

THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

The way to measure the depth of the love of Christ is to begin at the throne and go down to the cross, and to the foul abysses of evil. The way to measure the height is to begin at the cross and the foul abysses of evil, and go up to the throne. That is to say, the topmost thing in the universe, the shining apex and summit, glittering away up there in the radiant unsetting light, is the love of God in Jesus Christ. The other conceptions of that divine nature spring high above us and tower beyond our thoughts, but the summit of them all, the very topmost as it is the very bottommost, outside of every thing, and therefore high above every thing, is the love of God which has been revealed to us all, and bought for us sinful men in the passion and manhood of our dear Christ.

And that love which thus towers above us, and gleams the summit and the apex of the universe, like the shining cross on the top of some lofty cathedral spire, does not gleam there above us inaccessible, nor lie before us like some pathless precipice, up which nothing that has not wings can ever hope to rise, but the height of the love of Christ is an hospitable height, which can be scaled by us. Nay, rather, that heaven of love which is "higher than our thoughts," bends down, as by a kind of optical delusion the physical heaven seems, to do, toward each of us, only with this blessed difference, that in the natural world the place where heaven touches earth is always the furthest point of distance from us; and in the spiritual world, the place where heaven stoops to me is always right over my head, and the nearest possible point to me. He has come to lift us to Himself. And this is the height of His love, that it bears us up, if we will, up and up to sit upon that throne where He Himself is enthroned.

So, brethren, round about us all, as some sunny tropical sea may embosom in its violet waves a multitude of luxuriant and happy islets, so all of us, landed on our little individual lives, lie in that great ocean of love, all the dimensions of which are immeasurable and which stretches above, beneath, around, shoreless, tideless, bottomless, endless.

But, remember, this ocean of love you can shut out of your lives. It is possible to plunge a jar into mid-Atlantic, further than soundings have ever descended, and to bring it up on deck as dry inside as if it had been lying on an oven. It is possible for men and women—and I have them listening to me at this moment—to live and move and have their being in that sea of love, and never to have got one drop of its richest gifts into their hearts or their lives. Open your hearts for Him to come in by humble faith in His great sacrifice for you. For if Christ dwell in your heart by faith, then and only then will experience be your guide; and you will be able to comprehend the boundless greatness, the endless duration, and absolute perfection, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.—*Alexander MacLaren, D.D.*

THE PULPIT AND PUBLIC OPINION.

The minister of the Gospel is in one sense a public servant, and is supported by the voluntary contributions of the people. It is only necessary to consider this simple statement a little to see that this relation of the minister to the people is the source of a very subtle and very powerful temptation to make the pulpit a mere echo of current opinion. If the people are not pleased they will not pay, and although the preacher may not be conscious of any lack of independence, and, as a rule, is not conscious of it, it nevertheless is a very difficult thing for him to escape the logic of the fact that his support depends upon the favour of the public. Nor is this all of the case, nor the worst of it. A man who differs much in his opinions from the people about him, and especially if he is vehement in the advocacy of his opinions, is stigmatized as peculiar. He must conform to the ideas and customs of his contemporaries, or fall under the odium of having an unbalanced mind. Elijah would be called a crank, and John the Baptist a lunatic, if they should appear now and denounce popular vices as they did in their own times. It is so in every age. The true prophet is never a universal favourite, and the temptation to unfaithfulness is, therefore, very great.

And yet no worse woe can befall the human race than a man who comes to his fellows under the authority of divine sanction, but instead of proclaiming the whole truth of God, becomes a panderer to public opinion, and a coward under the menace of public disfavour; a man who consents to error, and is dumb in the presence of wrong, because he fears that an independent utterance of God's truth will cost him something in public favour, and possibly in money. A sneaking pulpit is an offence in the sight of God, and a curse to mankind. The Word of the Lord has infinite authority, and it is the vocation of the minister of Jesus Christ to declare the whole counsel of God, and thus bring public opinion into conformity with divine revelation. And there never was more demand for this admonition than now.—*Western Christian Advocate.*

CHRIST IS MINE.

O, what precious joy divine,
I am Christ's and Christ is mine.
Mine to love in weal or woe,
Mine to keep where'er I go;
Mine upon the stormy deep,
Mine where turbid waters leap;
Mine upon the mountains cold,
Mine in valley, wood or wold;
Mine in scorching, trackless sands,
Mine in strange, unfriendly lands;
Mine in dark and stormy night,
Mine in hours of peaceful light;
Mine in poverty and wealth,
Mine in sickness, pain or health;
Mine when storms of sorrow fall,
Mine when joys have turned to gall;
Mine when foes shall hate me sore,
Mine when friends know me no more;
Mine when desolate and lone;
Mine when every hope has flown;
Mine is life in life or death,
Mine unto the latest breath;
Mine beyond earth's scenes of woe,
Mine where sorrows none shall know;
Mine when passed life's stormy tide,
Mine forever at His side—
O, what precious joy divine,
I am Christ's and Christ is mine.

CHRIST IN THE AGE:

"Christ present in our times," is a subject we are somewhat apt to overlook. We are naturally much more quick to observe the signs of gloom and misery, of sad sorrows and still sadder sins, than we are to notice the signs of the coming of the divine kingdom and of the day of Christ.

We find an illustration of this in the sphere of our home relationships—in the profounder reverence with which children are regarded, and in the more humane and enlightened agencies which are brought to bear on their development.

In the Church and outside of it the words of Christ, "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven," are receiving an interpretation which not long ago would have been regarded as the rankest of all heresies, and as a sure sign of "falling from grace."

And along with the more exalted sense of the dignity and honour of childhood, which that interpretation gives, there have grown kindlier and more beneficent agencies for its education and growth.

The books, for example, which are now provided for the culture of the child-mind are removed from their counterparts of a few years ago, by a gulf nearly as wide as that which separated Lazarus in Abraham's bosom from Dives in his torment. I do not refer to the wonderful progress that has been made in the art of illustrating them, nor to the fact that some of the foremost artists of the day have not deemed it beneath their thought and skill to make expressive the story book of a little child, but to the difference there is in their character and aim. The moral progress is much greater than the artistic, and is the more significant because its movement is usually of a slower and more gradual kind.

The literature for children, known years ago by many who are here this morning, was not rich in quantity, and was poorer still in quality. Often it did more harm than good, and tainted the minds it was meant to stimulate and purify. It started with the assumption—based not on the teaching of Jesus Christ, but on the theological dogma of the total depravity of man—that every child was born into the world full of "envy, malice and all uncharitableness," with infinite gifts of craft and guile, and assuming that he was totally depraved, it did its best to make him prove the assumption true. The literature of to-day, as a rule, stands in sharpest contrast with it. There are fewer pages you have to sew together lest their impure atmosphere should poison your children's minds. It recognizes more clearly the good and noble elements that are to be found in every child, and appealing to them it obtains a readier reply. And above all, it makes known to them the Father of men, not so much as One who is swift to note a child's transgression and to punish him for his sin, but as One to whom the youngest may go for help and sympathy, who will gladly overlook his failures, and tenderly aid him in every prayer and struggle.

Yes, the truer understanding of Christ's words in reference to children has uplifted them in our reverence and regard. They rank higher in our thought and love, because we see how high they ranked in His. And so now regarding them, in the light of Christ's words, as born into the kingdom of heaven, we do our best to keep them there, instead of waiting until they have gone through a weary wilderness of wandering, and have returned to the home they ought never to have left, and have returned through paroxysms of repentance, burdened with memories of shame.—*Rev. Henry Shaw.*

TEN thousand of the greatest faults in our neighbours are of less consequence to us than one of the smallest in ourselves.—*Archbishop Whately.*

HOME, SWEET HOME.

Modern society is so full of the heaven of Christianity that most of us have very little idea what a social revolution Christ has already achieved. One of the most startling evidences of this is the fact that what we mean by the word "home" is a peculiar and characteristic product of Christianity. When Christ came there were no "homes" in any country under heaven. In Palestine, where there was the nearest approach to the Christian ideal, there were fatal defects. The Jewish "home" was and is the strength and glory of the Jewish race. But the Jewish home fell immeasurably below the Christian "home," because the Jewish faith tolerated a lax system of divorce, and, yet more, because it tolerated polygamy. With this partial exception, there were no "homes" when Christ was born. In the Roman Empire the marriage tie was fearfully lax, and the father had power even to kill his children. Nameless forms of infanticide were openly advocated by illustrious authorities. In Greece the same infamous doctrines prevailed. Even Socrates treated his wife and children with heartlessness, and Plato founded his ideal Republic upon the most ingenious and elaborate arrangements to prevent the existence of "home." We need say nothing of the social organizations of Asia and Africa, for they continue to this day. It is well known that there is no "home" in Arabia, India, or China, except where the Oriental religions have given place to Christianity. The savage tribes of Africa are equally incapable of understanding the delight with which we sing "Home, Sweet Home." In fact, "home" is so absolutely a Christian creation that it existed nowhere when Christ came, and it exists now only where the influence of Christ is felt.

It is, therefore, quite natural that the enemies of Christ in Europe and America are notorious for their hatred of the "home." Most of them preach and practise very lax views of the marriage tie, and are incessantly engaged in trying to substitute the State for the home. They are well aware that until they can destroy the Christian "home" they cannot destroy the Christian religion.—*Methodist Times.*

TESTIMONY OF THE MONUMENTS.

The Christian world is getting rather tired of the cobweb historical and anti-Biblical criticisms spun by the German critics. They are fast being dispelled by the spade and pick-axe. It was apparently proved that Homer was a myth, and ancient Troy a delusion. Yet Dr. Schliemann has disinterred the captured city, found traces of the fire which destroyed it, and proved that the "Iliad" and ancient tradition were right in designating its site and surroundings. Genesis and Daniel, both alleged publications of a later age, have been shown to be so minutely in accordance with their professed eras, that the hypothesis of posthumous invention becomes incredible. And now Jeremiah is added to the list of accurate narrators, for the digging at Tahpanhes has made it evident that he was thoroughly acquainted with the architectural details of Pharaoh's palace. We might greatly extend the list of scriptural confirmations, but enough has been said to show that evidence has been dug from the dust which overthrows many a carefully elaborated hypothesis of the sceptical theologians of the Fatherland. A good deal more is to follow, for the work of exploration and disinterment is yet in its early stages. Thus far not a single discovery has shaken the accuracy of the Holy Writ, while light has been thrown upon not a few obscure passages, and the complete truthfulness of important statements has been demonstrated. There was never greater reason for cheerfulness among the defenders of the faith. Every rescued monument adds a new stone to the walls about Zion.—*Western Christian Advocate.*

THE MIGHTY MONOSYLLABLE.

The most effective word on many occasions in the English language is the mighty monosyllable No. It has been the pivot on which innumerable destinies have turned for this world and the next. Uttered at the right moment, it has saved multitudes from perdition. For example, the splendid career of Joseph turned on the prompt "no" spoken at the very nick of time. Had he stopped to parley with that wanton woman (as too many young men stop to parley with a temptress on the street), he would have been lost. "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" saved him from the dizzy cataract. Daniel might plausibly have said to himself: "O, everybody about the court drinks wine and lives high on the king's dainties; I do not want to be thought self-righteous." He dared to be singular. At the end of a few weeks he had a cleaner countenance and a sweeter breath than any of the fast livers in the palace. "So will not I" was the motto of the courageous young teetotaller. If he had drifted along with the current of temptation, we might never have heard of even the name of Daniel.—*Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, D.D.*

LEARN to live by faith, no class of persons need the support of faith and hope more than the aged.