

the weak and human life was at a discount. The wicked men in the days of Noah appear to be somewhat tolerant, but I imagine they were exceedingly amused by the plans and performances of "the foolish old man," and waited patiently to see what would come of his folly. So Noah escaped direct persecution. Abraham, called from idolatry, had respect among the people because of his power, wisdom, greatness and wealth.

In Joseph's day, an Hebrew was an abomination to an Egyptian, and doubtless an Egyptian was an abomination to the Hebrew, but could not so well afford to show it, because of minority.

Christ came in a time of universal peace, but not of universal love. The Jew was against the Roman and the Roman against the Jew; the Jew against the Samaritan and the Samaritan against the Jew; the Pharisee against the Sadducee and the Sadducee against the Pharisee. The spirit of the time was: Love them that love you, and hate them that hate you.

The controversies were not just like ours, but much in the same spirit—hatred, envy, jealousy, strife and evil speaking; yea, sometimes, cruelty, injustice and bloodshed. The spirit of religious controversy crucified the Lord of Glory. Cruelty and blood have marked the pathway of religious controversy, and, if not carried to the same extent to-day, it is because of the lack of opportunity.

Christ came—the Prince of Peace. His teaching was followed by "a sword," not because He would have it so, but because of the evil in men's nature. The father against the son, the son against the father; the daughter against the mother, the mother against the daughter, etc.; and a man's foes, they of his own household; and all this because of the evil in men's nature: the wicked *always* persecuting the righteous.

Christ taught something better than love for love and hatred for hatred. He would draw men more to the divine standard: Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, etc. Why? That you may be the children of your Father in heaven, etc.

By one beautiful parable—the parable of the prodigal son—Jesus showed "the fatherhood of God." Where can you find a more beautiful picture of the never-changing love of God than that which is held up before the mental vision in the inimitable wording of this parable.

By another parable Jesus would impress upon the minds of all the universal brotherhood of man.

One of the very religious men of the Jewish nation came to Jesus and asked:

"What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"

"What is written in the law," said Jesus, "how readest thou?"

The man answered: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself."

"Thou hast answered right," said Jesus, "this do and thou shalt live."

But this religious lawyer is not yet satisfied; he is narrow, and wishing to be justified in his own narrowness (perhaps to love the Jew and the Jew only, and only the choice, even, of that nation) asked: "Who is my neighbor?"

To this question Jesus gave no direct answer, but by the fine, clear portrayal of character as given in the parable of the good Samaritan (see Luke x.) He would abolish forever the national and religious narrowness that drew the dividing lines, built the partition walls, and formed the impassable gulfs of His day.

"Who," said Jesus, "was neighbor to him who fell among thieves?"

The lawyer, made again to answer his own question, said: "He who showed mercy on him."

Jesus said unto him: "Go thou and do likewise."

This is the fruit of religion. This will bind men together. It will bring men and women under the influence of Jesus of Nazareth. It will cause their hearts and lives to be filled with love, joy, peace, long-suffering, etc., and hasten the universal sway of Him whose right it is to reign.

"You different sects who all declare,
Lo! here is Christ, or Christ is there;
Your former proofs divinely give,
And show us where the Christians live."
O. B. EMERY.

PREACHING.

NO. II.

Every view we can possibly take of preaching, most emphatically teaches us that nothing less than the entire force of consecrated character of the man can satisfy its demands. This is evident when we consider the importance, weight, and grandeur of the themes with which the Christian minister has to do. He has to do with the soul, that ray of the Divine Being, which, if true to itself and the requirements of God the King eternal, will one day be clad with a beauty and grandeur such as nature's loveliest and sublimest scenery never can equal. He has to speak of the invisible, which in its nature is too spiritual for fleshly eyes to behold, and which can alone be appreciated by the enlightened and purified heart. He has to speak of sin, the soul's dread malady, that fearful outrage against God, that evil, which by its unutterable hideousness has marred the human heart so frightfully that its effect upon mankind makes all other calamities unworthy the name. He has to do with Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the glorious personification of eternal love and truth, the Saviour from the dread consequences of sin, and the conqueror of the last enemy. He has to speak of the final consummation of the world's eventful history, the coming judgment, and the retributions of the last day. His own soul, filled with the intensest interest of subjects, fraught with such vast importance, must call into full play every activity of mind, and summon into full energy the heart's whole power.

The preacher is a teacher; but he is more than a teacher. The subjects with which he has to do are infinitely wronged, when presented in dull platitudes from cold lips and an unmoved heart. A teacher may accomplish his purpose, when he expends his force on ideas or facts; but the preacher is more than a simple proclaimer or declaimer; he is, to a vast extent, in his feeling heart and tender sensibilities of soul, a reproduction of the truths he presents. The truth is not only understood by him, but is in him a fountain of enthusiasm, a living, glowing, intense reality. His words leap from his lips as living flames kindled in his heart. No man can preach the gospel with such power that it will have the lasting and desired effect upon his hearers until he himself has been brought, by the power of divine truth, into real, vital, personal sympathy with Christ. Such a sympathy will give a heavenly pathos and power to his words, and such a personal manifestation of the sense of eternal things that will awaken a corresponding feeling in his auditors. We referred in our previous number to the almost superhuman power and influence of the early reformers, and although we may perhaps very justly criticize much of their style and teaching, yet we feel assured that theirs was a work of true and heartfelt religious zeal. It is said of the celebrated Jonathan Edwards, a widely known divine and metaphysician of the last century, that his famous sermon—"Sinners in the hands of an angry God," was preached by him with such tenderness and solemnity of manner, that his audience at Enfield shrieked and groaned aloud, until their cries drowned the preacher's voice, and he was forced to pause and quiet them; and yet Edwards was in no sense considered a sensational preacher.

His tenderness and sympathy, his solemn, fervent and pungent logic, his mingled simplicity and sincerity, his directness and earnestness, completely captured the hearts and impulses of his audience. The importance of power in the pulpit will perhaps be better seen if we consider that the preacher has to do with the conscience, as well as the intellect, to enforce the obligations as well as to teach the truths of Christianity. His function has for its highest aim to call forth towards God the awe, love, fear, attachment, trust and joy of humanity. He is to strive to make Him who is supreme in the universe, supreme in the soul. His great purpose is to give strength and vitality to the thought of God in the human heart. No object ever presented itself for thought and investigation to the intellect and affections of man, comparable to the subject of our relations to God, and the great and sublime consequences growing out of that relationship. Loose conceptions of Christianity do not deserve the name of religious knowledge. The enquiry ought to be prosecuted with an intenseness with which no other subject is investigated, possessing as religion does, the power to lift the thoughts, the aspirations, and the conceptions, into a realm which for grandeur and lofty sublimity is exclusively alone. With, then, a theme so noble, and a life-work as infinitely important as it is inspiring, it ought to be readily seen and understood that preaching should be able to summon in the man, who is willing to devote himself to the work, every moral and intellectual faculty. Intellect, conscience, affections, moral will, lofty conception, deep rooted earnestness, and sanctified resolution, should characterize and pervade his every effort.

"How often," says Channing, "does preaching remind us of a child's arrows, shot against a fortress of adamant? How often does it seem a mock fight? We do not see the earnestness of real warfare, of men bent on the accomplishment of a great good." Winning souls to Christ is our highest conception of earth work. No loftier position can be occupied in the activities of life than that position chosen by the preacher of the word of God. While the fruits of the toil of others perish and decay with time and sense, while cities with their proud monuments and palaces may crumble to dust, his work leaps the bounds of time and the finite, and glories in the glad fruition of eternal joys in the infinite. The proclaimer of Christianity stands upon the lofty glory-tipped mount of God's love, behind him the far-receding outlines of the past, before him the gradually unfolding revelations of the future, and above him the over-spreading regis of God's effulgent glory. He beholds the anxieties, toils, dissipations, pleasures and competitions of human life around him. In the stir and bustle of society he sees the distracting influences of human capriciousness, and his whole being is aroused to lift the human conceptions to the Invisible and fix impressions of God deeper and more enduring than can be found by a perishing world, groaning, fettered and chained in subjection to vanity.

T. H. BLENNIS.

Jacksonville, Florida,
August 9th, 1887.

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

All duly interested in spreading the gospel will look with anxiety for the subscription list in this issue. I look for a long list, and hope I will not be disappointed. There would be none more rejoiced to see a long list of names in this issue than myself. It would be well for us all to study the early Christian Church and see what they did. We read in Acts iv. 32, "They were all of one heart and of one soul; neither said any of them that ought of the things he possessed was his own; but they had all things common." This is the spirit we require when we are asked to contribute to the cause of Christ and the salvation of our fellow-men.