

The Great Revival.

BY REV. A. C. DIXON, D. D.

Before Mr. Moody died he declared that he believed we were on the eve of a great revival, and such has been the public expectation. Are we to be disappointed? I believe not, for there are signs that God is moving upon the ministry and the churches as never before since the great revival of 1857.

A revival cannot be gotten up; it cannot even be preached up, and worked up. Organization is important, but organization, however wisely manipulated, will not bring revival. It was God at work on the Day of Pentecost converting 3,000 in one day. Human agencies are not to be dispensed with, but let us be careful not to substitute the human for the divine. God is life, and it is only God who can give life to the dead, and more abundant life to the living.

The object of a revival is that Christians may rejoice in God. "Wilt thou not revive us again that thy people may rejoice in thee?" What now is the source of our joy? Is it the gifts of God rather than the Giver? Is it the blessing more than the Blessor? Is it the love more than the Lover? If so we are not truly revived. Our source of joy as well as life is in God, and if we rejoice in the latter we may rejoice evermore, for then we have the unfailing source of joy. Let us not even rejoice in joy, but in the God who gives the joy. Some of us would like to repeat the experience of past years. Time was when in the old country meeting house our hearts were filled with ecstatic joy; we shouted hallelujah and meant it. Since then we have had seasons of trial which have resulted in coldness, and we are hungry for another refreshing from the Lord. Such a motive will not bring revival. Christians may be guilty of spiritual dissipation; they want to be happy just for the sake of being happy. They like pleasurable emotions, and seek them.

It may be, again, that we desire a revival, in order that our church may be built up, our denomination prospered, our plans promoted, but such a motive will not bring a revival. When we turn from looking at our joys and seeking our own prosperity, unto God as the source of all joy, and the giver of all prosperity, we shall be truly revived. Our hearts yearn for friends who simply desire us, who do not want us for our money or our influence, but just for ourselves. I read in the Youth's Companion of two men who met in the restaurant of the Waldorf-Astoria. They had been boys together. One of them determined to be rich, and had succeeded. He was worth \$20,000,000. The other was content to remain on a farm in Western New York. He married a wife who loved him, and his children were like their mother in this respect. This country farmer had with him in the restaurant his wife and two daughters whom he introduced to his millionaire friend. "Where is your wife?" asked the farmer. "She is in Paris," was the reply. "Where are your children?" "My daughter is in London, and my son is on his yacht. I board in this great hotel and feel very lonely." When the millionaire went up to his room, he sat down and brooded in silence. He said to himself, "I wish that I had some one who cared simply for me and not what I have. When I went to England my daughter hurried me off to Brighton, that she might get me away from her English friends. When I visited my son on his yacht he was evidently ashamed of me, and when I left England for America, I felt certain that they were glad that I was gone." In a short time, the story goes on to say, this millionaire died in his lonely room, doubtless of a broken heart. The Western farmer still lives, and is happy in the love of his wife and daughters. As we prize the love which is for us alone, may not God prize the love which is for him alone. He looks for his children to love him, not for what he gives, but for what he is. He wants them to rejoice in him as he rejoices in them. A true revival means faith in God, love for God, joy in God.

There comes with every revival the searching of God's word, with a view not to know simply its literary merit, but to hear God's voice. A willingness to hear what God says goes with the willingness to do what God commands. He says, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," and when we have truly heard this command, we are willing to obey it. The world is hungry for the Word of God. Other books may interest and instruct, but cannot feed the soul. The people go for light and comfort to those who give them the Word of God. The pulpits that are preaching anything else are losing their power. The preachers who are willing simply to be prophets of God, and speak for him, are the ones who draw the hungry multitudes to them. Travelers tell us that in the Transvaal, where the bees place their honey in the clefts of the rocks, the little honey bird sometimes twitters around their heads, even flutters on their shoulders, going back and forth to the rock where the honey is, and thus inviting them to come and lift the rocks that they may eat the honey that is left. The instinct of these birds has led them to associate the traveler with the honey in the rock, and seek the travelers for the sake of the honey. If we give out

the honey from the rock of truth, the people will be like these birds, coming to us for it. "It is sweeter than honey and the honeycomb."

It is easy to be saved when God's people are revived. "Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him." When the waters are troubled by prayer and preaching God's Word, the people can step in and be saved. A broken hearted-sinner went to several churches in one of our great cities, seeking salvation. There was nothing in a sermon he heard that showed him the way of life. They were interesting and eloquent, but they lacked the one thing needful. When the life of God fills God's people, salvation is nigh to them in the sense that it will be easy for their friends to be saved.

God is glorified. "Salvation is nigh them that fear him that glory may dwell in our land." Earthly glory is like the early dew, evanescent and fleeting, but the glory that comes from winning souls to Christ is eternal. In writing to the Thessalonians Paul said, "Ye are my glory." A sinner saved by grace is greater glory than a nation conquered by arms. Let us pray and work that our land during this year may be filled with the glory of salvation.

There is harmony between all the attributes and acts of God. "Mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other." In Jesus Christ God can be true and at the same time merciful; he can be righteous, while he gives peace, but out of Christ he cannot be true and merciful. It would be unjust for him to be merciful; it would be untrue in him to forgive. His righteousness, without the atonement of Jesus, compels him to remain at war with sinners, but in Christ there is peace; while righteousness is maintained, he can be just and the justifier of them that believe. Now that truth and righteousness through Christ prevail, truth shall spring out of the earth and righteousness shall look down from heaven. The figure is that of the growing seed in the field. Truth under the genial rays of God's mercy germinates and brings forth a crop to his glory, while righteousness throws up the window of heaven and looks down, well pleased, upon the scene.

Our greatest need is a revival of righteousness, righteousness in business, righteousness in politics, righteousness in the home, righteousness in all the relations between men. But such righteousness cannot be without the regeneration of the soul, and this comes through Jesus Christ alone. If, therefore, we would make our people righteous, let us make them Christians. A friend told me the other day that he heard the oratorio of the Messiah, and such music had never thrilled his soul before. The music that comes from reconciling men to God, and God to men through Jesus Christ, is sweeter than any melodies produced by instruments or voice. It is the music of the soul.

"Righteousness shall go before him, and shall set us in the way of his steps." When men are made righteous by being brought into right relation through Christ, the way of the Lord is prepared. He goes forth conquering and to conquer. And this work of righteousness goes forward like an engine and a train of cars upon the two rails of the Spirit in the Word, and the Spirit in the Christian. The Holy Spirit is God with us today. He lives in his Word of truth, for it is God-breathed, and he lives in his people of truth who are God-filled. If we depend upon the Spirit of God in the Word and in his people, we need not fear what is before us.

When you sit for the first time beside a locomotive engine while his train is running through the darkness of the night at the rate of 40 miles an hour, you will think that the engine and cars may be pitched at any moment. The light shines straight ahead without following the curve, and reveals to you the ditches, the precipices and all other rough places into which you seem to be running, but the train follows the rails and not the light at its head. In the light of our own experience and reason, while we try to look into the future, we sometimes feel that we are going into the ditch of destruction, and all our plans and purposes will be wrecked, but, be not afraid, the Spirit of God is guiding and keeping his affairs on the track. Let us commit ourselves to him with soul abandonment. Let us believe in spite of our senses, for if we commit our way to the Lord, he will direct our path. Yield to Christ Jesus for salvation, yield to the Holy Spirit for guidance and power, then shall God, the Author of salvation, fill us with life, lead us to rejoice in him, using the means of confession of sin, prayer for salvation, hearing the Word, bring salvation nigh, glorify his name. Then will God make bare his arm in the salvation of the people, and righteousness shall prevail. —Western Recorder.

Sacrifice, the Law of Life.

BY S. C. MITCHELL.

We have been too wont to regard the principle of sacrifice which Jesus embodied as individual and isolated, whereas he meant for us to see in his example the expression of an universal law of life. Man has ever insisted that selfishness—or self-preservation, as we prefer to term it—is the first law of nature; Jesus, in opposition

to this, held up to view the fact that self-sacrifice is a force of even greater moment in the development of life. Too often has the life of Christ in this respect appeared as a single straight line, whereas it is in fact an arc of an all-embracing circle. Happy shall I be if this article enables any one to see at least the crescent of the hidden orb of truth.

IN THE PHYSICAL WORLD,

we live only as we die. "The moment we cease dying, we cease living. As the heart works day and night, it burns out in thirty days. We thus dissolve, melt away, and only the shadow of our bodies can be called our own. They are like the flame of a lamp, which appears for a long time the same, since it is ceaselessly fed as it melts away. Yet the action of oxygen, so destructive, is essential to our existence." No act, no thought can be performed without wearing away tissue. Jesus was really illustrating for us an universal law of nature when he said: "Except a corn of wheat fall in the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." In the rising tiers of existence, the mineral gives up its properties to the vegetable, the vegetable to the animal, and the lower animals, in turn, likewise suffer destruction in order to maintain the yet higher forms. At the very sources of life, we find that production, which is concern for others, shares with nutrition the prime function of the organism. Everywhere in nature, mother-love, with its birth-throes and solicitude for the young, foreshadows what we call sacrifice in the spiritual realm.

THE PROCESS OF CIVILIZATION

is the outcome of the sufferings of successive generations. Some time ago, in driving with a gentleman from Covington to Cincinnati, across the Ohio, he told me of the exceeding difficulty experienced in putting in the piers of that splendid structure. Although the men were carefully examined by a physician before they were allowed to descend into the deep pits at the bottom of the stream, yet, after remaining a while in those rayless depths, they were often brought to the surface with blood streaming from their ears and nostrils, so trying were the conditions under which they had to work. Now commerce and pleasure speed across that fine bridge without any thought of the severe labors of the men who risked their lives in those abysses. As Marshal Ney, in that final charge at Waterloo, filled the ditch with the dead and dying horses and their riders, in order that the cavalry and cannon might pass over to make the assault upon the enemy, so the chariot of progress has been borne over many a chasm by the agonizing forms of the men and women who were sacrificed to fill it.

FOR EVERY TRUTH SOME HEART HAS BEEN BROKEN

and some brow bathed in blood. Socrates, Huss, and the whole martyr roll confirm the accuracy of Bulwer's facetious remark: "There is a rod for the back of every fool who would be wiser than his generation." A book, to live, must be written with the heart's blood. In sending a copy of his poems to a friend, Robert Burns wrote: "I have put my life into this book." That discloses the secret of this plowman's power to move the hearts of men in all times and climes.

We love the cause for which we have to suffer, just as the mother feels the greatest tenderness for the afflicted child. Why? Because love is active and waves strong by sacrifice. Like the fabled bird, love pierces its own bosom to feed its dependent ones. On the contrary, gratitude is seldom a source of love. We know full well we must live for others, if we would live for ourselves. From human love, marred as it is by evil, we can, nevertheless, get some knowledge of him who is love. "The death of Christ," says one, "was a representation of the life of God. To me this is the profoundest of all truths, that the whole of the life of God is the sacrifice of self. God is love; love is sacrifice—to give rather than to receive—the blessedness of self-giving. All the life of God is a flow of this divine, self-giving charity. Creation is sacrifice—the self-impartment of the Divine Being. Redemption, too, is sacrifice, else it could not be love; for which reason we will not surrender one iota of the truth that the death of Christ was the sacrifice of God—the manifestation once in time of that which is the eternal law of his being."

IT WAS THE PURPOSE OF JESUS

to body forth the might and majesty of this principle of sacrifice. The words which were perhaps, most often on his lips, as they were most expressive of his life, were: "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." In the case of two young rulers the Saviour applied this principle and exemplified its truth. The one was rich, of pure morals, and so desirous of the noblest things that Jesus, beholding, loved him. He met Christ in the way with the eager question, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" The answer, in substance was, "Lose your life." At this the young ruler staggered, and slipped away sorrowfully into the crowd—never to be heard of more, not even leaving a name in the memory of man. What a contrast to this is presented by the young man whom Jesus met in the way near Damascus! Saul of Tarsus was in high esteem among the mighty in his