

## COMPLETE IN CHRIST.

Our Life	In Him can never be Forfeited.
Our Righteousness	In Him can never be Tarnished.
Our Pardon	In Him can never be Revoked.
Our Justification	In Him can never be Cancelled.
Our Acceptance	In Him can never be Questioned.
Our Peace	In Him can never be Broken.
Our Joy	In Him can never be Diminished.
Our Rest	In Him can never be Disturbed.
Our Hope	In Him can never be Disappointed.
Our Glory	In Him can never be Clouded.
Our Sun	In Him can never be Darkened.
Our Happiness	In Him can never be Interrupted.
Our Strength	In Him can never be Enfeebled.
Our Purity	In Him can never be Defiled.
Our Comeliness	In Him can never be Marred.
Our Wisdom	In Him can never be Baffled.
Our Inheritance	In Him can never be Alienated.
Our Resources	In Him can never be Exhausted.

## MODERN PREACHING.

We cannot more forcibly illustrate the difference between ancient and modern preaching than by imagining the translation of a preacher of fifty years ago to a modern pulpit. The dry and formal essays, the long homilies, the dogmatism and controversy that then formed the staple of public religious teaching, would be to-day altogether unsatisfactory in the hearing, and unfruitful in the result. Experience has proved that Christians are more rarely made by arguments addressed to the reason than by motives addressed to the heart. The reliable and satisfactory evidences of Christianity are found less in the sacred records than in its transformation of character and its inspirations of life. Though a thousand Strauss and Renans were at work endeavoring to undermine the historical basis of the Christian scheme, their efforts would prove nugatory when met by practical results of that scheme in reforming character, in substituting benevolence for selfishness as the dominant motive in human commerce, in sustaining the heart in trial, in comforting it in sickness, and supporting it in dissolution. With the results of Christianity before him and in him, the Christian may confidently say to all his enemies: "If a lie can do all this, then a lie is better than all your truth, for your truth does not pretend to it; and if our lie is better in every possible legitimate result than your truth, then your truth is proved to be a lie, and our lie is the truth." The argument is not only fair but it is unanswerable, and saves a world of trouble. Of all "short methods" with infidelity, this is the shortest. It is like the argument of design in proving the existence of an intelligent first cause. The man who ignores or denies it, is either incapable of reason or viciously perverse.

So the modern preacher preaches more and argues less. He declares, promulgates, explains, advises, exhorts, appeals. He does more than this. Instead of regarding Christianity solely as a scheme of belief and faith, and thus becoming the narrow expounder of a creed, he broadens into a critic and cultivator of human motive and character. We do not assert that modern preaching is entirely released from its old narrowness. There are still too many who heat over the old broth, and ladle it out in the old way which they learned in the seminary. This preaching of Jesus Christ is still to multitudes the preaching of a scheme of religion, the explanation of a plan, the promulgation of dogmata. But these men, except in the most ignorant and unprogressive communities, preach to empty walls, or contemptuous audiences. The man who preaches Christ the most effectively and acceptably, in these days, is he who tries all motive and character and life by the divine standard, who applies the divine life to the every-day life of the world, and whose grand endeavor is not so much to save men as to make them worth saving. He denounces wrong in public and private life; he exposes and removes the sins of society; he applies and urges the motives to purity, sobriety, honesty, charity, and good neighborhood; he shows men to themselves, and then shows them the mode by which they may correct themselves. In all this he meets with wonderful acceptance, and, most frequently, in direct proportion to his faithfulness. This, after all, is the kind of talk

men are willing to hear, even if it condemns them. All truth relating to the faults of character and life, if presented in a Christian spirit, by a man who assumes nothing for himself, and who never loses sight of his own weakness and his brotherhood with the erring masses whom he addresses, is received gladly.

The world has come to the comprehension of the fact that, after all that may be said of dogmatic Christianity, character is the final result at which its author aimed. The aim and end of Christianity is to make men better, and in making them better to secure their safety and happiness in this world and the world to come. The Christianity which narrows the sympathies of a man, and binds him to his sect, which makes the Christian name of smaller significance to him than the name of his party, which thinks more of soundness of belief than soundness of character, is the meanest kind of Christianity, and belongs to the old and outgrown time. It savors of schools, and books, and tradition. The human element in it predominates over the divine. The typical modern preacher mingles with men. He goes into the world of business—into its cares, its trials, its great temptations, its overreaching, its dangers and disasters—and learns the character and needs of the men he meets there. He sits in the humble dwelling of the laborer, and reads the wants of the humanity he finds there. In workshops, in social assemblies, in schools, among men, women and children, wherever they live, or meet for labor or for pleasure, his presence is familiar. Human life is the book he reads preparatory to his pulpit labors, and without the faithful reading of this book he has no fitting preparation for his task. No matter how much a preacher knows of the divine life, if he has not an equal knowledge of the human, his message will be a barren one.

The great mistake of the modern preacher is in not keeping up with the secular thought of his time. It is quite as essential to the preacher to know what men are thinking about as what they are doing. Comparatively few preachers are at home in the current progress of science, and too many of them look coldly upon it, as upon something necessarily inimical to the system of religion to which they have committed their lives. They apparently forget that their indifference or opposition wins only contempt for themselves and their scheme. There are few laymen so devoid of common sense as to be unable to see that any scheme which is afraid of scientific truth—nay, any scheme which does not gladly welcome every new realm won to the grand domain of human knowledge—is unworthy of confidence. An unreasoning loyalty to old interpretations of revealed truth is a weakness of the pulpit that becomes practically a reproach to Christianity itself. If the God of nature undeniably disputes the God of revelation, as the preacher interprets him, let him give up his interpretation gladly, and receive the correction as from the mouth of God himself. It is only in this way that he can maintain his hold upon his age, and win honor to the religion he tries to serve. All truth is divine, and the mode of utterance makes it neither more so nor less. A man who denies a truth spoken to him by the God of nature is as truly and culpably an infidel as if he were to deny a plainly spoken truth of the Bible. —*J. G. Holland, in Scribner's for September.*

## SAMUEL.

Samuel was emphatically God's servant—God's from the very first—God's all along. Obedience, not self-assertion, was the idea of his life. When Samuel came to Saul, and rebuked him for his disobedience, and said, "Behold to obey is better than sacrifice," and "rebellion—i. e., disobedience—is as the sin of Witchcraft," he was only putting into words what his own life had been all along putting into deeds. Samuel was God's servant from the very first. You see it in that history we read to-night; how again and again—thinking it was Eli that called him—he rose and answered the voice which called him. Few other people would have acted so. Few others, when they had found that they had been mistaken twice, would have got up the third time they heard the voice. But Samuel did. He cared nothing about his own ease or rest. What he cared for was to do his duty. And here is a great pattern and lesson for

us all. Samuel thought it was Eli that called him. It was not, although it seemed so. It was God who really called him. And Samuel in getting up to obey Eli, as he thought, was really obeying God's call, though he did not know it. And having obeyed God, even though he did not know it, he was thereby proved and found worthy to be God's special servant for the rest of his life. That is to say, Samuel, through obeying man, was found to be obeying God, and so became worthy of God's special service. Samuel, through obeying man in the silence, and privacy, and secrecy of night, was found worthy to be God's public servant and prophet, and to serve him before all Israel, so that "all Israel, from Dan even to Beer-Sheba, know that he was established to be a Prophet of the Lord." So we learn that God is behind the veil of what is seemingly only human authority, and that now, as well as then, we may be often spoken to by the voice of God when we little think it. And may it not often be with similar results? Think what it would have been had Samuel acted differently. Suppose he had said to himself at the third call, "I have been mistaken twice, I will not get up again." Would he then have been "established a Prophet of the Lord?" He might have had another trial given him. But also he might not. And how many of us may not have lost the opportunity of being called to do good service for God in His Church, through having failed in some trial—some testing trial like this of Samuel's—which we never knew of, and perhaps never shall know of this side of eternity? For take notice that in this Samuel was really being put upon his trial, whether he would obey when there was no credit to be gained or display to be made. For, of course, after being mistaken twice, the probability was that it was not Eli at all that he called. Yet he heard a voice call him, and it was a plain duty to get up and answer, though he was running the risk of displeasing his Master, by troubling him again for nothing. A selfish youth would have said—"I will take my ease, for I shall get no thanks for my pains, but perhaps the reverse of thanks." And so, no doubt, most human judgments would have reasoned. But to have followed human reasoning would have led Samuel away from God and from God's service; just as it does us continually. And so Samuel, thinking nothing of himself, but a great deal of doing his duty, caring nothing about getting credit, but a great deal about exact obedience, came well through the trial, just as Abraham did through his great trial in the offering of Isaac, and ere long was established to be the Prophet of the Lord. He had obeyed God's word without knowing it. He should henceforth be the mouthpiece of that Word to the nation, and, as he had himself obeyed it in secret, so he should henceforward proclaim it in public.

Yet though Samuel was called thus to serve God publicly, yet, for all that, it still remains true that this scene in the night time in God's temple remains a type of all Samuel's work. There is a certain retiringness about Samuel always. He dwells apart. He is busy with his pupils in the Prophetic Colleges. When he is wanted to hold his Courts of Justice he comes out and goes his circuits. When he is needed to offer a sacrifice, or to rebuke a king, or to amount a king, he comes out and does his work, and then goes back again to dwell among his pupils; busy ever with training up the men who are to teach and lighten the nation and guide it in God's ways when he was gone. Samuel the Prophet was also the founder of the Prophetic Schools, and that—of which we hear the least—was his greatest work. This is why St. Peter in his sermon in Solomon's Porch (Acts iii. 24) says "all the Prophets from Samuel"—because it was Samuel who was God's instrument in founding the line of the Prophets. And this of course was a quiet, secret work. But Samuel's work was working out its results in every Prophet and teacher that came after him to the close of the whole line. And here again we see how the practice of Obedience pointed out to Samuel as being fitted for his peculiar duty. Only those who know how to obey are fit to rule. Especially is it true that only those who know how to obey are fit to train others. It is no use to tell other people what they ought to be unless you also do the things which you say. And it has ever seemed to me to be a matter of special interest to see that Samuel, who was himself

brought up from childhood in the temple of the Lord, becomes so great a pattern of special service to the Lord. He, the first of the line of Prophets, had his training from childhood in the House of God. So it shows us that it is never too soon to begin to form and train the character for good. The sooner you begin, the deeper the impression, the more abiding the result, the more effectual the training. Men who begin to serve God later on in life, always show self-will and self-opinion in their way of serving Him. It marks their work. It spoils their characters. Doubtless it was owing to this early crushing down of all self-will in Samuel that he became fitted (under Providence) to the work he had to do. It is those who have been blessed with the early discipline of God's service who know how to give themselves up totally to God's work, and be contented to be unseen and unknown except when God calls them to the fore-front of the battle of the faith.

## EXTRAORDINARY EFFECTS OF KINDNESS.

A servant of the Rev. Rowland Hill very lately died, and his master preached his funeral sermon to a numerous audience, in the course of which he mentioned the following anecdote: "Many persons present were acquainted with the deceased, and have had it in their power to observe his character and conduct. They can bear witness that I speak the truth, when I assert that for a considerable number of years past he has proved himself a perfectly sober, honest, industrious, and religious man, faithfully performing, as far as lay in his power, the duties of his station in life, and serving God with constancy and zeal; and yet this very man, this virtuous and pious man, was once a robber on the highway. More than thirty years ago, he stopped me on the high-road, and demanded my money. Not at all intimidated, I argued with him. I asked what could induce him to leave so iniquitous course of life. 'I have been a coachman sir,' said he, 'but am now out of place, and not being able to get a character, can obtain no employment, and am therefore obliged to resort to this means of gaining subsistence.' I desired him to call upon me; he promised he would, and kept his word. I talked further with him, and offered to take him into my service. He consented; and ever since that period he has served me faithfully, and not me only, but he has faithfully served his God. And instead of having finished his life in a public ignominious manner, with a depraved and hardened mind, as he probably would soon have done, he has died in peace, rejoicing in hope, and prepared, we trust, for the society of just men made perfect."

## PRAISE CHILDREN.

There is an old superstition that praise is too good a thing to be given to the children; that it is too rich for their mental and moral digestion. Some parents are so afraid that a child will grow proud, that they never praise him, and this course is often disastrous. It is apt to produce too much self-assertion;—for self-assertion is a legitimate outgrowth of the withholding of commendation to which one is entitled—or to engender a self-distrust, or melancholy hopelessness of disposition.

Praise is sunshine to a child, and there is no child that does not need it. It is the high reward of one's struggle to do right. Thomas Hughes says that you can never get a man's best out of him without praise. You certainly can never get a child's best out of him without praise. Many a sensitive child, we believe, dies of hunger for kind commendation. Many a child staying for the praise that a parent should give, runs off eagerly after the designing flattery of others.

To withhold praise where it is due is dishonest, and in the case of a child, such a course often leaves a stinging sense of injustice. Motives of common justice as well as a regard for the future of the child, such influence the parent to give generous praise for all that deserves it. Of course there is a difference in the constitution of children. Some cannot bear so much praise as others, some need a great deal.

It should never be indiscriminate. We remember a wonderful woman who taught school in one village until she had educated a part of three generations. She was one of the most successful of teachers. But her suc-

cess lay in her gift of praising with discrimination. A bad boy who was a good scholar got praises for his brilliancy, sandwiched between her abomination for his bad behavior, and so was won to a better life, and we recall a good girl who had no gift of learning rapidly, but who was saved from utter despair by the praise she got for her untiring industry. Into the discouraged hearts of the children the praise of the teacher cannot like sunlight. And the virtues, like other fruits, can only ripen in the sunshine.—*Edward Eggleston.*

## THE SICK ROOM.

American "humor" newspaper extravagance and "fun" are the wonder of our transatlantic friends. The best American jokes, and the most absurd paragraphs, are reproduced in the English papers, and are even translated into French and German, when the wit will bear translation. People who are accustomed to this sort of play upon words, and extravagance, can generally read a truth strongly stated, or a sensible doctrine propounded under the guise of nonsense. An instance is given below.

A watcher called to sit by a sick friend is represented to have boisterously tossed his hat into one corner, and to have distributed his boots in the same rough manner, with various other antics, contrary to all the received etiquette of the sick room. The sick man had suffered under a succession of lugubrious doctors, friends and nurses, all laboring (unconsciously) to make him feel that his doom was sealed—that he had no hope—mysterious whispers tortured his ears—whispers really about nothing; cat-like steps crept round his room, and sudden and unexpected apparitions perplexed and annoyed him, by coming without warning, like ghosts from the grave. All faces around him gathered blackness, and the whole atmosphere of the sick chamber was made as funereal as possible—giving the unhappy patient the idea that his coffin was already ordered, if not, indeed, in the house.

At this juncture some sensible neighbor was called upon—a man with a proper understanding of the power of spirit over matter, and the influence of mind upon the body. He at once, by the introduction of some innocent, awkward pranks—not quite so extravagant as represented, perhaps—took the patient's mind out of its "slough of despond." The sick man was astonished into forgetfulness of his ailments. Perhaps he smiled. He may even have laughed aloud; and if he did, it was better than a box of pills or a pint of tincture. If people could only be made to understand it, cheerfulness in a sick room is fully as essential as medicine. The face of a nurse, or a wife, or a daughter, or a doctor, or any other visitor or attendant, is studied by the patient as heralding his death or prophesying his recovery. The depressing influence of mournful looks cannot be over-estimated, and many a patient, if not actually hurried to his grave, has had his recovery delayed by depression caused by the sadness of his attendants.

It is a rule among physicians, never in any serious case to prescribe for their own families, if any other physician is within call. The skilful doctor will not trust his judgment in cases where his affection may impair the clearness of his observation. The same rule, where circumstances will permit, should be followed in the arduous duty of nursing the sick. More really depends, in a majority of cases, upon the nurse, who is in constant attendance, than upon the doctor whose visits are necessarily short. The careful nurse, who understands the duties of a sick room, is neither deficient in attention, nor over-officious. Of nurses it may be said, even more truly than of poets, "that they are born, not made." There are many persons who have not the slightest fitness for attendance in a sick chamber, and upon whom no education or experience will confer that fitness.

The admission of too many visitors, and of persons of the wrong temperament into sick rooms, is a great disadvantage to the patient. If he receives a train of friends bearing in their faces the conviction that they have come "to look their last," he is forced to conclude that his case is hopeless. All the efforts of physicians and the offices of nurses are marred by the imposition of such depressing influences upon the patient's mind.—*Phil. Pub. Ledger.*