

practical lesson in humility, Peter felt uncomfortable, and at first opposed his Master's wish. He wished to see Jesus put on the crown and sceptre, and when he saw him, instead, go down on his knees to wash his feet, he was disappointed. But if Peter had this fault, he also, when he saw his error, made full amends, and we may believe that he learned his lesson in humility. Peter often, as Jesus said to him, thought of things "not like God, but like man." Yet he was always willing to learn the right, and he belongs to the teachable, those whom Jesus calls the poor in spirit, whose is the kingdom of heaven.

6. The character of Peter illustrates the truth that a man may prove weakest where he seems to be strongest. If there was anything in which Peter was strong, it was his power of speaking the truth, and confessing the right. At Caesarea Philippi, it was he to whom it was first given to confess Jesus as

the Messiah, the Son of God, and Jesus said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: for flesh and blood has not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Yet afterwards, it was Peter who denied him among the servants in the court-yard. So scripture points out to us that we may fall on that side on which we seem strongest, if we forget Christ and begin to trust in ourselves. Moses was the meekest of men, and yet he sinned through pride. Solomon was the wisest of men, and yet he sinned through folly. Christ says it is absolutely necessary for his disciples to keep near to him if they are to be strong or holy. He says: "Apart from Me you can do nothing." Peter learned that lesson, and it was because he learned it well, and received the spirit of his Master, that he became the great apostle whose career is so full of abiding interest and inspiration.

Knox College, Toronto.

The Programme of the Early Christian Brotherhood

BY REV. PROFESSOR J. W. FALCONER, D.D.

[Students of The Programme of Christianity in the New Standard Teacher Training Course, Second Year, by Dr. Frank Sanders, will find Professor Falconer's article useful in connection with Chapter II. of that book—
EDITORS.]

We cannot easily overestimate the honor which comes to us because of our membership in the Christian Church. This is a divine institution, which has had a most remarkable history. It was founded by Jesus Christ, who said: "On this rock I will build my Church," and it is fulfilling more and more the purpose for which it was formed. Though often attacked by foes without and within, though rent asunder by schisms and heresies, though often corrupted by error and evil, the Church has constantly held on its way, and it is more powerful to-day than at any previous time of its history. It is making the largest contribution to the regeneration of society, and to the healing of the divisions of the world.

In a recent number of the Hibbert Journal, this statement is made: "If what has been done by the Church or the Churches for the good of man, be eliminated, that which is left for the credit of other benefactors will be little indeed."

The League of Nations, on which we are resting our hopes for universal peace, can only be successful if there is some deeper unity, such as the league of Churches, which will inspire all nations with the brotherly love of Jesus.

It is, therefore, a very important theme which is here presented in the Book of Acts: it is nothing less than the story of the rise

and progress of the Church. The key to the meaning of this great book is to be found in ch. 1:8. The Acts show us how the little band of followers of Jesus increased first in Jerusalem, then spread to Judea, after that to Samaria, and then to the uttermost parts of the earth. "Like a mighty army moves the Church of God."

1. *The Divine Power.* Jesus had promised that he would not leave his disciples comfortless, but would come to them, and impart new power to them. This is abundantly fulfilled in the Acts which is the narrative of the working of God's spirit of grace and power.

(a) *The birthday of the Church.* As the disciples were praying in the Upper Room, the Spirit descended upon them with great power, so that they realized that there was a new influence helping them in their work. Great multitudes hear the Gospel, and many additions are made to the Church. Pentecost is called the birthday of the Church.

(b) *Miraculous power.* The disciples find themselves in possession of a grace which enables them to work miracles, and convince the unbeliever. This same Spirit of Jesus is present with them to heal the sick.

(c) *First organization.* The growth of the Church makes it necessary to organize the forces with more care, and here again it is the divine Spirit which becomes the guiding principle. They are to look out men full of the Spirit and wisdom.