

has been left free to move; within these lines her freedom results from her spirituality, and is to be conditioned by it. To dictate to every congregation or community of believers one unelastic compulsory order of service or liturgical form of prayer, to encumber the free and simple worship of the Church with a multitude of wearisome ceremonies which minister to pageant rather than profit; to make a crime out of trifling divergences in details, as if Christians were tied to some painful and scrupulous law of ceremonies; or to split the unity of the visible Church of Christ on unimportant matters of ritual—are any of these things in harmony with the liberty or with the spirituality of the New Testament religion?—*J. Oswald Dykes in the Catholic Presbyterian.*

HABIT OF UNTRUTH.

Some men seem to have a constitutional inability to tell the simple truth. They may not mean to lie, or to tell an untruth. But they are careless—careless in hearing, careless in understanding, careless in repeating what is said to them. These well-meaning but reckless people do more mischief than those who intentionally foment strife by deliberate falsehood. There is no firebrand like your well-meaning busybody, who is continually in search of scandal, and by sheer habit misquotes everybody's statements. This carelessness is a sin of no small magnitude. A man's duty to God and to his fellows requires him to be careful—for what else were brains and common sense given him? Of course, that other class, the malignant scandal mongers who take a fiendish pleasure in promoting strife, who deliberately garble men's words and twist their sentiments—is in the minority, and people have a pretty decided opinion regarding them. Most men misrepresent because they don't seem to think that care in speaking the truth is a pre-eminent duty.

The effects of this careless misrepresenting of others are seen everywhere. Its effect on the individual is to confirm him in a habit of loose, distorted and exaggerated statement, until telling the truth becomes a moral impossibility. No other thing causes so many long-standing friendships to be broken, so grave dissensions in churches, so much bitterness in communities, and so much evil everywhere. It is an abuse that calls for the rebuke of every honourable man—a rebuke that shall be given not only in words whenever occasion demands, but by example. The Persians were said to teach their youth three things: to ride, to draw the bow, and to speak the truth. A little more instruction on this latter head would do no harm to our "advanced civilization."—*Examiner and Chronicle.*

A STRANGE FUNERAL SERMON.

The deceased had long been renowned throughout that part of the country for his wickedness. His intellectual abilities were of no mean order; his property was considerable, and he had belonged to a highly respectable family; advantages which he used most assiduously in the service of his master. By the practice of every kind of dissipation he had achieved an evil notoriety, and gloried in being considered the most fascinating and dangerous *rowe* in the country. This being so, his associates resolved upon giving him a funeral worthy of his reputation.

As one means of insuring this, they invited one of the most eminent Presbyterian ministers in the region to deliver the funeral discourse. To the surprise of many, after some little hesitation, he consented. On the day and at the hour appointed, the country church was crowded to overflowing by an assembly composed of the relatives, friends and companions of the deceased, together with a mixed multitude drawn from far and near by curiosity to hear what such a minister could find to say of such a man.

Punctual to the moment, the tall form of the Rev. Dr. ascended the pulpit, and the service began. There was first the reading of the Scriptures. Then followed a prayer, subdued and tender, for the family and relatives of the deceased. But the announcement of the text fell like a clap of thunder upon the assembly. It

was from Luke xvi. 23—"And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment." The sermon was a most pungent and powerful exhibition of the character, course and end of a wicked man. It held the assembly spell-bound to the very last word; but there was in it not a single direct allusion to the person whose obsequies they had come there to celebrate.

In silence and in deep solemnity the congregation dispersed after the sermon was finished. Some were indignant, but the attempt to excite odium against the preacher was a failure. It was generally thought that in what he had done he was governed by a sense of duty. He was said to have stated afterwards that when he was invited to preach on that occasion, he had determined to decline, but, in answer to prayer, received a message which he believed to be from God:—"Go—and preach the preaching that I bid thee."

"UNWORTHILY."

This word used in relation to the Lord's Supper, has been a terror to many minds, and has kept many away from the Lord's table. It occurs in 1 Cor. xi. 27: "Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." Again, in verse 29, "For he that eateth and drinketh [unworthily], eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." I quote from the version of King James, which is less accurate here than usual. The word "unworthily," in the 29th verse, I have included in brackets, as it does not belong there at all. It is not in the original.

But what does the word "unworthily" mean? Observe carefully, the language is not "whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord *being unworthy*." If our own personal worthiness were the requisite qualification, who would venture to approach the Lord's table? We are all unworthy. There is no worthiness in ourselves, but in Christ alone. What, then, is the real meaning of the adverb unworthily? Doubtless it means, "in an unworthy manner." The apostle makes his meaning plain in the 20-22 verses. It appears that in the Corinthian church the Lord's Supper had become an occasion of festivity and of reveling, not very unlike a modern picnic. All this was unsuited to the occasion; and the reflection which the ordinance demands and suggests, the discerning of the body, was an impossibility in the midst of such disorder. It is no wonder that the apostle rebuked all this in the most pointed language. Well might he say that the one eating and drinking thus, ate and drank condemnation to himself. This surely was eating and drinking unworthily, that is, in an unworthy manner.

The word "unworthily," therefore, does not apply, was never meant to apply, to those timid persons who are conscious of their own personal unworthiness. Such persons have in this word, and in this whole passage, no warning to stay away from the Lord's Supper.—*The Standard.*

MANY men claim to be firm in their principles, when really they are only obstinate in their prejudices.

Do you know that a wise and good man does nothing for appearance, but everything for the sake of having acted well?

WHATEVER we gain in this life must be by effort. If one look at his attainments in knowledge or anything else that is worthy, he will be reminded that they all came as the result of his determination and energy. Toil and battle procure us bread and a crown.

In our Sabbath schools we have just now much apparatus for conveying information and inculcating opinion. Of the information we fear the wit would justly say, "It is better not to know so much than to know so much that isn't so." Of the opinion every thoughtful hearer would observe,

"Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and saint, and heard great argument
About it and about; but evermore
Came out by the same door wherein I went."

—*Sunday Afternoon.*

The Ages before Moses.

By J. Munro Gibson, D.D. New York: A. D. Randolph & Co. Toronto: Hart and Rawlinson.

This is a recent contribution to the already voluminous literature of the Book of Genesis. But it possesses a special interest to our Church, owing to its being from the pen of a Canadian by education, well known to our body as having been the colleague of the late Dr. Taylor of Montreal, and pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, Chicago, the Rev. John M. Gibson, D.D. The book consists of twelve lectures, which were delivered by the author partly in Farwell Hall and partly in his own church. The plan of these lectures is very admirable and is well carried out. It is, the writer tells us in the preface, "The result of an attempt to combine the advantages of the expository and topical methods, and at the same time to secure the benefits of *continuous* exposition without wearying and discouraging those who have not time to dwell upon details." Although we would not say that the manner of dwelling more on details, better known to us in Canada as a mode of expository lecturing, should never be followed, or is without its advantages for special subjects, we yet entirely and without qualification hold the method of which we have so good an example in Dr. Gibson's work, to be the very best for popular expository preaching. We would also add that, while the first mentioned mode *may* be the best for students of theology in our colleges, that a good deal also of the kind illustrated in this book, would be of incalculable advantage to young men pursuing their studies. It is just what many have felt the want of, and have had to supply for themselves after entering upon their public work, which they could have done very much better had they been prepared in this way for it beforehand. We have however in this volume specimens of both kinds of treatment. But how to lecture after the manner of Dr. Gibson is the question? He points out what we believe is the only way in which it can be done, provided there are, to begin with, the proper mental qualifications. His work, he tells us, is the "fruit of repeated study of the book of Genesis during many years." Nothing but patient, intelligent, candid and *repeated* study of the scriptures and other works illustrating them will enable any one to do it, and any one by this means, though they may not equal the author, may in a measure succeed. With respect to style, there may be noticed, perhaps, the abruptness peculiar to spoken discourses, as distinguished from those first and wholly written out in the study. But when the cause of this is explained it can hardly be considered a defect. Criticism is at least disarmed. We cannot in this brief notice point out all the many merits of these very excellent lectures; but we may say that there appears on the very surface a far-reaching, a broad and strong grasp of truth with the ability to set it clearly before the mind of the reader. They are thoroughly conservative of truth, and yet conciliatory in tone and spirit as regards those who have honest difficulties. The help of scientists in their several departments, where they have rendered real help is not only acknowledged, but freely used, and their ignorance where they show it, and they show it often, is freely exposed. It is not by any means granted in these lectures that because a man is an authority in the natural sciences, he necessarily must be also an authority in the interpretation of Scripture. Lastly Dr. Gibson excels in pointing out, as he constantly does, how the Old Testament throws light upon the New, and the latter reflects back its clearer light upon the former. Indeed the book might very well have been called, *The Gospel in Genesis*. We cordially commend it to all students in our colleges, to our ministers, and to all other intelligent readers of the Word of God, who, not satisfied with texts only and snatches of it, crave those larger views which reach from the beginning to the end, and give a grand continuity to all Scripture. Dr. Gibson promises, should this volume prove useful, to follow it with another upon the "Mosaic Era." We shall gladly welcome the lectures upon this subject when they appear, and we shall be very much disappointed and confess ourselves greatly mistaken, if they are not soon called for by those who have felt that in "The Ages before Moses," they have received most valuable aid in the study of the Sacred Scriptures.—P.◊