingers in boyhood; for at the age of fifteen he ventured into a controversy on the slavery question in the columns of his county newspaper. While a pastor at Burlington, N.J., in 1847 he wrote a short article for the *New York Observer*. This was followed by several others, which led a friend to say to him: "You are on the right track now; work on that as long as you live." He has obeyed this injunction, and in the course of his life has written probably 5,000 articles for religious newspapers, which have been printed in more than 200,000-000 copies, besides a score of books. Not one of these but has been a blessing to the reader. Their sweet spirit and spiritual character are a revelation of the influence which has made his pastorate in Brooklyn among the most notable in the history of American churches. He is now pastor-emeritus of Lafayette Avenue Church, Brooklyn. His spiritual work, however, did not end with his valedictory discourse delivered April 6, 1890. That abides and continues its beneficent influence through his spiritual children and the continued publication of his articles.

Those who have had the pleasure of personal acquaintance with Dr. Cuyler can readily understand the gracious influence which has made him so great a spiritual and moral power. He is now past four score years of age, and in the order of nature will not remain long in this life; but when the end comes he will have an abundant entrance upon the life eternal, and there will find jewels in his crown more precious than those found in the diamond fields of South Africa, and they will have been gathered from all parts of the world.

### Dr. Cuyler's Early Years

IN his most interesting book, "Recollections of a Long Life," Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, D.D., gives a graphic picture of his boyhood days which were spent in Western New York, when conditions were very different from what they are to-day. There was not a single railroad in the whole state, and when he went away to school in New Jersey, the tedious journey, by stage coach, required three days and two nights; every letter from home cost 18 cents for postage; and the youngsters pored over Webster's spelling books, and Morse's geography by tallow candles, for no gas lamps had been dreamed of, and the wood fires were covered, in most houses, by 9 o'clock on a winter evening.

Dr. Cuyler's father died when he was but four and a half years old, and the lad passed into "the care of one of the best mothers that God ever gave to an only son." He says, "She was more to me than school, pastor, or church, or all combined," and we are not surprised to learn that great preacher believes that "the progress of Christ's kingdom depends more upon the influence of faithful, wise, and pious mothers than upon any other human agency."

His early days were spent with his grandfather in the country where he drove the cows to pasture, rode the horses in the hay-field, and carried in the stock of fire wood on winter afternoons. In speaking of his education, he says: "The first Sunday School that I ever at-