

"What is the Bible and How Should it be Studied." "Crozer (in which Dr. Vedder is a professor) is a conservative, Baptist theological college.

Dr. Wood, the Baptist President at Newton Centre, in writing of Baptists wrote of "our lack of share in the thoughtful life of the century." Dr. Faunce, the Baptist President of Brown University, after referring to this, wrote:

"Baptists need to develop schools of thought, not opposing but supplementary. . . . There are today thousands of young men in their ranks for whom the old shibboleth are meaningless, to whom the newer Biblical study has come as a glad release and spiritual inspiration, and whose ideal of Christian service is not exhausted in contending for the faith." These men know what service their Baptist forbears rendered to the cause of civil and religious freedom, and they are quietly resolved to enjoy the same freedom today. They realize that the strength of their great denomination must lie, not in its millions of adherents, not in its literalistic interpretation of ancient writings, but in its ever-growing apprehension of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, its ever-fresh translation of that Spirit into the language of the twentieth century, and its constant application of that spirit to the institutions and the lives of men."

Perhaps we could not do better than close with a quotation from Prof. J. F. Ganong, author of "The Epic of the Inner Life." In a sermon from John 1:45, 46, he said:

"The spirit of the time urges, if the Bible is true, surely it can make its claim good. As matters are, however, despite its evident priceless value, it is in danger of total rejection by some, if it is allowed to go untested and unverified. Men will none of it if you insist on their approaching it with a kind of doctored sense, because it is religious, cannot see a historical contradiction plain before its eyes. The double consciousness thus required is impossible to some. Modern Bible study is the response to such objections, which, being of the age, we feel with the rest. . . . We study the Bible like any other book; and this is right. But will we know in our heart of hearts that more truly we cannot study the Bible like any other book. As soon as we stand within its venerable precincts it lays power and authority upon us. Here are words before which we cannot remain neutral, words that tingle and quicken and search us like a fire. . . . Wherein lies their power? Men have tried to name it; they have called it inspiration, and then filled libraries with books attempting to define what the word means, and no one could exactly tell beyond this, and in this all are agreed, that it is the real indisputable thing in the Bible; that its presence and power sets the Bible apart from human literature forever and makes it the perennially modern book of the centuries."

H. F. WARING.

P. S.—I have some copies of the "summary" which I should be pleased to send to any who wish it. H. F. W.

"He Means Me."

Many listen to the truth before it comes home. We generalize and criticize, and forget that the gospel message is direct, definite and personal. Usually we are bad judges of our own portrait, and are specially slow to recognize our moral portrait when it is accurate and unflattering, and, in addition, we have no sincere desire to know our true selves. So the upper seats hear for the lower, and free seats for the rich; but hearing, they do not hear, and seeing, they do not perceive that God has a controversy with them. A soldier shoots his weight in lead before he kills a foe, and the preacher knows how to kill a foe, and the preacher knows how rarely his message reaches the heart and conscience of those who regularly sit before him. We need to cry with the disciples, "Lord, is it I?" Nothing is done until we have individualized the truth. The great problem is to rescue ourselves from the mass, to disentangle ourselves, to shake off the tyranny of the crowd, and to realize our personal relation to God, His truth, and His kingdom.

But if the truth that condemns means you, so does the truth that saves. "Come unto me me, all ye that are heavy laden;" "He means me." "And when he was yet a great way off;" "He means me." "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost;" "He means me." God's love to us is personal. "Fear not: for I have redeemed thee: I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine," "That thou mayst know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel."

Is not the knowledge of this personal, redeeming, enfolding love just what we want? Happy day when we realize it! Once I was looking carelessly down a list of heirs to unclaimed property, when I suddenly saw my own name. What an electric shock! How deeply interesting that document all at once became! So it is when we recognize our personal interest in the gospel grace and promise, "He loved me, and gave Himself for me."—Rev. W. L. Watkinson.

Christian Aspiration Today.

When a minister goes into a pulpit as a stranger and finds an old hymn-book he is puzzled to find hymns appropriate to his sermon, unless that also is an old one. Ruling religious sentiments of a generation ago are conspicuously absent. The martial note especially is missed. Struggle, conquest, joy, exultation, anticipation of heaven have given way to contemplation.

One reason for the change is to be found in the present aim of evangelistic movements. Evangelists in recent years, failing to gain the attention of the unconverted, have made it their main object to deepen the religious life of Christians. At first this was urged as a means to an end—

the conviction and conversion of sinners. Now it is often presented as the end in itself. It is a common report of evangelistic meetings that though the unchurched masses were not affected the spiritual life of the churches was enriched.

Spiritual experience becomes exhausted by feeding on itself. It requires an objective aim, the conquest of the world that is opposed to God, in order to grow. And the fight to win such a conquest must be hand to hand. It is inspiring to give Christian civilization to distant lands. But the inspiration to do this wanes in those who do not seek to give their next door neighbors the Christian faith which they prize as an inestimable blessing. We shall not increase our gifts for foreign missions much until we increase, our labors for the conversion of those nearest to us and the reclamation of those who have lost their Christian faith, and until we feel the joy of such victories for Christ.

Virile Christian aspiration has more of the element of conflict than that of meditation. It must have the sturdy active purpose to conquer inward temptations. It must kindle with the eager desire to win new disciples for Christ and to know them when they are won. It must see foes in those who do not follow him, and the great real foe in the devil who leads them astray. The church needs a new version of the Psalms for use in public worship. Their prevailing note of battle and victory is too largely lacking in our hymns. Their aspiration has too much disappeared from our prayers, as any one may see who listens to the petitions of the prayer meeting and the pulpit.

Most of all our churches need a campaign of individual effort to save souls. Covenants of two and three gathered together in Christ's name to win some persons named and known are of more value at this time than great evangelistic meetings. When Christians have a definite object to pray for which they long for, their prayers are fervent. When they have won a victory, they do not celebrate it in song. Let those who are willing unite now to gain some out of the kingdom of the evil one into the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, and his church will be alive with fresh aspirations which must find expression in song and prayer.—Congregationalist.

The Summons to Repentance.

Repentance is the attitude which we should take in reference to sin, in view of the fact that God has enlightened us as to the sinfulness and destructiveness of sin, and as to his love for us and his desire to win us to a saved and holy life.

Repentance is in the first place a turning from sin unto God. Following this, and all through life, the repentant one is to continue turning away from every sin that presents itself and turning unto God in fresh and loving obedience day by day. At the very beginning of Christian life one turns away from sin, choosing God and his service instead of the service of sin, and then forever after, he is choosing God and alliance with him in every place where evil solicits his heart and life.

Repentance is more than sorrow over the consequences of sin. Cain was greatly sturred up and excited over the punishment that was threatened, and he said that it was greater than he could bear. Esau was sorry that he had lost the temporal benefits of his birthright, but he showed no sorrow for his past life or desire for a different disposition. The unrepentant thief on the cross railed and reviled, and when he begged to be saved from the cross, showed no desire for the salvation of his soul. Many a criminal has groaned over his punishment with no manifestation of desire for a better life.

Repentance again is a great deal more than sorrow for sin. It is an abandonment of and turning away from it. Sorrow might mean brooding and even despair. If one were simply filled with grief over his wrong doing he might be overwhelmed by it. Peter was repentant, but he showed it not only by going out and weeping bitterly, but by seeking Christ out at the sepulchre and through his resurrected life protesting that he loved him accepting the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and serving him faithfully all through his whole life. All of that showed what Peter thought of his sin of denying Christ. He turned away from it. He served Christ as the Lord whom he loved and for whom he was willing and ready to die.

When one truly repents of his sins and turns to God in faith, he becomes a Christian. Led by the Holy Spirit to begin a life of new obedience, he henceforth loves the good he once hated and hates the evil he once loved. He turns his back upon sin, toward which his face was once turned, and his face is toward Christ, whom he once wished to avoid. If ever in his Christian life he is overtaken by sin, he is to turn from it repentantly, as did David, when he wrote the Fifty-first Psalm, or as did Peter when he wept and told Christ of his love.

The Christian is not perfect. He makes mistakes. He falls into error. He does what is wrong. This does not change the fact that he is a child of God. But because he is a child of God he sorrows over his sin, and day by day he seeks divine grace to enable him to overcome. The Holy Spirit works within him watchfulness and striving against sin, and carefulness that he may walk worthy as God's children ought to walk.—Herald and Presbyter.

The Passion for a Crowd.

BY GEO. E. BURLINGAME.

The passion for a crowd brings upon the preacher—and upon the church as well—an avalanche of temptations which are well nigh irresistible. It tends to superficiality in service. In the smaller sphere we demand of ourselves the most thorough and genuine effort and method. We take time to do our work well. But the passion for a crowd leads us to a tolerance of less thoroughness. We become more extensive, but less intensive; broader yet thinner; the blue lake nesting in the mountains has become an overflowing sea, but the little lake had depth; the great sea is a shallow fraud.

The passion for a crowd depreciates the individual. He is no longer a soul to be won at every cost, a life to be rescued from peril and woe. He is simply a bead on the counting frame; he has value only as he is part of a crowd. A story is told of Bishop Grafton, of Fon du Lac, who once went to church to deliver a sermon. He found an audience of six or seven persons gathered to hear him. He was angry and chagrined, and after a sharp scolding at the parish for its indifference, he left. He told some of his auditors he had spent four days on his sermon and he did not purpose to waste it on a handful of people. The doubtful bishop was sorely afflicted with the passion for a crowd. Individuals had no value and presented neither opportunity nor obligation.

The passion for a crowd leads to the love of popularity. Where the crowd is considered essential to success it is accepted as a sure sign of that success, and thus becomes an end in itself. The soul of the preacher is drawn into sympathy with the popular estimate of himself, and the graces of self-satisfaction and self-laudation are rapidly developed. It is far easier for the average Christian teacher to be popular than for him to be inflexibly true to his divine commission.

For the passion for a crowd further tempts him to compromise with the truth. If the crowd is so essential to his success, and even to his personal satisfaction, then no word must be uttered to alienate or alarm his impulsive and easy-going constituency. He must handle their failings gently and ignore their sins entirely. If he must have homiletic exercise, he may use the Jews for a punching bag or the Mormons for a cushion to jump on. The crowd is only his while he tickles its ear and warms its fickle heart. Truth must waive its claim in favor of truckling. Conscience retires to make room for compromise. The crowd cries for smooth things; their itching ears can endure only teachers after their own lusts, and the man who has a passion for a crowd must bow at the shrine he worships.—The Standard.

Radium Christians.

One of the most interesting and far reaching scientific discoveries made of late is that of radium, a metal which possesses the wonderful properties of emitting light and heat energy without appreciably diminishing its bulk of force. How beautifully suggestive is this radium of the normal spiritual condition of the Christian! Any other light needs to be lighted and replenished. Any other fire needs to be fed.

This metal glows and radiates as if it had an infinite source of energy. It has been claimed that one gram of this substance could exert enough in time to lift the whole British navy to the top of Ben Nevis, and yet retain all of its initial force. We are reminded at once of that one perfect life nineteen centuries ago, that was continually giving off to others, and that yet grew greater and greater until it has come to dominate one third of the human race, and to endue them with an energy that makes them the rulers practically of the other two thirds.

A more recently suspected property of this radium is that it may communicate to other metals the properties that it possesses. What may be true of radium we know to be true of the Christian who is in vital touch with God. Radium Christians do not have to be continually lighted or energized by others. They are constantly giving off energy and yet losing nothing.

One radium Christian can do more than lift a great navy like John Wesley, he can lift the whole world to a higher place. Radium Christians are as much a mystery to the world as radium is to scientists, but the fact of their existence has been so revolutionary as to compel the world to change its standards of morals politics and business. If all Christians were spiritual radium, the miracle through Paul was wrought in pagan Europe would be wrought in the whole world. Radium Christians would make a radiant earth.—Christian Endeavor World.

He who bestows the same love upon others as he does upon himself may be entrusted with the government of an empire.—From the Chinese.

In this life there is but one happiness—to live for others.—Leo Tolstoi.

There is no self-complacency in feeling ourselves in harmony with the divine, for the more you feel so the more you feel that it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his own good pleasure.—Ex.