

THE HIGHER LIFE—AN ENTIRE CONSECRATION.

BY C. H. FOWLER, D. D., LL. D.

MASSILLON, the famous French pulpit orator and Bishop, in his *Sentiments d'une Ame touchée de Dieu*, "Sentiments of a soul touched of God," says, "You can serve God with pleasure only when you serve him without reservation. From the moment you have made him entire master of your heart, hope and confidence and joy will spring up in the depth of your soul."

Here we have the idea of that "entire consecration" so much and so beneficially insisted upon by our modern advocates of "the higher life"—that higher life which the author of the "Schoenberg-Cotta Family," in a late English periodical, justly says, "should be the ordinary Christian life"—though as she admits, it is far from being so in Christendom generally. She professes to have experienced the "the higher life," and urges that it may be made common.

The advocates of the higher life have a legitimate idea, and it is producing a marvellous and most salutary effect, not only in this country, but in England, Scotland, Germany and France. We bid them God-speed. They are rendering familiar, outside the pale of Methodism, a great truth which Fletcher taught, and also lived, a hundred years ago, and which Wesley pronounced the "grand deposition of Methodism" that for which, he believed Methodism was chiefly raised up. We have nothing to say against them, or, at least against their special work. The Greek Church, the Latin Church, and—as Alexander Knox, the friend of Wesley said to Robert Southey—the best old divines of the Anglican Church, taught Wesley's doctrine of sanctification; and not a few of the Roman Catholic manuals of devotion bear the express title of "Christian Perfection." Some of best old Calvinistic theologians taught it substantially, though they deemed it more an "idea" than a "real" standard for Christian life. The Congregational Union of England, reviewing the ripe discussion of the subject now going on there, declared that it is the revival of an old and precious truth, bringing into more common realization a form of Christian experience always taught by their theology, but seldom before practically attained.

We will not even object to the distinctive title of the subject, for, though the idea it expresses should be embodied in the common Christian life, yet we all know that it has not been, even among the followers of Wesley who have been most familiar with it. It may, then, well enough provisionally, be called the higher Christian life; but we pray that it may yet become the ordinary life of the Church.

There are two postulates taught by the advocates of the "higher life," as the essential conditions of its attainment, namely, entire consecration and absolute faith in God's acceptance of the consecration. A third postulate may also be stated—the result of such consecration and faith, namely, perfect peace, the "rest of faith" in accordance with the prophet's declaration, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he putteth his trust (faith) in thee;" and the apostle's equivalent declaration that "perfect love casteth out fear."

Massillon, doubtless, knew the old doctrine of the Church on "Christian perfection," and that entire consecration must precede it. But, though the treatise from which we have quoted is imbued with fervent piety—the piety which we find in the celebrated Catholic manual of a 'Kempis, the "Imitation of Christ," and in some of the writings of the best "Mystics" yet he certainly does not restrict his doctrine of consecration to a special class of Christians, to "Mystics" or "Perfectionists;" he inculcates it upon all; he urges it as the requisite of a happy Christian life with all. He addresses Catholics in common, all of whom are supposed to be Christians, and tells them why they are not more devoted, and especially why they are not more generally examples of the consolations of piety. It is because they come short of entire consecration. They live their Christian life with certain "reservations," certain compromises with the

conventional habits and vices around them, assuming that they cannot all be saints; that though a few may be found to exemplify a sanctity superior to the temptations of "the world, the flesh and the devil;" yet these are select, privileged ones; and ordinary men must expect only ordinary piety and the ordinary discomforts of piety.

He insists that even the most criminal penitent may rise, by entire consecration, to entire blessedness; so that his very sins, thus conquered by the grace of God, may become but "the stepping-stones," Tennyson sings, "to something higher." "The memory of your crimes," he continues, "will recur to you only with the memory of the eternal mercy which has inspired you with repentance and horror for them; the deeper that abyss in which you were buried so many years may appear to you—the more frightful and without hope of recovery if you had been abandoned to yourself—the more you will be touched with the mercy of the Lord, whose all-powerful hand has lifted you out of it. You will read, in the history of your sinful wanderings, His infinite compassion on your soul; and the more you discover that you have been a sinner, the more will be apparent to you His goodness, mercy and love." Hence, however guilty you have been, you will serve Him with delight if you serve Him without reservation; but only if you thus serve Him."

We may, then, with the great French preacher, enforce on all ordinary Christians the duty of entire consecration. We may do so aside from their opinions of what is called the "higher life," or sanctification. Entire consecration will, sooner or later, afford them the best solution of any difficulties they have on that subject.

Doubtless, penitent souls at the time of their conversion do usually design to give themselves wholly to God. But do they remain wholly His? Do they not ordinarily find around them such a partial consecration of Christian life as leads them to suppose that they need not, perhaps cannot, be saintly in their own lives? Do they not quite generally compromise, more or less, their consciences with the maxims and habits of the godless world? We need not pause here to inquire into the doctrinal difficulties of sanctification, of the relations of justification to sanctification, etc.; we need only refer to the "sheer matter of fact," that the mass of the Christian world is not living a life of entire consecration. Who doubts this fact? And who doubts that entire consecration is an intelligible and a fundamental requisite of scriptural piety, whatever may be the differences of opinion about sanctification? In every great section and in every age of the Church this has been admitted. Here then, we may take our stand indisputably, and enforce the exhortation of Massillon as the ordinance of the Bible itself, serve God without reservation, or you cannot serve Him with consolation, or even with safety. For the world, with which you compromise your religious life may be found too powerful for you, and may engulf you at last.

With this entire consecration you shall have the blessedness, the interior peace, of which the eloquent French Bishop speaks. Nothing more disturbs the tranquility of the Christian conscience than the sense of its own compromise with evil. And are not many professors of religion habitually in such inward discomfort? Let them thank God that His good Spirit will not let them rest in them! His very power to do so should appeal him, and break the spell of his fallacies. But why live in such discomfort? Relief is within your immediate reach. Contritely lay all on the altar of consecration, even your sins, your most besetting sins; God "will abundantly pardon." And, living in accordance with an unreserved consecration, you will find the "peace of God which passeth all understanding;" the whole course of the Christian life will become simpler, easier and more consolatory to you; the miseries of a divided and ever-dubious mind, will pass away; the fear of death will be subdued; the will of God will be not only your duty, but your felicity.

Will not this be, indeed, a "higher life" to you? And will it not be also an easier life? Pause not, then, to dispute with others or with yourself, about

the difficulties of "sanctification." The Church is already too much harassed with such disputes. There can be no dispute about "consecration." Make this, and see whither it will lead you. Be assured of one thing—it will at last lead you into heaven.

THE NEW ARCTIC EXPEDITION.

A New London despatch to the New York Herald announces that the schooner *Florence*, Capt. George E. Tyson, commander, on a preliminary expedition to the Polar seas, will sail on Wednesday, August 1, or possibly a day or two later. Her officers and crew are engaged—with one or two exceptions—and her stores, together with instruments from the Signal Office at Washington, are on board. She is provisioned for a year's cruise. The *Florence* is a fast sailer. She is rigged as a fore-and-aft schooner, and though built in 1851 is yet staunch and seaworthy. She was thoroughly overhauled before going on her last cruise, and is nearly as good as new. Her measurements are:—64 feet long, 19 feet beam, depth 7 feet and tonnage 66 23-100 tons. She carries no foretopmast, and has her square sail yard athwart. Since the enlargement of her cabin she has six births and two state-rooms aft and ten berths forward. She will ship six foremost hands. In order that she may resist the pressure of the floating ice which she will meet in Northern seas her stem has been replanked with ten inch timbers and covered with two-inch planks. This gives her a total thickness at the bow of nearly sixteen inches. She has been caulked, scraped and painted, and is now in first-class condition for her perilous and isolated expedition. Captain Tyson supervises the work upon her, giving his personal attention to the smallest details. He expects that Captain Howate, who will command the main expedition, will arrive at New London on Sunday and remain until the departure of the *Florence*. Professor Baird, Commissioner of Fish and Fisheries, who is deeply interested in the scheme of Arctic exploration, was in New London on Tuesday and had a conference with Captain Tyson and expressed satisfaction at the progress of the preliminary steps. Mr. Orray Taft Sherman, Yale graduate of 1877, who is to accompany the expedition as meteorologist and photographer, was also there looking after the instruments and scientific appurtenances of the vessel. Should this expedition fail it is not likely that another will be undertaken for a long time.—*Telegraph*.

THE EXACT TRUTH.

Two young masons were building a brick wall—the front wall of a high house. One of them, in placing a brick, discovered that it was a little thicker on one side than the other.

His companion advised him to throw it out. "It will make your wall untrue, Ben," said he.

"Pooh!" answered Ben, "what difference will such a trifle as that make? You're too particular."

"My mother," replied he, "taught me that truth is truth, and ever so little an untruth is a lie, and a lie is no trifle."

"Oh," said Ben, "that's all very well but I am not lying, and have no intention of doing so."

"Very true, but you make your wall tell a lie; and I have somewhere read that a lie in one's work, like a lie in his character, will show itself sooner or later, and bring harm, if not ruin."

"I'll risk it in this case," answered Ben; and he worked away, laying more bricks, and carrying the wall up higher, till the close of the day, when they quit work and went home.

The next morning they went to resume their work, when, behold, the lie had wrought out the result of all lies! The wall getting a little slant from the untrue brick, had got more and more untrue as it got higher, and at last, in the night, had toppled over, obliging the masons to do all their work over again.

Just so with ever so little an untruth in your character; it grows more and more untrue if you permit it to remain, till it brings sorrow and ruin. Tell, act, and live, the exact truth always.—*Selected*.

MULLER COMING.

This summer the United States, and probably Canada also, will be visited by one of the most remarkable men of the old world—Rev. George Muller, manager of the famous orphan asylum at Ashley Down, Bristol. In him is found a most conspicuous illustration of the rule that the prayer of a righteous man availeth much. He is a German by birth, but has spent many years in England and become thoroughly identified with the English people. His orphan asylum was started with thirty orphans. "Prayer and faith" was his maxim from the beginning. He asked nobody directly or indirectly for aid—except God. His object was, while providing for the orphans, to strengthen the faith of the weak by showing them an evidence of how God cared for those who served and trusted in Him. He has no sympathy with tea-meetings, bazaars, or any other of the numerous devices of that character to obtain money for religious purposes. We imagine that he has a profound contempt for the too prevalent practice in churches of thrusting a broad plate before the worshipper during the services, to remind Mrs. Smith that Mrs. Brown is watching closely to see how much she (Mrs. S.) deposits, and that elder Jones or Deacon Green, who carries the plate, is watching both for the same purpose. Mr. Muller thus describes his system:—

"I ask for nothing from anybody but God, directly or indirectly, in order that those who are weak in faith may see what can be accomplished simply through prayer and faith. I pretend to no miracles. I am grieved, indeed, indeed, to hear that this work is called a miracle. But I do confess that I carry it on simply by prayer and faith in God. Of scarcely one out of fifty of the donors have I any knowledge. In very many instances I do not know their names. I only wait upon God. I ask him to be pleased to supply me with means, and to speak to the hearts of His children who know of this work, and are able to help, and He does so."

An extract from his diary of receipts will be of interest:

- £1 from Ireland as a thank-offering for the recovery of a lost cheque.
- From Abingdon, ten shillings—a thank-offering for a bountiful harvest.
- From a workman at Abergavenny, twelve shillings—being a penny from each job during the past year—a free-will offering.
- £25 from a commercial house—thank-offering for a heavy loss averted in answer to prayer.
- Thirty shillings—thank-offerings from Oxfordshire for two children preserved in great danger.
- Three shillings saved in farthings for the orphans.
- £2 from the master of a ship at Demerara for answers to prayer during a long voyage.
- £5 from parents whose dear boy has reached his first birth-day in good health.
- £5 from Dundee—Thank-offering for the Lord's goodness to the donors, as a family, during the past year.

The fame of Muller's orphanage is now world-wide, and from all parts of civilization he receives contributions. The little institution of thirty children has grown to immense proportions. About fifteen hundred orphans are in the home, and are supported at an expense of about fifty thousand pounds a year. Mr. Muller has grown old in the work, but has lost none of his vigour. At 72 he is full of zeal and energy. He recently visited the continent and while there preached no less than 802 times. At the earnest request of many American friends he is coming to the United States next month. No doubt an invitation will be extended to him to visit the Dominion of Canada.—*Chron*.

DOMINION Y. M. C. A.

To the Executive Committees, Young Men's Christian Associations of Ontario, Quebec, and Maritime Provinces.

DEAR BROTHERS.—In accordance with the unanimous desire expressed at a meeting of Canadian delegates, held in Toronto, July, 1876, and resolution passed at the London Convention in October last, we beg to intimate that the Tenth Annual Convention will (D. V.) be held in the city of Quebec, on the 13th, 14th, 15th, and 16th of September next.

We are looking forward to this convention with great anticipations, combining as it does the united attendance of representatives from the entire Dominion, and hope that every Association will endeavor to send a delegation composed of their very best men, and pray in private and at Association meetings for God's blessing upon this gathering.

Our work in all its departments has

been eminently blessed of God during the past year. We trust this will be the best meeting of the kind ever held in Canada. The number of delegates from each Association is not limited, and pastors of churches professors and teachers in colleges and schools, and young men interested in Christian work, who are not members of the Association, are cordially invited to attend. They will enjoy every privilege (save that of voting) which belongs to the regular delegates.

After much prayer and correspondence with the Associations, the following topics have been selected for discussion at the Convention, and will be opened by brief addresses or papers, by men of practical experience:—

TOPICS.

1. What is your Association doing for Young Men?
 - a. Railroad Men?
 - b. Commercial Travellers.
 - c. Students and Professional Men.
 - d. Young men out of Employment.
2. The necessity for an interchange of sympathy and experiences of Associations throughout the Dominion. How can this be attained?
3. The duty and joyfulness of personal effort in winning souls. How can it be done most effectually?
4. How to use the Bible in our work.
5. Young Men's Christian Associations. What is their work in Towns?
6. Young men at home. How can they use their homes to benefit strangers?

Associations are requested to appoint their delegates as soon as possible and forward their names not later than the 6th of September, to Mr. Thos. S. Cole, Secretary, Quebec, in order that "homes" may be provided. This is important. And also to empower their representatives to pledge such money to the executive as may be necessary to carry on their work. The usual travelling facilities will be extended by the railways and steamers. All particulars of which will be given in due time by circular from the Quebec Association.

The committees cannot urge too strongly the vital importance of sending to this Convention earnest and devout men, filled with the spirit of the Master, and sustained by the prayers of the faithful workers who remain behind.

Our work in the past has so developed, that the future demands wise planning and faithful execution. In coming together then let our objects be:—

1. A oneness with Him who is one with the Father.
 2. A more spiritual and intelligent preparation for the future work.
 3. A willingness to make any sacrifice to build up the Kingdom of our Lord in Canada, during the coming year.
- We are, faithfully yours,
On behalf of the Executive Committee,
S. B. BRIGGS,
Chairman Ex. Com. Ontario and Quebec.
J. B. MORROW,
Chairman Ex. Com. Maritime Provinces.
THOS. J. WILKIE,
Cor. Sec. Ontario and Quebec.
W. B. MCNUTT,
Cor. Sec. Maritime Provinces.
July 23rd, 1877.

OBITUARY.

Died at Wallace, N.S., June 22nd, 1877

MARTHA A. HEATHER
Beloved wife of John B. Canfield. Sister Canfield was born in Sussex, England, 14th Feb. 1814, came to Wallace, N.S., 1824 and about six years after while under the ministry of Rev. J. G. Hennigar, was led to give her heart to God. She at once united with the Methodist Church and continued steadfast in the Faith of the Gospel until the hour of her departure from earth. She had twelve children, all but one survive her and ten of these gave their hearts to God before they reached their sixteenth year, one only remained outside the fold of Christ, his salvation was the burden of his mothers daily prayer, but he did not yield to the strings of the Spirit until he stood by the death bed of his praying mother. A few hours after her spirit reached the land of bliss his soul was set at liberty by the converting grace of God "she being dead yet speaketh." She rests from her labors and her works follow her. As a Christian her life was blameless before the world. She was a professor of religion for forty-seven years and during all those years she taught by her life that religion was the only thing worth living for.

During the last ten years of life she was often near the gates of death, but could always say, "Though I walk through the valley and the shadow of death I will fear no evil for though art with me, Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me."

Thursday the 21st of June saw her work finished. Just as the sun was setting in the West the shadows of the evening of her life began to fall, weeping children and friends gathered round her but those could not keep her when Jesus called and in a very few hours she was gone, "gone to be with Christ which is far better."

R.