

structors, and sparing no pains to place his son under the very happiest and best influences, no one would for one moment doubt that that father felt something more than simply a cold sense of duty to meet his obligations to his son, or to fulfil some previous promise which he might have made. There is evinced a deep interest in his son's welfare.

But if a man under these circumstances shews interest, how much greater is shewn by Him who has done almost infinitely more to secure an almost infinitely greater good for lost man. Surely, He is "not willing that any should perish."

Again, 'tis hard for a man to realize that our Heavenly Father is interested in him as in individual. He thinks only of a general interest.

He is ready to admit that God must be interested in the salvation of all men, but fails to realize that He is in him personally. Yet so it is. Many of the truths of God's word are addressed to the individual. It is, "whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely," and "him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." It is the individual. When the law was enacted giving liberty to the slaves of the Southern States it was for all, but was it any the less for each individual slave? Were not the makers of that law interested in each individual case? And any poor slave, however humble, might avail himself of it if he would, and the benefits which he received were just as secure to him, and just as great as if he had been the only one who could receive any benefit; as great as if the law had been provided especially for him.

So this salvation is for each individual just as much as if it were only for him; as if God had looked simply upon him and made all this provision for him alone.

The truth, then, evidently is that God is not willing that I, an individual, should perish. Think of that.—*Rev. G. L. Smith, in Philadelphia Presbyterian.*

SIX EAR-MARKS OF A LIVING CHURCH.

The brave little band which issued from the upper room in Jerusalem under the baptism of the Holy Spirit were the pioneers of Christianity. We look back to them as a model. Young as that church was, and confined to a single city, it possessed the six traits of a living, healthy church of Christ. There were six things in which they "continued steadfastly"—or as the Rhemish version has it—"they persevered." Would that all our churches now would lay hold of the same practices, and hold fast to them!

1. Their first characteristic was study of the Word. The "apostles' doctrine" signifies the teaching of fundamental truths by such men as Peter and John. The young converts were not fed on the syllabus of sensationalism, but on the strong meat of Bible doctrine. The gospel was a new revelation fresh from heaven; its two cardinal principles were repentance of sin and faith in Jesus Christ; and on these bottom doctrines every convert needed to be well established. It is a grievous wrong to a young convert to admit him into the Church, if he cannot "give a reason for the faith that is in him." The surest way to make him a loose, weak-backed member ever afterwards is to leave him without thorough instruction both in a Bible class and from the pulpit. False doctrine can only be kept out by putting the Bible in.

2. The second ear-mark that belonged to that Jerusalem church was their "fellowship." They began to love one another, and to manifest their fellow-feeling by meeting often, by knowing each other well, and by bearing one another's burdens. I'll warrant it that no stranger ever came into one of their meetings without being spoken to and welcomed. It has been left to some of our modern churches to allow "outsiders" to come to the house of God and go away again, without even a nod of the head, much less a kind word of greeting. Brethren, this conventional stiffness is a disgrace to a Christian church. No sinner who is out in the spiritual cold of impenitence is likely to come very often for warmth into an ice-house.

3. Nor did that early church neglect the ordinances which Christ had appointed. We are told that they continued steadfastly in the "breaking of bread."

This phrase describes something more than a social meal together. It refers to their frequent commemoration of their crucified Lord in the eucharistic supper. This feast of love was celebrated as often as once a week, and probably in a very simple fashion. It is a bad symptom in a church now-a-days when its communion seasons cease to be a full, devout, and joyful gathering of the whole flock. Why do not more revivals spring from these periodic festivals of redeeming love? Because Christ is not invited to His own table, and welcomed there by penitent, broken, loving hearts.

4. Of course that company which had just come out of a Pentecost were a praying church. When no breath issues from his patient's lips the doctor gives him up as dead. When no breath of sincere prayer issues from a church member's lips he is "dead in sin." As soon as Saul of Tarsus began to pray, he began to live.

The grievous lack of many a church, even in its devotional meetings, is a lack of prayer. Addresses and sacred song do not make up for the want of prayer, which is the one indispensable channel of blessings from the throne. Our people are surfeited with preaching. Then if they add to this starvation of prayer, how can they grow in grace, how can they become strong for God's great work of saving sinners? Those Jerusalem brethren had fifty-two "weeks of prayer" in every year.

5. Such a praying and brotherly-minded church were the very ones to sell their possessions in order to have money to give to the Lord. What costly gifts they laid at the apostles' feet for Christian charities! That Brother Barnabas was the leader and model for all the Arthur Tappans and James Lennoxes and John Wanamakers who have blessed our modern churches by their beneficence. Satan had not yet taught churches how to indulge themselves with ceiled houses and carriages, and to turn off their Master with candle ends.

6. To any church which continues steadfastly in Bible study, brotherly love, attendance upon worship, prayer, and deeds of charity, "the Lord will add daily such as are saved." Our translation of Acts ii. 47 is a clumsy one. The Greek text signifies that the Lord brought into that apostolic ark "saved ones," who would otherwise have been lost.

In the family register of our churches there ought to be more frequent additions of names under the head of "Births." And when we return to the apostolic spirit of love, faith, and hard work, there will be a constant addition from the world of precious souls new born into an everlasting life.—*Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, D.D., in American Messenger.*

"THE LIMITATIONS OF LIFE," AND OTHER SERMONS.

Dr. Taylor is tolerably well known in Canada, but not nearly so much so as he deserves to be. Perhaps this has been unavoidable. He has but seldom visited the Dominion, and his public appearances before a Canadian audience, whether as a preacher or a lecturer, have been but few. It is generally known that some years ago he came from Liverpool to occupy the pulpit of the Broadway Tabernacle as occasional supply for a few weeks; that his preaching was of such a character that he was eagerly solicited to become pastor; that he consented to do so, and that ever since he has far more than realized the highest expectations of those who were chiefly instrumental in bringing him to New York. This is about all that the most of Canadians know of one who is among the most prominent and influential preachers and writers on this continent. Those of us who visit New York make it a point to hear the famous preacher of the Tabernacle, and then spread his reputation as best we may among our "kinsmen and acquaintance." But generally it is a matter of faith rather than experience. It is concluded that there must be something uncommonly attractive about both the man and his message, but wherein that attractiveness consists could not very generally or very clearly be stated or defined. We are accordingly glad that this volume of sermons has appeared, to make us all better acquainted with "the

man and his conversation," for though there is only a portrait of the preacher given, and the commanding presence, the deep-toned voice, and the kindling kindly eye of the living man are necessarily absent yet in every one of these sermons the marked individuality of Dr. Taylor comes out in striking relief, and if he "hold" not his readers "with his eye," he holds them at any rate with his masculine vigour of thought, his tender and all but womanly sympathy, his affluence of illustration, his cogency of argument, his directness of appeal, his clearness of statement, his fervid earnestness, and his unostentatious piety. To make our readers acquainted with the aim and object of this publication, and in doing so to occupy as little as possible of our space, we cannot do better than place before them the author's preface in full:

"It would neither be just to myself, nor complimentary to those who may become my readers, to say that these sermons have been chosen at random out of that pile of manuscripts which is constantly accumulating in every minister's study, and whose final destination is the fire. On the contrary, they have been deliberately selected, not only because of the present and permanent importance of their subjects, but also, and especially, because, in the experience of many who heard them, they were felt to be helpful to them in their prosecution of the Christian life. There is not a discourse here reproduced which has not already been useful to some souls, and if, when preached thus through the press, that usefulness shall be widened, the great end of their publication will be secured."

The volume contains twenty-five sermons, on subjects which are certainly, as the author says, of "present and permanent importance." While they state clearly and effectively defend some of the great doctrines of the Christian faith, they are at the same time eminently practical, and when we say "practical," we do not mean that they are mere secular essays, "of the earth, earthy," but such discourses as teach practical religion, and bring Gospel principles to bear upon every-day life. The first sermon—that which supplies a title for the book—has for its text Paul's "autographic endorsement" to the Epistle to the Colossians, "Remember my bonds," and the following are its opening words:

"What an exquisite pathos there is in these words of Paul! He is now 'such an one as Paul the aged,' and the tremour of years is in his hand. He is, besides, 'the prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ,' and the chain by which his right arm is bound to the left arm of the 'soldier that kept him,' impedes the free motion of his wrist, so that he cannot write with his usual ease. Hence, as he takes the pen from his amanuensis and appends the salutation whereby this letter was to be authorized, he delicately apologizes for the uncouth irregularity of the characters which he has traced by adding this clause, 'Remember my bonds.'"

From the apostle's condition and conduct under his "bonds," the preacher draws practical lessons for the Christian under all the "imitations of life." From the numerous cases in point which are adduced, the following may be taken as a sample:

"I am sorry that there should be need for such a style of remark. But the tendency of much that is said nowadays is to make one dissatisfied with himself if he be not engaged in some way, in one or other of the common departments of ecclesiastical work. Now, it is good to have a church which will realize John Wesley's idea, 'at work, all at work and always at work.' But it is not good to advocate this in such a way as shall wound those who, because of the limiting conditions of their lives, cannot respond to the call as, in other circumstances, they would. I have known a gentle heart well nigh broken because a minister, more remarkable for zeal than wisdom, almost as good as declared that those who were connected with the church, and who did not engage in a certain kind of work were unworthy to be called Christians. But if he had only known it, the truth was that the quiet one whom he had almost crushed was every day doing a kind of service for Christ which required far more self-denial than that to which the preacher would have summoned her, and one, too, which she could not have neglected without sin."

But our space is more than exhausted; only we are sure that our readers will thank us, should they be induced by what we have said to purchase the volume and thus be able to judge for themselves. If things were as they ought to be with the reading Christian people of the Dominion, the demand for such a work ought to be such as to justify the issue of a Canadian edition, and not a pirated one either.

We cannot skip the seasons of our education. We cannot hasten the ripeness and the sweetness by a single day, nor dispense with one night's nipping frost, nor one week's blighting east wind.