

strength. It will stir you to much prayer; and in prayer for others is the time when the soul, forgetful of itself, unconsciously grows deeper into Christ. It will make clearer to you the new nature of branch-life; its absolute dependence, and at the same time its glorious sufficiency,—independent of all else, because dependent on Jesus. If you work, abide in Christ. There are temptations and dangers. Work for Christ has sometimes drawn away from Christ, and taken the place of fellowship with Him. Work can sometimes give a form of godliness without the power. As you work, abide in Christ. Let a living faith in Christ working in you to be the secret spring of all your work; this will inspire at once humility and courage. Let the Holy Spirit of Jesus dwell in you as the Spirit of His tender compassion and His Divine power. Abide in Christ, and offer every faculty of your nature freely and unreservedly to Him, to sanctify it for Himself. If Jesus Christ is really to work through us, it needs an entire consecration of ourselves to Him, daily renewed. But we understand now, just this is abiding in Him; just this it is that constitutes our highest privilege and happiness. To be a branch bearing much fruit,—nothing less, nothing more,—be this our only joy.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE CRIMINAL.

A Sermon preached before the National Prison Association of the United States, Saratoga, September 7, 1884.

BY THE REV. DR. LYMAN ABBOTT.

"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."—Romans xii. 19-21.

Of details of prison administration and questions of prison reform I shall have nothing to say this morning. Many of you have given your best thought to this subject; some of you have learned in the only school that is of value—the school of experience; it would be a singular freak of self-conceit for the minister, coming out of his study, where he has learned all that he knows respecting prison reform from the reports which you have written and given to the public, to venture to instruct you respecting the method by which prison administration and criminal law should be enforced. I have no such purpose. But there are certain great essential principles revealed, as I believe, in the Bible, and confirmed by the experience of life, in conformity with which all reform, social, moral, political, and individual, must be carried out. It is of certain of those great fundamental principles that I propose to speak this morning. And I have chosen this text for this reason: it tells us what are the principles on which we are to deal with our enemies; and it is a text as applicable to society as to the individual.

We have in this country a great body of enemies. I do not know that there is any accurate census of their number; they count, at all events, by the hundred thousand. A rough estimate puts the number of the inmates in all prisons and reformatory institutions, and those dependent on them or united by interest to them, and included under the general title of the criminal class, at about 700,000, or one in seventy of the entire population.

They are enemies of our social order, they are enemies of our homes, of our property, of our lives; they are in enmity against everything that is good, true, pure, valuable, best, in society. What are we to do with them? Society has ordinarily answered that question by saying, Punish them. The method of deal-

ing with social enemies which society has suggested has been essentially a punitive system.

Three great principles, more or less recognized, have underlaid the methods with which society has operated in dealing with the criminal class in times past. It has undertaken to exercise justice toward them. It has undertaken to attach so much pain and penalty to so much transgression. It has acted on the sound and true principle that every wrong-doing deserves suffering; it has undertaken to adjust the amount of suffering which shall be inflicted on each offender for each wrong-doing. In doing this, it has sought for its purpose the protection of society, and, incidentally, the reformation of the offender. It has said, Here are enemies to public order, enemies to life, enemies to liberty, enemies to prosperity, enemies to peace; we must protect ourselves against them. And this is all that society, in its social organization, has undertaken to do. It has accordingly taken them, when it could lay its hands on them, and has shut them off in a community by themselves: it has put them now in Botany Bay, now in a chain-gang, now within the four walls of a prison. Having put them there, it has shut its eyes to their condition; it has been indifferent as to whether they were well fed or ill fed, whether they were well clothed or ill clothed, whether they had cleanliness and ventilation or whether all sanitary conditions were neglected; and when, now and then, a cry of complaint has come up from them, the cry has been disregarded. Society has made very little attempt, until very recently, to put men in charge of these criminals that should do them any good. Something has been done since John Howard's time to care for their physical and moral condition; but all such efforts are the results of prison reform, the product of a very different system. This self-protection society has undertaken to accomplish chiefly by the deterrent power of fear, by showing men that the way of the transgressor is hard, by making them fear the results of crime. These three principles, I think, have underlaid that method on which society has acted in dealing with the criminal classes: vindictive justice—the idea; protection of society—the aim; and the deterrent power of fear—the method. Now, that system cannot be reformed. It is wrong in every fibre; wrong from its lowermost root to its topmost bough and leaf. You can no more reform that system than you can graft strawberries on a Canada thistle, or Delaware peaches on a scrub oak. The only thing you can do is to cut it down, root it out, burn it up, put the plowshare through the field, and plant a new stock. Against this whole method, in its idea, its aim, its method, I set in opposition this morning the principles indicated in our text.

In the first place, we are not to deal out justice to wrong-doers. The very phrase "administration of justice" is a misphrase. What does justice mean but this: the right adjustment of penalty to crime? It is not within the capacity of men to adjust the penalty, on righteous and true and adequate principles, to crime. We do not know enough; it is not our function; it does not belong to us; we have not the capacity; and the era and the epoch in which we are living is not the era and epoch in which even God Almighty, sitting on his throne, administers justice. It is the epoch of redemption. The epoch of judgment is in the future. "Prisoner at the bar, stand up! You are tried and condemned for a crime—stealing a pair of shoes, stealing a loaf of bread, picking a pocket. Receive the just sentence of your crime!" Will you give it? If you would know what is the real desert of this man, you must know his past ancestry, his father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, great-grandfather,

the whole line through which the blood has flowed down into his veins. You must know his education; you must know whether, when you were at your mother's knee, learning from her sacred lips to repeat the Lord's prayer, he from his father and mother was learning obscenity, profanity, lying, drunkenness, theft, all innumerable crimes. You must know what is his organization, his brain, his physical construction, what the globules of his blood, the fibre of his nerves; you must know more, you must know the interior life of his soul and spirit, what are the temptations he has resisted or failed to resist, what has been the purposed wrong-doing or what has been yielding to sudden stress that has driven him like a ship before the gale. You must know all these before you can adjust in due proportion the penalty he deserves. And if you are not as those who, having ears, hear not, you will hear from heaven the solemn voice saying to you: "Judge not, that ye be not judged." "Who art thou, that judgest thy brother?" "We must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ." "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

In the second place, this system is wrong in the object which it proposes. It is a part of our duty in society, and certainly of our right, to protect ourselves from wrong-doing. But self-protection is not the principal end and aim of social order. Selfishness is always blind. Love only is clear-eyed. Our duty is not simply self-protection, not chiefly self-protection; still less is it simply the reformation of the individual offender: of that I shall speak presently. Our duty is not to protect ourselves from evil, but to overcome the evil; not merely to protect society, but to redeem society; not merely to wall up this crime within four prison walls, or send it to a Botany Bay, but to get rid of it, to sweep it out of existence, to transform it. Near my old home in the West there was for years and years what was known as the "lost creek." This creek, coming down from the hills far away, buried itself in the prairie, turning it now into a noisome swamp, and now, in the rainy season, into a beautiful but equally noisome lake. Men fled from it, or they lived near it and fought it with quinine, and grew sallow and palsied and weak. At last some clever engineer said, "Why not drain it?" And they drained the lost creek, and carried it away into the waters of the Wabash River; and the yellow cheeks were yellow no longer, and palsied limbs were palsied no longer, and life and health and strength came back when the miasmatic swamp was drained, and they had gotten rid of it. Now in our country, and in all countries, there is a great swamp sending out its evil influences, larger, broader, I think, than any of us imagine, corrupting our press, feeding on liquor shops, polluting all the sources of our life, drawing into itself those that stand just on the border line, multiplying crime and iniquity, deadening sensibility, dwarfing virtue. What are we to do with it? Build a wall around it, and so try to protect ourselves against it? No! Drain it. Get rid of it. Redeem society from it. Do you say, "That cannot be done?" If we cannot drain a hundred thousand acres, we can drain one. It has already been demonstrated in this State that we can do something in that direction. The Elmira Reformatory reports that of those sent to its walls eighty per cent. give evidence of reform. Eighty per cent. of the swamp that the Elmira Reformatory deals with is drained. That is something. It cannot be done, but we can work to that end. Can we protect society fully? Are there no burglaries because we have a prison? Is society unharmed or uninjured to-day? We can do neither the one nor the other perfectly. Which shall we work toward, self-protection

or redemption? We shall not be vindictive in our justice. We shall not let God have finished his children stand spot or wrinkle, or avarice or hate or hearts. Not until redemptive work is done with our God to the end, kept in the protection of society, individuals, but the contamination.

In the third place, this end by the deed has its place in our redemption from the world was to be protected and prevented by fear. The punishment inflicted before they see the horror of the forces that led to the veil that we wishments? Why before our church the criminal in the example of the gang breaks stone walks, that our editing example by seeing it? Men no longer they did in the that they may the back of the way of the tar that the gallows public square a public spectacle learning that the infliction of back from crime the infliction of the on-looker art to virtue. Eve rod is used by privacy of a si pupils. God I teeth, no cry of ears from his suffers us to know dark future, an alty; but no e knows what it from the huma

I venture to forms a wrong: the wrong-doer agents may be he is set free fr but by the pow ligions seek t fear. Set up i any pagan lan The priests m appearance, b with wisdom. men from wro Christ brings way in which remedy is nev is the power o by hope," is t of every one o faith, love—tl we are elevate society from t not merely to are to overcome it, not chiefly good.