

Our Contributors.

An Accident and what Came of it.

Those who have seen the late Dr. G. M. Grant, principal of Queen's College, Kingston, Ontario, will remember that he always wore a black mitten upon his right hand. In his early life he met with an accident in which this hand was so severely injured that only a stump of it remained. But though he suffered this disability, he made such progress that he rose to be one of the foremost men in Canada. As an educationalist, as an administrator, and as an ecclesiastical statesman, he had few equals in the Dominion. He was naturally of a kindly nature, but it is probable that his own early sufferings and struggles made him more alert to discover, and more prompt to assist, cases of distress.

Some years ago, Dr. Grant revisited the little village in Nova Scotia where he began his ministry. On the night before the day he had set for his departure, he heard that a little lad that day had lost his hand. Though it was about ten o'clock at night when Dr. Grant heard the sad news, he at once asked his host if it would not be possible for them to go out to see the little fellow. The host hesitated at first because the wounded lad lived some little distance out of the village, the night was dark and rainy, and there were neither street lamp nor sidewalks; but when he saw how determined the principal was to go, and when he remembered that that would be the only opportunity his guest would have of seeing the boy, he procured a lantern, and together they set off. Along the muddy and deserted street they went, and in due time reached the place. Very tenderly did the good doctor talk to the boy; indeed, no mother could have spoken more sympathetically. Taking off his black mitten, and showing him his maimed hand, he said: "The accident to that hand made a man of me. It was after I met with it that I resolved to be a preacher of the Gospel. God has been gracious to me, and He will be to you. You are not so badly off as I was, because you have only lost your left hand, whereas I lost my right. So you see you have the advantage of me. In this strain he spoke to the lad, not long, but long enough to inspire the sufferer with fresh faith and hope. It was a high price which Dr. Grant paid for the lesson which enabled him to speak in that helpful, hopeful, encouraging fashion to a boy; but who will say that it was too costly? Certainly he himself would not have said so.—Rev. W. S. McTavish in Forward.

The Word Made Flesh.

The incarnation includes two things, the eternal pre-existence of the Word, and the manifestation of that Word in time, and on earth, and among men.

The preface of John's Gospel, which every child learns to recite, and which yet is fathomless in the depth of its thought, contains a series of these manifestations of God. A word is the expression of a thought. Men even think in words. It is perhaps impossible to think without them. I have a thought in my mind, expressed only to myself. God, in that timeless age before all worlds, was conscious of himself, "And the Word was with God and the Word was

God." Here, then, are two personalities in the Godhead. Identity of substance, both are the one God. Yet distinct of personality, the Word that was with God.

And then God manifested himself in Creation. By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made. Through the Son, the Infinite Manifestation of God, were all things created. But then there comes the story of earth and its evil and of Eden and its sin. Darkness has fallen upon the world. And God manifests himself in the Word, who is the light of men. And not only sin is here, but death. But the Word is the Word of Life. Then came the ministry of the Old Testament prophets, with John the Baptist standing as their representative, all bearing witness to the true Light that cometh into the world. He came unto his own, the chosen people, in prophecy and vision, in sacrifice and type, but still the chief manifestation was not yet. It was fulfilled, at length, when the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

And in the meaning of that phrase, "the Word of God," we have the purpose of the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. As the word is the expression of a thought, so Christ is the expression of God to men. That is simple enough. Men have been so blinded by sin that they cannot know God. All through these centuries they have been groping after God. God spake to men, in sundry ways and in divers manners, by the prophets. But still the revelation was incomplete. And outside the little circle of the Chosen people, the world was as Paul expresses it, "feeling after him to find him, though he be not far from every one of us." Men made figments of their own imaginations and worshipped them. They likened God to themselves, or to the creatures of earth. They endowed God with attributes of cruelty and even of lust. Let the old mythologies tell how far men had wandered from God and how much need there was of some authoritative and enduring revelation of him. Philosophy failed to give any clear answer. It could not even speak with certainty concerning the immortality of the soul.

And into this darkness the Light shined. Into this ignorance came the Word, the very expression of the thought of God himself. And he taught men who God was by letting them see what he was. He dwelt among us that we might behold his glory, the glory of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, and might say, Now we know God. Now we can look up to our Heavenly Father and not fear. Now we can trust in his love and rejoice in his grace. We are the children of God, and we are unafraid, for the Word hath dwelt among us, having become flesh.

What would we then learn about God? If he is our Creator, if our lives and our breath are in his hand, if he hath power, not only to kill, but to destroy soul and body in hell, what is his disposition towards us men? That is what we want to know about him.

And here is the answer, Christ.

At the very beginning of his ministry he was invited to a wedding feast. He went and hallowed that feast with his presence, and wrought the first of his miracles by way of adding to the innocent joy of the occasion and saving the embarrassment of poverty.

What may we learn about God from that? Why, that he is no severe and separate Being, but one who delights in the happiness of his creatures and who has made their happiness his highest glory.

Near that little village of Cana is another little village of Nain. A funeral procession winds its slow and dreary way along; the only son of his mother, and she a widow, say the followers of the body to its grave. What does God think of the poor sorrows of the children of earth? How does God feel at the mother's agony over her only son? Listen to the voice that breaks that silence and penetrates into the spirit world with the command, "Young man, I say unto you, arise." And into that mother's arms of love he delivered her son. The scene changes, but the lesson is the same. Here are two sisters, lone women now, weeping for their brother. And though Jesus knew that he was about to restore the dead to life, about to change that sorrow into overflowing joy, when he saw them weeping, his own heart of sympathy overflowed and his eyes were wet with tears. How does God think then of our sorrows? Why, he knoweth our frame. He remembered that we are dust. And though he has provided the immortal life for those who trust in him, and though he said "these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, shall work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," "that our weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning," yet is the Divine face turned toward us in sympathy and the Divine heart feels for us. And this puts a new meaning into sorrow itself, that he who hath sent it into our lives, and who knew that it was for our good, and who will grant us the eternal peace and joy of heaven at last, yet in the agony of our present sorrow is a very present help and one who understands our grief. For such was Christ, and he who dwelt among us in the Word, the Revelation of the very nature of God.

What is God's relation to the sinner of earth? Christ bore a double relation to the sinners of his day. There were those upon earth in the time of Christ to whom he never referred save in terms of denunciation and of judgment. Men will have to search far in the literature of invective to find any more scathing indictments than Christ framed against the Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites. He told them that they were like whitened sepulchres, beautiful without, full of dead men's bones within. He laid to their charge all the murders of the ages, for their hatred of himself. He told them that the publicans and harlots would enter into the kingdom of God before them. He challenged them, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" And he was plain enough about that hell, too. He described it as the place where "the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." He draws for us the curtain, once, that separates the land of the living from the land of horrors unutterable, and shows us the naked soul in its agony, tormented by the flames and by the pangs of undying remorse. Some ignorant fool was writing, the other day, about the Old Testament doctrine of Hell Fire. The phrase is a coarse one, but the doctrine is not in the Old Testament, unless vaguely and faintly. The one who reveals hell to men, and warns them lest they enter it, is the most merciful and loving and tender-hearted being who ever walked this earth, Jesus Christ.

Therefore, we argue, that as he is the revelation of God's thoughts toward men, God, the Judge of all the world, will do