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THE HYMNS OF THE WESLEYS

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE SPIRIT AND MANNER OF THEIR PREACHING AND OF THEIR SYMPATHIZING WORK.

By THE REV. DAVID HAY.

CHARLES WESLEY.

The preaching of Charles Wesley was immediately directed, like that of his brother John, to the salvation of souls. He had, with him, a passion for saving souls, and under his preaching multitudes were added to the Lord, who became his glory and joy. In doctrine, feeling, and aim the brothers were one, having both been baptized into the same Spirit. They firmly believed in the universal gift and depravity of the human race, and also in Christ, as "God's great gift to all mankind." They strongly and decidedly bore testimony to the truth that the Son of God gave Himself a ransom for all. They knew nothing of those bonds which a limited redemption and a restricted Gospel impose on the preacher's offer of salvation. They openly declared and maintained by arguments which have never been refuted, that the redeeming grace of God is free for all men. For this truth Charles Wesley contended as stoutly as his more polemical brother. He not only preached it wherever he went, but set it forth in his psalms and hymns with a fulness and power which were irresistible. On the subject of God's universal love to man, he put forth his sentiments with intense and passionate earnestness. To the thousands who gathered around him on Kennington-common and elsewhere Charles Wesley cried:

See all your sins on Jesus laid;
The Lamb of God we adore;
His soul was once an offering made
For every soul of man.

And what a glorious opportunity was then given to the herald of salvation to declare to listening multitudes that Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man. But even those vast audiences were not sufficient to satisfy his heart, expanded as it was by the love of Christ. He desired to proclaim it to the world, to make it known to all mankind. Hence his fervent wish:

O for a trumpet voice
On all the world to call;
To bid the nations rejoice
In Him who died for all.

And again why, since God has already bestowed his word of salvation, and by an oath declared that he has no pleasure in the death of the sinner, and above all, has not spared his own Son, to deliver Him up for us all? Then, renewing his appeal to the sinner, he exclaimed:

See! the suffering God appears!
Jesus weeps; believe his tears!
Mingled with his blood, they cry,
Why will you resolve to die?

Are there not congregations amongst us in which these hymns are now solemnly heard, or the subject of them treated from the pulpit? Is it because there are no sinners in our assemblies to whom they are applicable? Are there none still dead in trespasses and sins, and hastening on to the second death? Not outwardly such may be, as those to whom the Wesleyan preached more than a century and a quarter ago, yet are there many as truly spiritually and with minds as full of earthly agonies as King James's soldiers, and a half of the world? There need no similar voice of warning and earnest exhortation to be lifted up among us in these days of formality, worldliness, self-indulgence, and love of ease? Are there none among us who call the Saviour Lord, who read his written Word, who see the Gospel light, and who yet need the expostulation, "Why will you, ye Christians, die?" Alas! there are more than we think or know.

And then, again, in illustration of the passion and power of the preaching of the Wesleyans, how many a passage overflowing with deep religious pathos might be quoted from their hymns on "The Pleasantry of Religion," and "The Goodness of God." Here, again, there hymns and sermons were full of the same inspiration. As they sang of the pleasantry of religion, and of the goodness of God, so they preached; the sermon intensifying the feeling which the opening hymn created, while the closing hymn, sung with heart and soul, served to carry it to a still higher pitch. There hymns show how thoroughly their hearts were on fire with the spirit of the Gospel, for they could never have been written but under a white heat of love to God and man. And it is not surprising that the inspiration of the hymn and sermon often took possession of the whole congregation, so that all were of one heart and soul.

And on a love inspired the whole.
And proper effect can only be given to our glowing evangelical hymns, when the preachers hear and sermon are in full sympathy with them. First identifying himself with his hearers in the common heirship of the cross, he should then identify himself with himself in the common salvation. His invitation to them will then be—

Come, let me with the blood applied,
My Lord, my Love is crucified.
Is crucified for me and you,
To bring us rebels back to God;
Believe, believe with Jesus' blood
Fusion for all flows from his side;
My Lord, my Love is crucified.

Happy is it for those congregations in which such hymns are sung on every Sabbath, and in every service with the Spirit and the understanding aloft. Methodism was not only born, but flourished too, while its heart is with its hymns, and its ministry is a true and living expression of them.—*Met. Rec.*

AFRICA'S NATIVE BISHOP.

IN VIEW OF THE PRESENT VISIT TO ENGLAND OF BISHOP CROWTHER, THE NATIVE CHIEF PASTOR OF THE NIGER TERRITORY, THE FOLLOWING PARTICULARS OF HIS HISTORY MAY BE INTERESTING TO MANY.

One morning in the year 1821, the inhabitants of Oshogun, a town about 100 miles inland from the Bight of Benue, were attacked by a slave-trading tribe. The town was captured and burnt. Among the prisoners was a boy, Adaji by name, eleven years of age, with his mother, his two sisters, and one of his cousins.

The relatives were, however, soon divided among the conquerors, Adaji, whose course we have to pursue, with one of his sisters, being allotted to the principal chief, who almost immediately barked him for a horse, but by a failure in the bargain he was returned for a short time to his relatives. He was, however, soon taken prisoner, and sold in the slave-market to a Mohammedan mistress, by whom he was again disposed of for some rum and tobacco.

From his new owners he experienced barbarous treatment. With 186 fellow prisoners he was chained and fettered, and thrown into the hold of a ship, where their sufferings were most intense. The vessel was, however, captured by British cruisers. Adaji, and five of his younger companions, kept close together, in the hope of sharing together the same fate, but descending from the accounts which had been falsely given them by the Portuguese, that their new masters would kill and devour them. When they were brought on board the British man-of-war they were terrified by seeing a beam of cannon shot, which they imagined to be a pile of negroes' heads, as well as by some pieces of pork, which they thought to be the remnants of a cannibal feast. Their fears, however, were greatly mollified by the presence of the British officers, and that the flesh belonged to some animal that had a cloven foot; and the kindness of the sailors, who supplied them with food and clothing, soon banished all suspicions, and made them feel that they had fallen into friendly hands. Soon after this, with a little girl of the same tribe, named Asano, he was placed under the care of Mr. Weeks (afterwards Bishop of Sierra Leone), a pious missionary schoolmaster at Freetown, on the Western Coast of Africa. Adaji displayed, from the outset of his unacquainted life, great industry and intelligence. Not content with two hours' teaching daily in the school, he begged a half-penny from some of his countrymen, purchased an alphabet card, and engaged one of the school children as his teacher. In three days he had learned the alphabet pretty well, in six months he was able to read the New Testament, and had shown such a desire for improvement that he attracted the special notice of the missionary, and his wife. Three years of kind and faithful teaching were more than rewarded by bringing Adaji to renounce heathenism, and to embrace with all his heart the religion of Jesus Christ. He was consequently baptized on the 11th December, 1825, and received the name of Samuel Crowther, after a well-known and excellent clergyman. After visiting England in 1826, he returned to Sierra Leone, and became the first student in the Fourah Bay Institution which was founded in order to prepare pious Africans for the work of evangelizing their countrymen. In 1829 he married Asano, and for several years was the devoted schoolmaster of Freetown. His wife died in the month of his former return to Sierra Leone, and he was appointed to accompany the first Niger expedition. It will be remembered how disastrous that mission proved to the lives of the party engaged in it. Still it was not without its fruit. Mr. Crowther was spared, and resolved to devote himself to the Lord's work in that region. For this purpose he came over to England, became a student in the Church Missionary College in Kingston, and was ordained by the Bishop of London to be a missionary in Abbeokuta. Many providential circumstances led to the selection of that place as a missionary station, and on the 2nd of December, 1845, he reached the coast of Africa, "crowned a minister," as his countrymen expressed it, and preached, for the first time, the word of life to his black brethren. Delayed at Badagry for a year and a half by unforeseen events, he preached constantly under the shadow of a wide-spreading tree, and laid there the foundation of a new mission. Arriving at length at Abbeokuta what was his joy to find himself restored to his mother and relatives, after five-and-twenty years' absence, and his still greater joy to be the means of subsequently admitting them into the Christian Church! We must pass over his trials and successes at Abbeokuta; over his labors in Divinity; and the numerous and successful expeditions up the river Niger in the interior. A chief pastor was required to consolidate and superintend the work which had been so happily commenced. Every eye was directed to Samuel Crowther; and on the 29th of June, 1854, with the prayers and concurrence of all, and under the Queen's licence, he was consecrated in the Cathedral of Canterbury, as the first negro bishop of the Niger. The University of Oxford had already conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor in Divinity; and it was a touching sight to see mingling amongst some of the greatest and noblest in the land, who had come to witness the solemn ceremony, several of his African countrymen, and that kind missionary's wife, who had given him his earliest lessons in religion, and whose names had been in his memory before he was called away from his earthly scene to his heavenly crown. Bishop Crowther was soon at his old labors on the Niger. He landed on the 24th of June, 1854, and reached Sierra Leone on the 10th of August. He had the reputation that there awaited him was overwhelming. Black men and white thronged the quay to meet and greet England's first black bishop. On the 22nd he reached Lagos, the scene of his former slavery, and immediately proceeded up the Niger by the *Imperial*. In six years he

POPULAR RELIGIOUS BOOKS.

WE are of opinion that a reform is necessary in the literature of the rich and educated, and not only of these, but of educated professors of religion generally. The religious light reading, even of the past ten years would form a considerable library, and while the demand is ever increasing the supply shows no indications of falling short. There are many of these books which only amuse a vacant hour. Some of them contain much novelty, but little merit; and possess only the lusciousness of a momentary pleasure. They suit the great majority of persons of desultory minds, who, deluged by the excessive variety of an inviting literature which neither stimulates nor taxes the mental powers, rove from book to book, skimming the surface of innumerable productions, but who never know the satisfying, healthful delight of conversing with an old book. There are works so solid and affixed in thought that like all other great master-pieces, they please better after an acquaintance of years. But people grow weary of master-pieces, and seek to luxuriate in a universal mediocrity. Even among professing Christians the natural distaste for the "things of the Spirit" is increased by the prevalence of a shallow and superficial piety of doctrinal and practical godliness to the thousand winning and caressing elaborations of worldly genius and talent under the insidious guise of a sentimental religion. It is probable that never since Christianity was promulgated have Christians held themselves so entirely aloof from those sound and edifying books on religion which constituted the aliment on which rest to the Bible, our evangelical forefathers delighted most to feed. This disposition to consider truly religious writing as abhorrent to good taste, as well as tedious and uninteresting, has led to a perfectly new species of literature which passes among Christians for religious reading. The day of ponderous treatises and systematic sermons has closed. And now our most popular religious writers, whether novelists, essayists, poets, or sermon-writers, vote all doctrinal discourses heavy and stilted, and live by catching up the watchwords of the hour, and breathing the spirit of the age. The strong meat which suited the mental digestive faculties of our fathers is now divided and attenuated, and mingled with milk for babes. The pure Reformation wine must be mixed with water. The Gospel must be made easy; the precious doctrine must be set to music, and what would not be tolerated in the guise of a treatise or homily must be adroitly concealed in the shape of a dialogue or story-book. And thus has arisen a class of productions which occupy a debatable ground between the Church and the world, neither edifying the one nor repelling the other. Yet, so earnestly do we desire to see all men brought to receive the precious words of Jesus Christ, that we would have even these means dealt with leniently, and would agree to any innocent vehicle of truth, if only our brethren may hear and learn of Jesus; but, if it is to wear and guide, when the question arises how the most healthy, robust, and earnest Christian shall be formed, we must plead for a severer regimen than these graceful tales, or even "Life Thoughts" or "Village Sermons." We may be judged stern and censorious when we affirm of the popular religious press that fancy is amused, but reason is famished, and every addition to imagery and ornament tends in modern use to defraud the heart. Sermons and essays in obedience to the prevailing taste are constrained to become picture galleries of illustration and meretricious displays of metaphor and conceits. Let us be fully understood. The books we need are not of reason, compromising, latitudinarian, all things, compromising, rapacious, or fictitious, or strains of sentimentality, however rainbow-tinted, but undeniable statements of Reformation truth. From more than one quarter are the boundaries of our Protestant faith invaded by the religious press of the day, especially from the sides of Ritualism and Rationalism. One large class of writings is occupied with delineations of and expatiations upon the pomp, more complete liturgical stanzas, vestmental sanctity, and meretricious decoration. In the opposite quarter may be seen a formidable array of books in varying degrees of falsehood and effrontery concealed beneath the mark of Christian liberalism, all agreeing in the repudiation of the tenets of sound theology—some professedly scepticism, others denying or ignoring proper inspiration, and others skillfully simulating all meaning from the words Assentment, Justification, Eternity.

To reform our religious literature we must reform the popular religious taste. The great fault of readers is, that they do not wisely select what they shall read; they have neither scrutiny nor discrimination. There are few things in which men feel more secure of their name. I love to think of him as actually with his impressions on their dungheons, or on their missions of Gospel love to the perishing. I believe that Jesus was as really with Luther in his convent, and with Bunyan in his cell, and with Brainerd in his forest solitudes, as he was with Peter and John by the strand of Galilee. He still does his mighty works through his living representatives. He still says, "thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." He still calls out evil spirits. He still comes in among the companies of his disciples. When our faithful Lord said, "I am with you always," he means that there is a strange mix of the unbelieved that seems to hang over good people's minds when they are urged to *revere* and *actualize* their Saviour as a living person. Because their eyes do not behold a living body, they regard him in a shadowy vague way, as if he were very far off on a throne of unapproachable glory. That he should really come into their souls as truly as he came into the house of Jarius, seems to

THE LAST PRAYER IN THE BIBLE.

BY REV. THOMAS L. CUYLER.

The word of God begins with a story, and ends with a prayer. It begins with the sublime story of the creation's six days' work, and concludes with an invitation to the Lord Jesus to come and possess the world which he had redeemed by his blood. "Even so, come Lord Jesus!"

This is the shortest, and yet it is the sweetest and most comprehensive request that devout hearts are taught to utter. It would seem as if the beloved John, when he came to the close of the inspired book, might have cast about him to find the words which would express the fullness of his love to his dear Master and to his fellow men. So he utters these words of prayer. And in these words he epitomizes all the richest blessings which could come into his soul, and into the souls of all who should ever utter it.

We have a great deal of repetitions and rambling verbiage in our average social prayer-meetings. Everything is mentioned, and often very little is really sought. But suppose it were allowed to us to agree upon one short request, our Father should promise to grant to us. What would it be? One might urge the case of a sick child; another the case of an unconverted husband; another's heart is yearning for the Sabbath-school, and still another for the coming of a revival; a prayer for backsliders might be urged as most needed, and the pastor might claim that the blessing of God upon the preached word was the crying want. Suddenly some one leaps up and says, "Let us pray for Jesus!" And we all agree that this prayer covers the whole ground, and meets every case. For if we get Christ we shall get everything. Health, light, strength, pardon for the guilty, comfort for aching hearts, converting power, sanctifying power, all these, and more, will come if Jesus only comes himself. Suppose that any one of our Church praying circles should actually agree to merge their several petitions into this single one, "Come, Lord Jesus!" Here would be a "prayer-gauge" different from any that Professor Tyndal has ever suggested. It would be the simple adoption of a Bible petition, and in accordance with the spirit of that promise, "If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching anything they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." We answered?

I sincerely believe it would. Such a request would be in the direct line of the Divine promise. It would be as nearly allied to all selfish and sinful desires as it is possible for anything human to be. It would involve no interference with physical laws. It would involve no miracle, and would include no impossibility.

For Jesus has distinctly promised his presence to his people. When his bodily form floated up from the side of Olivet he did not say, "Come, Lord Jesus!" A cloud received him out of their sight. But the promise remained, "Lo! I am with you." Not somebody else, but "I, your Lord and Master. Jesus Christ was as truly in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost as he was on the day of his trial or his crucifixion. He was present when the fiery baptism descended. He spoke through Peter's lips when he preached that wonderful discourse, and he wrought through Peter's hands when he was at the entrance to Damascus when Saul of Tarsus cried out from the ground, "Who art thou, Lord?" and the reply was, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." We love to think of Jesus as hovering around the blazing stakes at which his martyr-servants were dying in his name. I love to think of him as actually with his impressions on their dungheons, or on their missions of Gospel love to the perishing. I believe that Jesus was as really with Luther in his convent, and with Bunyan in his cell, and with Brainerd in his forest solitudes, as he was with Peter and John by the strand of Galilee. He still does his mighty works through his living representatives. He still says, "thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." He still calls out evil spirits. He still comes in among the companies of his disciples. When our faithful Lord said, "I am with you always," he means that there is a strange mix of the unbelieved that seems to hang over good people's minds when they are urged to *revere* and *actualize* their Saviour as a living person. Because their eyes do not behold a living body, they regard him in a shadowy vague way, as if he were very far off on a throne of unapproachable glory. That he should really come into their souls as truly as he came into the house of Jarius, seems to

AN INVALID FOR LIFE.

Destined for life to pain,
I suffering lie, and see the years go by;
No vote of sympathy, no loved one nigh,
To bring me hope again.

It was not always so;
There was a time when friends were ever near;
I felt through sorrow that with love so dear
My lot was blessed below.

But on one dreary day
There came a shadow of a grief, so near,
So great, so terrible, in deadly fear,
I trembling sank away.

For tortured nerves could bear
No more the sound of one loved one's tender tone,
Although through suffering's hour each friend
Had gone.

To me more doubly dear,
In anguish then I cried,
"Not this, my Father! Take all else below;
Spare but one friend to cheer me as I go!"

Alas! no voice replied.
But earth had darker grounds;
And one by one I saw my friends depart,
Each taking portions of my bleeding heart;
Till I was left alone.

My prayer had been in vain;
And nights I wept my pillow with my tears,
And mourned for friends who, through the coming years,
I never might see again;

Until one blessed night
There came a Form so fair, so sad to see;
Reproachfully it raised its hand to me—
"Hast thou forgotten thee?"

"When this I did for thee?
Behold my hands, behold my bleeding feet;
Thou hast a friend—was ever love repelt
With such a sympathy?"

Blest thought! my prayer was heard;
I gazed entranced, and saw the clouds depart,
Till every nerve was thrilled, and in my heart
The fountain depths were stirred.

No longer now alone,
Bright visions came to cheer me on the way,
And love's ecstatic bliss transpired to day—
My Friend, my only one.

—*Watchman and Reflector.*

THE EVANGELICAL WITNESS.

(organ of New-Connection Methodism) is an elaborate article in favor of the repetition of sermons. It says:—"Dr. Newton preached a sermon from Luke 1, I have loved the habitation of my house, and the place where thou dwellest (Ps. 26: 8), which sermon had been published only a few months before in the 'Pulpit.' Dr. Bunting, as he was about to commence his sermon on one occasion, saw a young man adjusting his note-paper and pencil to take it down, when he called him to save out of their sight. But the promise remained, 'Lo! I am with you.' Not somebody else, but 'I, your Lord and Master. Jesus Christ was as truly in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost as he was on the day of his trial or his crucifixion. He was present when the fiery baptism descended. He spoke through Peter's lips when he preached that wonderful discourse, and he wrought through Peter's hands when he was at the entrance to Damascus when Saul of Tarsus cried out from the ground, 'Who art thou, Lord?' and the reply was, 'I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.' We love to think of Jesus as hovering around the blazing stakes at which his martyr-servants were dying in his name. I love to think of him as actually with his impressions on their dungheons, or on their missions of Gospel love to the perishing. I believe that Jesus was as really with Luther in his convent, and with Bunyan in his cell, and with Brainerd in his forest solitudes, as he was with Peter and John by the strand of Galilee. He still does his mighty works through his living representatives. He still says, 'thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.' He still calls out evil spirits. He still comes in among the companies of his disciples. When our faithful Lord said, 'I am with you always,' he means that there is a strange mix of the unbelieved that seems to hang over good people's minds when they are urged to *revere* and *actualize* their Saviour as a living person. Because their eyes do not behold a living body, they regard him in a shadowy vague way, as if he were very far off on a throne of unapproachable glory. That he should really come into their souls as truly as he came into the house of Jarius, seems to

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The Great Bible, (A. D. 1539.)—This was a revised edition, corrected by Cramer and Coverdale, after the Bible of Xetzer, published in the year 1534, at the instigation of King Henry VIII. and his Council, he was imprisoned, and after a long confinement, strangled, A. D. 1536. This was a kind of annotated work, being a correction of Matthew's Bible.

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THE THREE LAST CALLS.

O sinner, cease! I despise not thee,
But give thy Creator the days of thy youth.
Why standest thou idle? the day is fast
The Lord of the vineyard is waiting for thee.

Holy Spirit by thy power,
Grant me yet another hour:
Earthly pleasures I will prove
Earthly joys and earthly love;
Sincerely yet I have said the day,
Holy Spirit, wait, I pray.

SIXTH AND NINTH HOUR.
O sinner, speed thee! the men wear space;
Then squander no longer the moments of grace;
But haste while there's time, to thy Master
Agree;

The Lord of the vineyard stands waiting for thee.

Gentle Spirit, stay, O stay!
Brightly beams the early day,
Let me linger in these bowers—
God shall have my noontide hours.
Hide me not for my delay,
Gentle Spirit, wait, I pray.

ELEVENTH HOUR.
O sinner arouse thee! thy morning is past.
Alas! the shadows are lengthening fast.
Escape for thy life, from the dark mountains
Flee!

The Lord of the vineyard yet waiteth for thee.

Spirit cease thy mournful lay;
Leave me to myself I pray;
Earth hath flung her spell around me,
Pleasure's silken chain hath bound me;
When shall my path hath trod,
Spirit, then I'll turn to God.

(Telling Bell.)
Hark! borne on the wind is the bill's solemn toll,
'Tis mournfully pleading the knell of a soul,
'Tis the Spirit's sweet pleadings and strivings are
more.

—*Christian Advocate.*

ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF THE BIBLE.

We have accounts of various parts of the Bible being translated into Saxon, when that language was spoken in England. The Psalms were translated by Adelph, the first Bishop of Sherborne, (A. D. 706.) The four Gospels, by Egbert, Bishop of Lindisfarne, who died A. D. 721.

The venerable Bede also translated various parts, if not the whole of the Bible into Saxon. King Alfred translated the Psalms, and Elric, Archbishop of Canterbury, parts of the Old Testament about A. D. 985. English translations of the Bible were also made in the 13th and 14th centuries. But of the complete English translation of the Bible, the first was Wickliffe's Bible, about A. D. 1380.—This was before printing was invented; transcripts therefore were obtained with difficulty and copies were scarce.

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