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REVIEW SECTION.

I.—THE HISTORICITY OF THE GOSPELS.

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ARE the Gospels true histories, to be received as such by candid students to-day? We may reply affirmatively, without touching the questions of scriptural inspiration and inerrancy. We may also answer in the affirmative, while acknowledging that the evangelic narratives are only outline sketches of the life of Jesus, fragmentary, and not always clearly consistent, accounts of the Founder of Christianity. The four books which are the literary basis of Christian faith and are immortal inspirations to Christian hope and love are evidently unlike the biographies that are issued from the modern press. They do not resemble the elaborate and finished lives of Napoleon and Lincoln, which, in five or ten bulky volumes, narrate chronologically, minutely, and with philosophical reflections the careers of those great men. The Gospels, while telling nearly all that is known of the most important Life ever lived, are exceedingly brief, sometimes apparently contradictory, and are wanting in discursive meditations upon the events described. Are there two biographies more unlike than Matthew's life of Jesus and Masson's "Life of Milton"? The first was apparently "the child of memory;" the second is the product of years of prodigious toil in libraries. In part at least the Gospels were spoken at the beginning as the personal witness of those who were acquainted with the Nazarene Prophet. What are the reasons which have led candid and studious men in all Christian ages to accept the Gospels as true? Within the compass of this article, little more can be done than to enumerate some of these reasons.

1. They give the *impression* of truthfulness, and so strong is this impression that frequently the best tonic for enfeebled faith is to read and ponder, with a reverent heart, these simple and self-evidencing narratives. The mere reading of one of the Gospels has sometimes exercised such a strong influence over the mind that the reader, without any further evidence, has believed the account to be true and has accepted Christianity. "The

simple, straightforward New Testament record" has produced upon multitudes such a lasting impression of its self-evidencing truthfulness, that the ingenious arguments and speculations of unbelief have been unable to remove the impression. The sceptical theory which would overthrow the record has often seemed little better than "an outrage upon common sense." The Gospels give no impression that their writers were either weak-minded, fanciful, or untruthful. It is no uncommon experience, that of Lacordaire, who turned from the ingenious and learned pages of Strauss, and found that it never needed more than a few minutes' reading in the Gospels to dissipate the charm of a vain science, and to enable him to smile inwardly at the impotence to which God has condemned error. And this impression of truthfulness is vastly deepened when one turns from the Gospels to read the legends of Hercules, the confused accounts of the life of Buddha, or the stories of mediæval miracle-working saints. If one desires what, to most persons, will be a sufficient evidence of the historicity of the evangelic accounts, he will only need to peruse, by way of contrast with them, the so-called Apocryphal Gospels, which are indubitably forged, and in which the writers give the most reckless scope to their fancies in ascribing fictitious marvels to Jesus of Nazareth. One might dwell on this at length, and show the simplicity and naturalness of the references to Jesus in the Gospel histories as contrasted with the wild workings of invention in the Apocryphal accounts. The four evangelists give no play to their emotions or their fancies, and appear to be faithfully recording only what they have seen and known.

2. We have a second reason for accepting the Gospels as true histories, from the fact that they are the narratives of men who witnessed the life of Christ, or of those who were friends of eye-witnesses. It is certain that they were composed in the language in use during the first Christian century—that is, in what is called Hellenistic Greek—and we have the testimony of ecclesiastical writers for the first three centuries that they were composed by the men whose names they bear, a testimony supported by the heretical writers and pagan sceptics of that period. The doubts which were raised concerning some of the books that were finally accepted show that the critical spirit was not wanting in the early Church. The primitive Christians were not credulous in this matter; they received only on testimony and evidence. Tertullian says of the four Gospels that they have existed "from the beginning," and "are coeval with the churches themselves." Clement of Alexandria appeals to the four Gospels as being the only authentic history of Christ that has been handed down to us. Justin Martyr, born in Palestine about the year 100, refers to the "Memoirs of the Apostles," making one hundred and twenty allusions to the Gospel history which correspond to the records that we hold to-day. He speaks of these Memoirs as composed by "the apostles and their companions." Professor Fisher has said: "The universal reception of the four Gospels as having exclusive authority by the churches in the closing part of the

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second century requires to be accounted for if their genuineness is denied." If later writers palmed off their own compositions and forged apostolic names, why should one Gospel have been ascribed to the obscure Matthew, about all we know of whom is that he was a despised and hated publican? And why should Mark and Luke, neither of whom was an apostle, have been pitched upon as the authors of two of the narratives, if later writers were palming off their own works? John's authorship of the Fourth Gospel had never been questioned in the time of Eusebius the historian, except by an insignificant heretical sect. It bears the marks of being the autobiographic record of a profound and affectionate soul who had come to believe, and who desired others to believe in the supernatural nature of the Messiah. It is because John's testimony, if acknowledged to be his, is so powerful in establishing the Deity of his Master and the celestial authority of His mission, that the anti-supernaturalists have, in the last fifty years, so violently assailed the Fourth Gospel. But after such defences of its Johannine authorship as those of Weiss, Meyer, Godet, Lightfoot, Ezra Abbott, Westcott, and a score of others, there is every reason to believe that the author was a Christian of Jewish origin, that he was a Jew of Palestine, that he was a contemporary of Jesus, that he was an eye-witness of what he recorded, that he was the disciple whom Jesus loved—in other words, that he was John, the son of Zebedee.

3. Our faith in the Gospels is augmented by the fact that we have a *fourfold* record of the life of Jesus. Each Gospel is different from the others, Matthew apparently written for the Jews, to show that Christ is the Messiah of the Old Testament; Mark, written, as it would seem, for the Romans, and, as the ancient writers unanimously testify, under the direction of Peter, to show in a vivid way Christ in action as the strong Son of God; Luke, written, it would seem, for the Greeks, under the direction of Paul, to show the universality, the mercifulness, and the peculiar tenderness of the grace of Christ and of His teaching; and John, apparently written for all Christians, to show that Jesus is One with the Father. And yet, though different, the peculiarities of each are found in some measure in all the others. The divinity of Christ is not taught by John alone, nor the graciousness and universality of His Gospel by Luke alone. The discrepancies between them forbid the theory of collusion and fraud, and tend to strengthen the conviction of the candor and faithfulness of the men who wrote of what they saw and believed. With so many gaps in the Gospel record, it may not be possible, and it is certainly not necessary, to show a perfect agreement. The careful reading of the four narratives gives the feeling that the variations confirm, rather than weaken, the total impression of reality and of faithfulness to the essential truth.

4. The evidence of the four evangelists is further strengthened by the important testimony of the Apostle Paul. Besides the Gospels we have, in confirmation of the evangelic narratives, the four undisputed Pauline epistles, Galatians, Romans, and First and Second Corinthians. The

sceptical scholars generally acknowledge that these were written by Paul within thirty years of the crucifixion. As Dr. Schaff has said, "They refer to our Lord's birth from a woman of the royal house of David, His sinless life and perfect example, His atoning death, His triumphant resurrection on the third day, His repeated manifestations to His disciples, His ascension and exaltation to the right hand of God, whence He will return to judge all men in righteousness, the adoration of Christ by His followers, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the establishment of the Church in Jerusalem." Paul narrates in detail the various appearances of Christ after His resurrection. His epistles are the destruction of the mythical theory. The period is too short for the growth of those mythical fancies to which Strauss attributed the miracles. Paul, writing in the midst of the men who knew Christ personally, nearly five hundred of whom were living witnesses of the resurrection, whose names were known, and who could be found and questioned, this apostle, in various literature which cannot be successfully disputed, gives his mighty additional testimony to the truth of the Gospel history. How many events between the battle of Marathon and the death of Cæsar have been recorded by five separate, competent, and apparently trustworthy historians, contemporary with the events described? But here we have five writers, including Paul as a separate evangelist, who have recorded the Gospel history in such a way that it commends itself to the confidence of mankind.

5. Another important evidence of the historic truth of the Gospels is the fact of their early proclamation and reception as true. No one doubts that the early Church believed that Christ rose from the dead. Primitive Christianity cannot be explained without this belief. The New Testament is largely the literature of the resurrection. Without it the primitive Christian theology is unintelligible. Channing says: "A history received by a people as true not only gives us the testimony of the writer, but the testimony of the nation among whom it finds credit." The earliest disciples, in the capital of Judaism, appealed to the enemies of Christ for the truth of Christ's miracles; and this appeal "was not contradicted by the Jews, as it unquestionably would have been had these miracles been an invention of a few followers of Christ." Peter said at Pentecost, within a few weeks of Christ's resurrection: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by Him in the midst of you, *even as ye yourselves know.*" And had it not been for the stumbling-block of the Cross, with its solemn disclosures of human guilt, with its enthronement of meekness, goodness, and mercy, and had Jesus proved the sort of Messiah that the Jewish leaders wanted, and not a flaming rebuke to their spirit of pride, formalism, and national revenge, they would more generally have yielded to His claims. As Edersheim has written: "Not denying His miracles, they regarded Jesus as the constant vehicle of Satanic influence, not because they convicted Him of any sin, but because His Kingdom

of God was precisely opposite to their kingdom of God." That One with such ideas should claim to be their Messiah called forth the cry of "blasphemy." But history has shown that His idea and not theirs was divine. From the very beginning, then, the first preachers of Christianity appealed to the Jewish people in behalf of the truth of what they asserted, and not till a later generation were the facts contradicted.

6. *The rapid progress and triumph of the Christian Church* is another evidence of the truth of the Gospel history on which the Church was founded. Mr. Gladstone is of the opinion that there never was so unequal a contest as that of Christianity with the Roman world. "Tainted in its origin by its connection with the detested Judaism, odious to the prevailing tone by its exclusiveness, it rested originally upon the testimony of men, poor, few, and ignorant, and for a length of time no human genius was enlisted in its service with the single exception of Saint Paul." Gibbon describes five causes for the rapid early spread of Christianity. The third of these is the miraculous powers attributed to the early Church. The other causes are the intense zeal of the early Christians, a zeal mingled with love, the profound and pervading belief in immortality as a state of reward and punishment, the active virtues of the early believers, and the mild and equitable form of Church government among them for a century after the death of the apostles. But when we go back of these secondary causes, and ask why Christian men had such a self denying zeal in an age of utter selfishness, why they were so confident in regard to the future, when the world generally had become sceptical, why they manifested such virtues far above the men about them, and lived as loving brethren in their Church life in the midst of a hate-ridden world, we strike immediately their faith in that wonderful history which was the substance of their preaching, their belief in Christ's resurrection, the supreme evidence to them of their immortality; we strike their belief in a divine Person who was their risen King, to whom they were bound by a deathless love, who inspired in them every active and passive virtue, and before whose majesty all were equal and all should be loving.

7. The Gospels are a record of miracles, and since the early progress of the Church is explained in great part by the miraculous forces lodged within it, we have here a mighty evidence confirmatory of the truth of the Gospel histories. It is not a marvel that so many Jews and others rejected the claims of the crucified Nazarene, but the wonder is that so many accepted them. "The reception of Christianity by them," it has been wisely said, "shows prejudice overcome by something, and the question is, by what?" Our answer is in part by the miracles. Some men have accepted a philosophy of history and of nature which forbids them to believe in miracles. Such persons have spent many years in the vain task of explaining away the Gospel narratives on the ground of fraud or delusion. They have attempted to break the force of the testimony, sealed with the heroic, unselfish, suffering lives and martyr deaths of those who

declared that they were witnesses of the miracles of Christ and of His risen person. For a hundred years sceptical scholarship has been perplexed and baffled in endeavoring to give a rational account of the person of Jesus on the theory of His being a fable and sometimes deluded and imperfect man. They have attempted to explain away the universal faith in Christ's resurrection for which men laid down their lives, a faith on which Strauss acknowledged the Church was built, a faith which was not destroyed by the Jewish authorities in Jerusalem, not because they were unwilling, but because they were unable. But how was it that the early Church, which made no appeal to pride and human passions, which refused to use the sword, but espoused lowliness and purity as its distinctive virtues—how was it that the Church, beset by such constant and terrible antagonism on every side, was not extinguished? The system of truth which originated with the Jewish Carpenter and a few rough fishermen—could not have fought its way to world-wide acceptance against the combined hostility of Jerusalem, Athens, and Rome, against synagogue and philosophic school and armed antagonism, against all the external forces of imperial civilization, and against the obdurate unbelief and wickedness of the human heart, unless it had been accompanied by the signature of Almighty God.

8. The character of Christ is a luminous evidence of the truth of the Gospels. Dupes or liars could not have given us such a portrait of a perfect personality as shines from the evangelic pages. Matthew and John, the publican and the fisherman of Galilee, unless painting from the life, would have left some "action or omission to act" to stain the fair picture of an incomparable Being. We cannot tear out the miracles from the Gospels without sinking the apostles to the level of fools or deceivers, a conclusion which is irrational, both from what they have written, from the lives they lived, and, most of all, from the incomparable grandeur of the portrait which they have drawn of Jesus Christ. That portrait was not the product of imagination; it was drawn from the life, and that alone "is sufficient to demonstrate the truth of the Gospel history." It was natural that such a Being as the sinless Christ, who, with all His genuine humanity, manifestly did not belong to this world—it was natural for the Holy One of Nazareth, whose touch is the life of our civilization to-day, whose Spirit is the very breath of God, should do the works of His Father. Miracles are the jewels that naturally adorn the brows of this celestial King. He who spake with the tenderness, the holiness, the wisdom, and the authority of God, and with constant assertions of His supernatural origin and Almighty power, is to be believed when He claimed to do the works of heaven. The presence of Christ in the Gospels forever vindicates their truth.

9. The unanimity of the Christian Church in all ages with regard to the truth of that wonderful history out of which it sprang, the high character and services of the men who, after long investigation, have given in their adherence to historic Christianity and the unequalled transforming power

which the Gospel of Jesus Christ has manifested, are all of them strong corroborations of the reasons already urged for the truthfulness of the Gospel narratives. The marvellous force of Christianity has sprung from the preaching of a supernatural history. What is peculiar in Christianity, even as a system of ethics, is this, that its ethical teachings are all embodied in a divinely perfect Teacher whose redemptive work fills them with a new and life-giving power. The Teacher Himself is the beginning and end of Christian faith. Christianity is Christ as set forth in the Gospels. These Gospels, which tell of a Divine incarnation, which relate the life of the Founder of Christianity, which rehearse His discourses and His miracles in the same breath, which bring their fourfold testimony to His death and resurrection, are now repeating their story in more than three hundred languages. Nothing parallel to this can be found in human history. Ewald said of the New Testament: "In this little book is all the wisdom of the world." It is most difficult to believe that the Book of Life, whose messages are all interwoven with so-called history, was built on a mass of fables and fancies. The Gospel history was preached as true at the very dawn of Christianity, and on its truth were built up institutions and usages which have come down to us, and which were never so strong and widespread as to-day. The kingdom of Christ with its conquering front is a mighty argument for the truth of that history out of which it rose. Once renounce the faith which is proclaimed by the solemn voice of the Christian ages, and the mind is tossed on the sea of restless speculation. After the freest and most prolonged and minute discussion of the Gospel documents and of the early Christian history, one theory after another, which would account for Christ and the Gospels and the early Church, on the basis of anti-supernaturalism, has been abandoned. Strauss destroyed the form of scepticism which went before him; Baur has revealed the untenable nature of the theory of Strauss; and the disciples of Baur have divided along various lines, have lost their hold of German thought, and have been forced to bring back the date of the Fourth Gospel from thirty to fifty years before the time fixed by their learned leader. Surely if the attacks made thus far on the Gospel histories have been unavailing, we need not expect that they will soon succeed. "The strength and consummate equipment of these attacks," it has been truly said, "has but rendered more evident the impregnability of the sacred citadel." The Church of God, built on the incarnation and the resurrection, and holding from her temple's topmost spire that Cross which gathers about it all the light of human history, has seen imperial dominions and hoary superstitions and theologies of error and ten thousand airy speculations disappear, while she steadily expands her sheltering walls and opens her shining gates to encompass all nations.

II.—OUR INHERITANCE OF SACRED SONG.

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POETRY and music have ever been associated with Divine worship. In all ages and in every land the voice of praise has been the voice of song.

This intimate connection between music and religion is one of the most interesting facts of sacred history. It is too widely prevalent to be regarded as mere accident, too permanent to be accounted for by anything less than some essential fitness. It has the warrant of inspiration and the precedent of angelic usage. We find that music and religion have not only come down all the path of human history hand in hand, bringing joy to the world and giving that joy a suitable expression, but beyond the sphere of human agency the voice of music is the voice of praise. The very corner-stone of earth's foundation God laid

" When the morning stars sang together,
And the sons of God shouted for joy."

Far away on the other side of earthly history we hear again the voice of song in praise, for the redeemed around the throne are singing, " And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb." From everlasting to everlasting is the epoch of sacred song, and its range is from the mouths of babes and sucklings to the saints and seraphim of heaven.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Church has ever held the arts of poetry and music as the sacred vessels in which to preserve all that is most precious in her history, and to celebrate the sweetest joys of our salvation. Almost every great event in the history of our redemption is commemorated in inspired hymnody. From Miriam's *Cantate Domino* to Simeon's *Nunc Dimittis* is a grand succession of inspired songs, in each of which are crystallized whole volumes of sacred history; and from the *Benedictus* to the latest Gospel hymn is a host, like the stars of heaven for multitude, and rich beyond comparison in beautiful expression of every phase of Christian doctrine and experience, sweet hope and holy aspiration.

Such is the inheritance of the Christian Church. We are the heirs of the ages in many things, but few of our birthrights are more precious than this. We eat the fruit of trees our fathers planted; we dwell in houses which they built; we speak in the words which they have enriched, and we sing the songs which they composed and hallowed by their best affections.

But the Church of to-day is a spoiled child who knows not how to value his wealth, nor how to turn it to account. Rich beyond measure in the talents we have received, we are slothful beyond excuse in our employment of the same. God, in His providence, has satisfied our mouth with good things. He has literally put songs, both new and old, into our mouth,

even praise unto our God, and we are too lazy to learn to utter them. We are sinning a great sin in this thing. Edwards is clearly right when he says: "If it be a duty to sing praise to God, it is surely our duty to learn to sing, since it is a thing that cannot be done decently without learning."

We expect our ministers to make full preparation for their preaching, and have little patience with them if they fail to do the best they can; if they preached as badly as the people sing, not one church in fifty would support a pastor.

It is not uncommon to hear the complaint that the people have too little part in the exercise of public worship; a liturgy of some sort is asked for to supply this alleged defect. Perhaps we need a liturgy, and perhaps the Church should authorize some form to take the place of crude affairs which zealous amateurs are formulating for the churches and Sunday-schools all over the land. However this may be, the demand for it could scarcely be more untimely, in view of the utter neglect of congregational singing throughout the whole Church in America. When we cease to offer the lame and blemished and dying upon the altars of praise, the request for more opportunity of service will be found in order.

Look for a moment what a rich possession we have in the Church's hymnody.

I. We have here the gems of literature. Out of some twenty thousand English hymns about three thousand may be said to compose the Church's hymnal. Of this three thousand a very few are positively bad, and, as a rule, bad hymns die young. Many are indifferent, but very often these best express the experience of some people; but the great majority of the standard hymns of the Church are good and beautiful. No other collection of lyric poetry can compare with any one of the great hymnals authorized by the various churches of this country. A good hymn-book is a whole library of poetry. The poorest workingman can have, for the price of a half-day's unskilled labor, a well-printed, well bound, well-selected volume of a thousand hymns, that for purity and depth of thought, for dignity and sweetness and beauty of expression, are far superior to all the lyric poetry that could have been procured at any cost in the very best days of Greek or Latin literature. Not only in quantity and cheapness, but in quality also, the great hymns which are found in every general collection are *facile princeps* among the lyrics of the world. There is nothing in ancient literature equal to the Hebrew psalm,

" All people that on earth do dwell
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice.
Him serve with mirth, His praise forth tell;
Come ye before Him and rejoice."

Nor is there anything in modern poetry finer than Charles Wesley's Christmas hymn,

“ Hark, the herald angels sing,
 Glory to the new-born King ;
 Peace on earth and mercy mild ;
 God and sinners reconciled.”

The man who knows his hymn-book thoroughly is better read in English poetry than the man who knows Shakespeare, Milton, and Browning and is ignorant of these grand and simple hymns.

II. The hymnody of the Church is the most accurate and complete expression of its faith. Grant us but the inspired songs of Scripture, and we will maintain every essential doctrine of redemption. Give us the hymns of the Church, the hymns she has really loved, and, if we are skilful at interpreting, we shall find her creed expressed more perfectly than it can be in dogmatic formulæ. Poetry is the language of the emotions, love and devotion and longing aspiration cannot be reduced to scientific statement. As the sweet scent of the mignonette or the delicate fragrance of an apple cannot be described in any words that could enable us even to distinguish the one from the other, or as the love of a mother for her child is vastly more than all that the best term of psychology can express, so the sweetest hopes, the dearest faith, and the affections, which are the very sources of character, elude description in the terms of any science.

We do not disparage creeds and confessions—they express the substance of our faith ; but what light and color are to the landscape, what fragrance is to the flower, what harmony is to music, this the hymnody of the Church is to her symbols of doctrine. It has also happened that hymns have been the ark in which truth has survived the deluge of ignorance and corruption. The *Te Deum*, for example, the greatest of all uninspired hymns, has been disfigured by Romish superstition, interpolated to adapt it to the worship of the Virgin ; but these corruptions of the text have never taken hold in the hearts of the people ; and since they can easily be proven to be perversions, they react upon their authors and convict them of innovation of doctrine.

III. Closely related to their use as exponents of doctrine is their value as records and interpreters of history. Almost all the great hymns, both inspired and uninspired, are rich in what Bishop Trench calls “ fossil history.” What an argument for the divinity of Christ, and the transcendent significance of the incarnation lies in the fact that the one occasion in the world’s history which God deemed worthy of angelic celebration was that on which the heavenly choir sang over the starlit hills of Bethlehem the first great anthem to the new-born Saviour of men,

“ Glory to God in the highest,
 And on earth peace among men in whom He is well pleased.”

Or what is more suggestive of the greatness of God’s purpose to bless the whole world through the seed of Abraham than the fact that Balaam, the

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son of Bosor, in the depths of his heathen darkness saw a great light, and from the very lips of dumb idolatry the Spirit of God evoked the prophetic ode,

“ How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob,
Thy tabernacles, O Israel :
As the valleys are they spread forth,
As gardens by the river-side,
As lign-aloes which the Lord hath planted,
As cedar-trees beside the waters. . . .
I see him, but not now ;
I behold him, but not nigh.
There shall come forth a star out of Jacob,
And a sceptre shall arise out of Israel.”

Or where in the volumes of history will we find so suggestive a picture of the deep darkness of the twelfth century as in the sweet, pathetic lines of good Bernard of Cluny,

“ The world is old and sinful,
Its passing hour is near ;
Be sober, and keep vigil,
The Judge's knock to hear.
Rise, Christian, rise to meet Him.
Let wrong give way to right,
Let tears of Godly sorrow
Melt into songs of light.”

IV. The value of sacred songs as means of instruction can hardly be overestimated. They are peculiarly effective for several reasons. First, because they may be, and they should be, the earliest in the field. The minds of little children are, like the mouths of young birds in the nest, all agape for food ; and the quantity that they can swallow is amazing. The mother, or the teacher, who fails to fill these gaping minds with the sweet psalms and hymns, so suitable for children, misses the best possible opportunity to prevent the devil and preoccupy the citadel of the soul. Second, because rhyme and rhythm and figures of speech stick to the memory better than prose ; or as good old Fuller puts it, verse is twice as light as the same bulk of prose. Many a man's whole stock of theology is contained in the bits of Sunday-school hymns he remembers. How important it is that these be carefully selected ! Third, because hymns find access and welcome where a sermon is refused admission. When a man attacks us with an argument we instinctively stand on the defensive, and feel somehow in honor bound not to yield till we can neither answer nor evade the logic of the discourse. But a good hymn does not argue ; it simply presents a phase of truth, a tender grace or a noble aspiration, and these find a responsive chord in the heart and conscience, the affections turn to the light thus given, and the truth enters the

soul. There are a great many hearts that can be melted by a hymn that cannot be broken by any sermons.

Such, in briefest outline, are some of the considerations that justify the assertion that, next to the Bible itself, our hymn-book is the best legacy of the past to the present Church ; and it should not be forgotten that, in addition to all this intrinsic value of the Church's hymnody, the rich associations which in the course of many generations have gathered round the great hymns give them an added value of peculiar sweetness ; and not only do personal experiences gather around the familiar words and tunes of standard hymns, but the best experiences of the Church have left their impress on the same. The familiar and beautiful hymn, "From Greenland's icy mountains," marks the beginning of a new era in Christian missions. The more familiar doxology, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow," is so intimately associated with public worship in this country that no service seems complete without it ; and as for Wesley's greatest hymn, "Jesus, lover of my soul," it would actually seem to belittle the subject to take less than a volume or two to relate the interesting incidents with which it has been connected. The field becomes still wider and richer when we take up the Psalms of Scripture.

The selection of hymns for a congregation is a function that no one should undertake without using all diligence to fit himself for its proper performance. In most churches this duty belongs to the pastor, and rightly so, but too often the pastor has neither the training nor the interest in hymnology which is necessary to the performance of this duty.

There is no short and easy rule for selecting hymns ; no quick and easy test to which they may be put. There are, however, some leading principles which may help us in the study of them. For want of a better guide I offer these suggestions as to points which an ideal hymn must have.

1. It must be eminently scriptural. It is not enough that it be free from positive error ; it must have the very timbre, as well as the tone, of revelation. The author must have drawn his inspiration not from Parnassus, but from Sinai and Pentecost.

2. It must be reverent. The worshippers must veil their faces and their feet before they cry Holy, Holy, Holy, with the seraphim around the throne. This, it seems to me, is the weak point of very many of our recent hymns. They are tender and sweet, but they abound in familiar terms of endearment, such as "Sweet Saviour," "Dear Jesus," and the like, which are absolutely without precedent in Scripture, and hardly consistent with the awful majesty of Him to whom we sing.

3. It must be catholic. It must express the sentiment and aspiration of the whole Church, not any local or temporary section of it. It should not be pitched to the key of any ecstatic state or experience which the whole Church may not hope to enjoy. Some of our most beautiful hymns are unfit for general use, because they express longings and desires which, as a matter of fact, we do not have.

4. It must be poetic. A poem is eminently a work of art ; its chief function is to please. No amount of pious sentiment can take the place of the artistic qualities demanded by the laws of poetry. Our ideal hymn must run smoothly on the tongue, it must not limp in its feet, and, above all, it must present its theme to the imagination in such a way that it shall gratify the æsthetic faculty. It is true that some of our good hymns fall short of the standard in this as in other respects. It would be hard to find a case of mixed metaphor worse than the familiar lines,

"Come, thou fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing thy praise."

A fountain tuning a heart is rather beyond the conception of the average imagination. The suggestion that the disembodied soul shall

"Shout while passing through the air,
Farewell, farewell, sweet hour of prayer,"

is decidedly grotesque. Of course a hymn may be great and useful in spite of such infelicities of expression, but they always detract from its value ; and many a hymn, otherwise most excellent, is made quite unusable by some such fault.

There are many minor points to be noticed in the study of a hymn, but these four general canons will rule out the most of the bad and admit most of the good : let them be *scriptural* and *reverent* and *catholic* and *poetic*, and they cannot be *far* out of the way in other respects.

But the critical appreciation of a hymn, as it stands in the hymnal, is only the beginning of our education as directors of public worship. The actual conduct of the services of the churches calls for constant exercise of taste and judgment in the selection of hymns suitable to the particular occasion at hand. Obvious as is the duty of care and judgment in the selection of hymns for the worship of God, it is neglected in a way that is positively shocking.

It is bad enough to hear, as we all have heard, a little handful of pious folk, who have all been believers from childhood, open their prayer-meeting with the hopeful confession of being

"Almost persuaded now to believe,
Almost persuaded Christ to receive ;"

but it is something worse than absurd to hear a stout sinner, who makes no pretension to be anything but an utter worldling, assert in loud bass,

"Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow Thee ;"

or the giddy girl, whose whole head is full of the pleasures of this gay world, beg in sweet soprano,

"Oh, bear me away on your snowy wings
To my immortal home."

This is profanity ; but it reaches near to blasphemy when a godless choir shout the wild, ecstatic measures,

“ Hallelujah, 'tis done ; I believe on the Son,
I'm saved by the blood of the crucified One.”

It is true that we cannot prevent the congregation from uttering falsehood if they are determined to do it ; but we can at least try to avoid leading them into temptation. We can diligently teach them the solemnity of worship, and the fearful profanity of singing thoughtlessly such words as,

“ Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,
With all Thy quickening powers,
Kindle a flame of sacred love
In these cold hearts of ours.”

A sermon now and then on Uzza and the Ark might be useful in this matter.

The last duty, and the most difficult which the minister has in relation to the hymns, is to have them well sung by the congregation. In this duty the minister is in sad predicament. The church puts the Bible in his hands and provides a thorough course of instruction before she even permits him to preach the Word ; at the same time she puts the hymnal in his hands, makes him absolute dictator in the whole conduct of worship, and not only makes no provision for his musical education, but actually gives him no time to find it for himself. They ordered this thing better under the old dispensation. A large part of the young priest's time and attention was given to sacred music. Perhaps this was because they did not have to study Hebrew, and therefore had time for music and some heart to sing. However that may be, I think it greatly to be regretted that the “ prophets upon harps” are no longer ranked with the other sons of the prophets. David spoke of opening a dark saying upon a harp, and I have no doubt that musical exegesis for some themes is much better than the ordinary method of grammar and lexicon. The exegetical power of a reed organ is not very great ; but we have all heard sometimes, if not often, some of our standard hymns, those splendid heirlooms of the Church, so magnificently sung that its beauty and power shone upon us as we never imagined was possible. There is a great thought in that little word of David's about opening a dark saying on a harp ; the great organ is a much better instrument than David ever saw ; by and by some one may be sent to us having the power and spirit of the sweet singer of Israel, and he will awake the Church to consciousness of her latent power in the voices of her people and the instruments and science of music. But meanwhile what is the minister to do about the music of his hymns ? If he must make brick without straw, how can he make most of his stubble ?

1. Every minister should learn as much of music as he can, and teach

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his choir all the theology they will hold. If, as Dr. Patton asserts, "the preacher nowadays must divide the honors with the prima donna at the other end of the room," then the prima donna must share with us the responsibility of instructing the people, and must give evidence of her ability to do so, just as we are required to prove ourselves equal to the duties of the pastorate. In plainer words, the music of Christian worship must be in the keeping of those who are Christians as well as musicians. The minister who surrenders this department of his charge to any hands less consecrated than his own betrays a sacred trust. He may call in the aid of the best talent he can find, but he is to have it very distinctly understood that the responsibility remains with him, and to meet it he must have absolute authority as to what may and what may not be sung in the church of which the Holy Ghost has made him bishop.

2. He must enforce the duty of congregational singing. The people must be brought to feel that the worship of God is a matter which we dare not treat so lightly. The very best that we can offer is poor enough; anything short of the best is an abomination to the Lord. If the priest of the old dispensation refused to accept the offering that was "blind or lame or had any ill blemish," how much more should the minister of the new dispensation demand in God's name an offering without blemish to be laid on the altar of praise! And not only the best we have, but the first-fruits of *all* we have, should be consecrated to God's service. If any one has a peculiar talent in music, it is but proper that it should be given a place in our service; therefore let the solo and duet and quartette, and every instrument of music, and all the aids of architecture, and whatever else can show its ability to aid in the musical interpretation of religious truth, let them all be brought, and let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.

While no music can be too good for use in Christian worship, it is also true that public worship must for the most part be popular. The great power of song is and always will be the chorus—the whole congregation. While no doubt a well-trained quartette choir will sing praise in more artistic music than any congregation can evoke from "Arlington," "Old Hundred," or "Dundee's wild, warbling measures," still there is a heartiness and homely sense of fitness about the latter that no fineness can equal. Imagine an army going forth to battle led by the general singing a bass solo from Wagner. Compare that with the scene of the French army marching to the field singing with ten thousand voices the inspiring measures of the "Marseillaise Hymn." When men are deeply moved they want to take part in the worship, not only with their hearts, but with their voices. At such times we do not want even an angel to sing for us, unless we can join in the chorus. Moreover, our best hymns are popular and simple, and the union of such hymns with music too artistic to be sung by the congregation is a discordant union, which hurts the hymns and mars the music. With our very limited knowledge of music we will not be able to do all we

could wish in the direction of this part of the service, but for all that we have a right to protest against being snubbed and ignored by the choir and organist. A man may be able to tell when a coat fits him, even though he be not a tailor by trade; so a minister may reasonably protest against the use of selections from the comic operas being dragged into his church and distorted by the organist, and thus used to entertain the congregation while the collection is being taken.

3. Since the pastor is also a presbyter, or member of conference or council, he should do his utmost to provide some better thing for his successor than this bricks-without-straw arrangement under which we groan. It is to be hoped that the time is not far off when the candidate for orders shall be required to show his ability to distinguish "Old Hundred" from "Hail Columbia," and a long-metre tune from a waltz.

III.—CHURCH CONFEDERATION.

By PROFESSOR GEORGE R. CROOKS, D.D., MADISON, N. J.

THE question of a better union of the Christians of the United States does not, and apparently will not, rest. Plans are discussed and rejected as impracticable, but only to be succeeded by others. At the Hartford Congress of 1885 Dr. Crosby described the churches of our country as arrayed in hostility against one another. "A church, split up into separate and often hostile camps, presses upon the world the gospel of unity and brotherly love. A church in which the drum-beat of civil war never ceases, urges the cause of the Prince of Peace." If this indictment is not unqualifiedly true, there are many grains of truth in it. Dr. Parkhurst sees a better unity coming, not by means of "any dextrous ecclesiastical cabinet-work," but through the growing sense of our oneness in Christ. Dr. Coe looks at the matter from the same point of view. He insists that the first thing to be done is "to stop quarrelling, stop calling names, stop reading each other out of the church." In his opinion, "liturgy and no liturgy, prelacy and presbytery, are alike of no real importance, but a new creation in Christ Jesus is everything." Dr. Shields, of Princeton, has proposed that we all unite on the basis of the acceptance of the liturgy of the English Church; but this proposal has so far been without result. It is plain that we might all agree in the use of the Prayer-Book and yet be practically as far apart as ever. On the other hand, the offer made by the Pan-Anglican Synod of reunion on the basis of the historic Episcopate—that is, on the basis of apostolic succession—has been considered by our churches and declined.

What next? We are certainly finding out what *can* not be done. It is clear that none of the churches are going to abandon their historical stand-

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ing ground. Their reverence for their several founders, and for the succession of saints which has glorified each, will assure that. Our hope must rest, therefore, on the growth of a larger Christian spirit, accompanied with an increase of dissatisfaction with our present divided state. Nor will measures be of much practical use which run far in advance of our development in catholicity. Approaches have, however, been already made to co-operation, and co-operation may end, should end, in confederation. The Evangelical Alliance of the United States has for some years past given itself to the task of persuading the churches to co-operate in evangelizing cities and towns, and has met with some degree of success. May it prove to be the herald crying out in this wilderness of strife, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord!" The American Sabbath Union officially represents some of our largest churches, through the action of their legislative assemblies, and is combining the scattered forces of the Church, on one topic, into unity. These are hopeful signs, suggesting still farther possibilities. Co-operation, should it become general, must lead up to confederation.

I. Why should not the Christian churches of the United States become confederate? Do we not all believe upon one and the same Christ, and do we not alike repeat the prayer taught by Him, "Thy kingdom come"? Do we not share the common hope that the kingdoms of this world will become His, and are we not alike laboring to make them His? In fact, of the four principles of reunion set forth by the Lambeth Synod, three met, as far as I have ascertained, with universal acceptance. These are :

"1. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as containing all things necessary to salvation, and as being the sole and ultimate standard of faith.

"2. The Apostles' Creed as the baptismal symbol, and the Nicene Creed as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith.

"3. The two sacraments ordained by Christ Himself—Baptism and the Supper of the Lord—ministered with unailing use of Christ's words of institution, and of the elements ordained by Him."

Here is a common ground broad enough for all the orthodox Christians of our country. In truth, it is only when we come to the application of salvation that we begin to diverge from one another. Why cannot each Church hold its own view of the method by which the benefits of redemption are brought to the human soul, and at the same time cultivate the spirit of unity with other churches? Whether the number of the saved is fixed by a predetermined decree or by a foreseen faith freely exercised, whether the gifts of the Spirit are conveyed through an episcopal succession, or directly to the seeker after God, without regard to a clerical lineage, whether baptism is rightly administered by immersion or affusion, are points of difference, serious enough, but small in comparison with the bulk and importance of the truths in which we agree. That for these reasons we should be to each other as aliens, and almost enemies, is dis-

creditable to our profession of Christianity. When we are ready to acknowledge him to be a Christian, who has put on Christ, we shall not inquire so strictly, through the help of what theological formula did he find his way to his Lord.

II. The benefits to be secured by a confederation of the American churches are so many that it would be tedious to name them all. In the first place, we would then have in some sort an expression of our national Christianity, and yet be wholly free from an alliance with the State. The Christianity of the United States proves more and more to be of a distinct type, and in the formation of the type we are all contributors to a greater degree than we are aware. By confederation we would give to this type an adequate expression, and few would then hazard the assertion that this is not a Christian nation. We could then more thoroughly protect marriage as a divine institution, and ripen public opinion for a uniform marriage law. If we could imbue the people of our country with the thought, that the obligations of the marriage relation are prior to all civil contracts, we would do much for their right culture. Does any one believe that if the confederate churches of the United States had some organ through which to express their convictions on this subject, their voice would be without power? In like manner the much-assailed public schools could be guarded, and the due observance of the Lord's day be better maintained. The churches of our country are its chief moral power. By their action upon old and young of all classes they form the opinions which control conduct. Would not the moral force be increased an hundredfold by some mode—not necessarily complex—of confederation?

III. If there be a confederation, must not the confederacy have some organ for the expression of its convictions? Most certainly, if it is to be felt at all in our common life. This organ might be a council with advisory powers only, a council capable of collecting the best thought of the churches represented and of suggesting modes of action. Suppose, for instance, it were designed to suppress the evil of the appropriation of public money to sectarian uses, an evil already grown to large proportions in some of the States, some common procedure must needs be agreed upon. All the processes, well known to Americans, of organizing public opinion must be called into service, and joint action secured. The secular papers already call for uniform marriage and divorce laws; but can these ever be secured, save through the combined efforts of the churches to create right opinion, and to help on the formulation of right opinion in law? If it be said that thereby the churches will be drawn into politics, the answer is that to the extent of expressing opinion on moral questions, the churches are already in politics. Have they been silent upon the outrageous legislation affecting the Chinese, excise laws, laws touching the observance of the Lord's day, or the neglect to enforce them? By its constitution, as created to better the world, the Christian Church must touch civil and political life at many points. It need not, however, hold

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nominating conventions, solicit votes, or create political machinery. Its functions are other than these; its primary work is in the realm of moral convictions; it must produce these, and then insist on their application in practice. How much more powerful would the American Church be in this realm if it were a confederate union!

IV. I need not dwell upon the probable effects of a confederate union of the churches upon the evangelization of cities and towns. Were the churches thus bound together, there would be created in them a sense of local responsibility (the phrase is awkward, but its meaning is plain). At present the pastor's sense of responsibility is relative to the congregation attendant on his preaching, scattered, it may be, over several square miles of area. He is stirred, if he is at all worthy of his place, by the misery visible about him, but how can he cope with it? He is only one, and he has neither the strength nor the resources for such a task as the evangelizing of a city's heathen. But if the churches were confederate, such of them as are of a like spirit, and harmonize in their methods of work, could assume a responsibility for the religious training of large areas of a city's population. In every area there will, of course, be found the accessible and inaccessible; but through a co-operative system the accessible might all be reached and cared for.

I have quoted Dr. Howard Crosby once, may I quote him once more? "Who," he asks, "can visit a village of a thousand inhabitants and see three Christian church buildings in the place, each representing a denomination, each endeavoring to get away the adherents of the others, each marking the community into social sets that look askance on each other, and not confess that the divisions of Christendom are unchristian?" And this is a picture of American Christianity as it is seen from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Are not our theological prejudices, our social prejudices—the latter the stubbornest to overcome—making of religion as we exhibit it a caricature of the religion of the four Gospels?

IV. — HINTS FOR DIVISIONS OF THEMES, CONSIDERED RHETORICALLY

BY PROFESSOR GEORGE L. RAYMOND, L.H.D., PRINCETON, N. J.

THE ability to present thought logically, as is said, and which is acknowledged to be well-nigh essential to success in public address, is not so much a matter of logic as of art. As such, it does not invariably necessitate either logical training, or even a logical mind. The art, too, as will be shown here, may be acquired with comparative ease. In fact, both the principles underlying it, and the methods of applying it, are so elementary in character that, were it not for the innumerable discourses in which one is obliged to listen to a violation of them, he might hesitate to present

them for consideration in pages like these. But, as it is, that which has proved helpful to less mature minds may not be wholly devoid of profitable suggestions to even some of the readers of this REVIEW.

Every art is developed by making a study of methods natural to exceptional men who, because they take to them naturally, do not need to cultivate them. The methods of analyzing themes to be here unfolded are applied by large numbers of speakers in unconscious and instinctive fulfilment of a principle underlying the expression of thought in almost every relation; and, of course, those who do not apply them unconsciously can and should be instructed so as to become able to apply them consciously. The principle is the well-known one in accordance with which, when we have any thought in mind to which we try to give expression, we instinctively associate it with certain sights or sounds of the external world. Otherwise, as thought itself is invisible and inaudible, we might not be able to make others acquainted with it. For instance, this term expression, just used, means a pressing out—an operation that can be affirmed literally only of a material substance which is forcibly expelled from another material substance; but, because we recognize a possibility of comparison between this operation and the way in which immaterial thought is made to leave the immaterial mind, we use the term as we do. So with thousands of terms like understanding, uprightness, clearness, fairness, etc. Carrying out the same principle, the ancients represented whole sentences through the use of hieroglyphics; and geometricians and scientists, even of our own times, represent whole arguments—the logical relations of abstract ideas and the physical relations of intangible forces—through the use of lines and figures. In a similar way and with a similar justification, we can apply the principle to the expression of thought in a theme or subject considered as a whole.

The sights or sounds in external nature, to which we may compare this thought, may be conceived of as occupying, chiefly, a certain portion of space, as a house does; or of time, as a melody does. Most things, however, and all things having life, while chiefly occupying the one or the other of these elements, actually occupy both, or, at least, suggest both; like a man's body, for instance, which has both bulk and movement. For this reason the arts of sight must usually represent in space not only what occupies space, but also time. Thus a picture often portrays an event; and this requires a suggestion at least, of a series of actions. In fact, the ability to embody such a suggestion, furnishes one reason why a product of the higher art of painting differs from a photograph. On one side of a canvas, for example, a painter may depict a man as drawing a bow; and on the other side of the same canvas, he may depict an arrow, which has evidently just left the bow, as having hit its mark. In the arts of sound, among which we must class all compositions involving a use of language, a corresponding principle operates. Think how large a proportion of the most artistic, in the sense of being the most effective, passages

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in poems and orations describe visible persons or events. The words occupy time ; but they represent to imagination, so that one seems to see them, face to face, things that exist only in space.

Not merely, as judged by separate illustrations, but by general arrangement, that essay or oration is the most successful which presents the thought in this depicted or graphic way—a way that causes the reader or hearer to seem to see the whole line of the argument mapped out before him, the entire framework of the ideas built up and standing in front of him. But before a writer or speaker can produce such an effect, he himself must be able to see his subject lying before him, or rising in front of him ; in other words, he must be able to conceive of it as comparable to some external object whose shape or movement can be perceived. The principle that is now to be applied, being based upon this kind of a conception, is, therefore, of such a nature as not only to simplify the work of dividing subjects, but also to make the presentation of them more effective.

Let us consider, first, certain methods of forming two general divisions, suggested by the appearance or condition of objects in connection with their positions and effects. Bearing in mind that we are to conceive of our topic as represented by a visible object, we may start by remarking that this may be perceived either in space, in which case it has location ; or in time, in which case it has movement. If we perceive it in space alone, we may notice The Object and also Its Relations to other objects, or—what is the same thing expressed differently—we may notice Itself and also Its Surroundings. This way of looking at it will give us two divisions, into one or the other of which can be put everything that it is possible to say about the object ; and, for this reason, about the topic also, which the object is supposed to represent. These two divisions, thus derived, may now suggest others analogous to them in principle, but differing in phraseology in order to meet the requirements of different subjects to which they are to be applied. Instead, for instance, of saying Object and Its Relations, we may say, if treating of persons, Individual and Community ; if of their character, Private and Public ; if of their influence, as in the case of a statesman, At Home and Abroad. If we are dealing with corporate as well as individual life, we may discuss its Character and Associations ; or its Constitution and Circumstances ; or, if we are referring to principles, natural or philosophic, we may speak of their Elements and Affinities or their Essence and Environment. Practically, in fact, there is no end of the ways in which we may change our phraseology, and yet not depart from the general method suggesting it.

Again, if we choose, we may confine our attention to only the object itself. In this case a thorough examination must include a consideration of Its Outside and also of Its Inside ; or, to use the technical terms that conventionally designate these respectively, Its Conditions and also Its Qualities. Here, again, we have two divisions, into one or the other of

which we can put everything that it is possible to say about the object considered merely in itself ; and changing the phraseology, in the way and for the reasons indicated in the last paragraph, we may go on and form such divisions as Externally and Internally, Superficially and Intrinsically, Appearance and Reality, Class and Kind, Reputation and Character, Accident and Essential, Form and Spirit, and others like these.

Once more, we may consider the object only in time, or as related to movement ; and this again will lead us to put everything into two divisions—namely, The Object and Its Actions, analogous to which we can form other divisions like In Itself and In its Results, Cause and Effect, Character and Influence, Nature and Acquirements, Matter and Manner, Means and Methods, Theory and Practice, and Principle and Tendencies.

Recalling now what has been said in the three paragraphs above, we shall notice that the Relations of the object as suggested by what surrounds it in space, the Object itself, and its Actions as they are perceived by its movements in time, can also furnish divisions, into which to put all that can be said of an object or a topic. But, holding still to our purpose, which is to compare the topic as a whole to some perceptible object, let us suppose this, first, to be one appearing in space, and, therefore, characterized mainly by shape ; and let us make three divisions suggested by it, somewhat analogous, though not closely so, to Relations, Object and Actions. Plato was evidently thinking of such an object when he said that every work of art must have Feet, Trunk and Head. Following out his suggestion, we may make divisions like Bottom, Sides and Top ; Foundation, Walls and Roof ; Mineral, Vegetable and Animal ; Physical, Intellectual and Spiritual ; Grounds, Beliefs and Speculations ; Certainities, Probabilities and Surmises ; Fact, Theory and Practice ; etc.

Now, let us compare our topic to an object appearing in time, and, therefore, characterized mainly by movement. This is evidently what Aristotle did when he said that every work of art should have Beginning, Middle and End. Following out his suggestion, we may make divisions like Past, Present and Future ; What I recall, What I see, What I anticipate ; Antecedents, Achievements and Expectations ; Source, Nature and Results ; Derivation, Condition and Tendencies ; History, Character and Destiny ; and so on indefinitely.

Going back, now, to the fact mentioned in the fourth paragraph above this—namely, that we may divide the object into its Outside and Inside ; or into its Condition and Qualities ; we may extend Relations, Object and Actions, into Relations, Conditions, Qualities and Actions ; and thus obtain four divisions. These, too, by the way, are the very terms that are used in logic to indicate the leading attributes of objects, and a knowledge of which is especially helpful when one is describing or defining ; as when we say of a man, that, in his relations he is social, in his condition healthy, in his qualities intellectual, and in his actions energetic. Making the same changes in phraseology as in the previous cases, we may parallel

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these divisions by such as the following : as applied to a person or community, by Surroundings, Constitution, Disposition and Occupation ; by Associations, Culture, Temperament and Achievements ; as applied to natural objects or to systems of philosophy or government, by Connections, Phases, Character and Influence ; by Affinities, Forms, Elements and Operations ; by Rank, State, Kind and Powers ; and so on.

So far our divisions have all been based upon a comparison of a topic to the conditions of an object, as appearing either in space or time. But besides conditions, the object, as has just been intimated, has qualities. This fact suggests that we may ask, what kinds of Relations, of Conditions, of Qualities or of Actions can be affirmed of the object ; and also that our answer, in each case, can suggest the divisions for which we are in search. Thus, the idea of the kinds of relations suggests that we can consider those which are on One Side and on the Other Side ; Before and Behind ; Antecedents and Consequences ; Means and Ends ; at One Extreme and at The Other Extreme ; that the object has a Bright Side and a Dark Side ; and that it may have certain features that are Advantageous and others Disadvantageous ; certain Superior and others Inferior ; etc.

The idea of the kinds of conditions suggests that we may consider some High and others Low ; some Rich and others Poor ; some Prosperous and others Unprosperous ; some Like and others Unlike ; some Free and others Restrained ; some Susceptible and others Insensible ; some Safe and others Dangerous ; etc.

The idea of the kinds of qualities suggests that we may consider some Good and others Bad ; some Fine and others Coarse ; some Common and others Uncommon ; some Pleasant and others Disagreeable ; some Admirable and others Despicable ; some Trustworthy and others Untrustworthy ; some Positive and others Negative ; etc.

The idea of the kinds of actions suggests that we may consider some Slow and others Fast ; some Beneficial and others Injurious ; some Skilful and others Bungling ; some Efficient and others Inefficient ; some Subjective and others Objective ; some Profitable and others Unprofitable ; some Peaceable and others Hostile.

Such formulæ as these can be used, first, for the main divisions of a topic. Suppose, for instance, that one be asked to address a gathering interested in a certain cause. Referring to it, he will have something to say in case only he can think of divisions like these, What I recall, What I see, What I anticipate. Or suppose that he is to preach on a text like " I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation." He can present the subject, both textually and logically, by saying, I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because, in its Source, it is of God ; in its Nature, a power ; and, in its Results, salvation.

The formulæ can be used also for subdivisions of the main divisions. Suppose that one be treating of Political Life. He can speak of it, first,

in Itself, and under this he can refer to its Character and its Influence, and to the latter both At Home and Abroad. Then, second, he can speak of its Surroundings, both Private and Public; and with reference to both of these he may mention what is Advantageous and Disadvantageous; and, perhaps, too, Pleasant and Disagreeable.

Two divisions, of course, one of which is complementary of the other, are more in accordance with the principles of logic than are a larger number. At the same time, the latter are not necessarily illogical. Aristotle, for instance, in Book II., Chapter 10, of his "Rhetoric," says: "All things are done by men either not of themselves, or of themselves. Of things not done by men of themselves, some they do from necessity, others they do from chance; of those done from necessity, a part are from external force; the others are from force of natural constitution. So that all that men do, not of themselves, are either from chance or from nature or force."

The number of divisions may be very greatly extended, too, with no serious detriment to the logical effect. The sole reason why certain of those that have been given—like Foundation, Walls and Roof, for instance—are of importance, is because of the order that they introduce into description. A hearer could not be interested in an account of a cathedral, or remember it, if the describer were to mention one feature of the foundation, then one of the roof, then one of the walls, and then another of the roof again, and so on. As a rule, he is expected to say everything that he has to say of the foundation before beginning about the walls, and to finish his description of these before referring to the roof. Because, in such cases, all that is essential is to preserve the order of thought, it is feasible, sometimes, to analyze one or more of the factors of divisions, such as Individual and Community, into many heads, like Individual, Family, Race and Humanity; or divisions like At Home and Abroad into Home, Town, District, Country, World and Universe. Often it is possible to fulfil the requirements of order, and, at the same time, because of allied principles of analysis, together with slightly different methods of applying them, to combine certain of the sets of divisions that have been mentioned. Thus, Rise, Culmination and Decline, together with History, Character and Destiny, can be turned into Rise, History, Culmination, Character, Decline and Destiny.

There is a connection worth noticing now between the methods that have suggested all these sets of divisions, and a well-known rule of rhetoric, which is, that in treating a subject, thought should move by successive stages from the generic to the specific, or from the specific to the generic. This connection is owing to the fact that, in passing from the generic to the specific, thought usually advances by a process of analysis from that which has mainly to do with the relations, or, at least, the environments of a subject, to that which may be said to belong to it more especially, because being, as it were, at its core; while passing onward from this,

thought usually does so in order to show the action or influence of that which is, in this sense, specific upon that which is more generic in its environments and relations. Dr. Mark Hopkins, for instance, in his "Outline Study of Man," illustrates this method by starting with the general conception of Being, and passing from that through Organized Being, Animal, Vertebrate, Mammal and Man to a Specific Man. Then, affirming something of this man, he retraces his steps exactly in reverse order, applying what has been said, first to Man, then to Mammal, Vertebrate, Animal, Organized Being, and finally to Being. So one may start with the general conception of Humanity, and advancing through Race and Country to Government affirm something of this, and apply what is said in succession to Country, Race and Humanity. So also moving through relations that are Physical, Intellectual and Moral to the Spiritual, he may apply what is said of this in succession to actions that are Moral, Intellectual and Physical; and moving from Nature through Human Nature and Æsthetic Nature to Art, he may apply what is said of this in succession to Æsthetic Nature, Human Nature, and Nature. It is evident that whenever we begin by observing in this way the more general relations or features of a subject and pass from these to those that are more specific, and, having reached the latter, go on to show the influence that they exert first in their more specific, and then in their more generic relations, we pursue an order of thought which fulfils the principle underlying all the formulæ that have been here unfolded.

Enough has been said now, however, to make clear what this principle is, as well as to suggest the methods through which it may be applied. It is hardly necessary to add that the sets of divisions that have been given, illustrating these, may be almost infinitely varied; or that, for this reason, there is no necessity that they should be used or imitated slavishly. In fact, it is hardly possible that, for any length of time, they should be used thus. The principle at the basis of them is so easy to understand and master that any endeavors to carry it out will, after a few attempts, give a man such a command of it as to render him practically independent of any prescribed methods of doing so.

A HEAVEN without human love it were inhuman, and yet more undivine to desire; it ought not to be desired by any being made in the image of God. The Lord of Life died that His Father's children might grow perfect in love—might love their brothers and sisters as He loved them: is it to this end that they must cease to know one another? To annihilate the past of our earthly embodiment would be to crush under the heel of an iron fate the very idea of tenderness, human or Divine.—*George MacDonald.*

SERMONIC SECTION.

CHRIST IN THE WRITTEN RECORD.

BY CANON H. SCOTT HOLLAND, LONDON, ENG.

And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and believing ye might have life through His name.—John xx. 30, 31.

"MANY other things which Jesus did." What is our first thought at being told this? Is it not this: "Oh! if we could only but know them; if only they had been written down, what a priceless boon; they would be just what we most need, they would clear up so many points that are now tangled in dispute"? For, indeed, the recorded doings and sayings of the Lord are so pitifully, so terribly, short—just a few rapid incidents thrown together by the Synoptics, mainly out of the very last year of His life—only twenty days of all His earthly career touched upon in St. John! How scanty, how partial, how unsatisfying! Was ever so tremendous a venture as the Christian creed made on so slight a foundation as this! And just think how far every single little word or deed of our Lord goes, how much it carries with it. That you know is His profound characteristic that everything He does is charged with significance, so that sermons, meditations, commentaries, all find inexhaustible material in the least phrase He uses in His passing acts. And rightly, for somehow or other they tell, they hit, they speak home, they are always fresh, alive, and fertile. Every text in the recorded Gospels holds in it the story of countless souls who have fed on it and have found their hope in it. No word of the Lord returns to Him empty: all of them go abroad in the world to work, to convert, to sustain, to quicken. Centuries have passed over them, and still they

wear their eternal youth. "No custom can make stale their infinite variety." Their very rarity only increases the wonder. A tiny pamphlet would hold them all! What, then, if there were many more of them, if their number were but doubled or trebled? Surely the additions would be as original, as rich, as awakening as these we now have; nothing that He ever said or did could fail to be instinct with the same deep and tender character. And, moreover, as we said, so many difficulties could surely be solved, for, as it is, it is the fragmentary abruptness of our records that creates such perplexities. There are no explanations or qualifications; a brief, quick word is dropped, and it raises a hundred problems, and yet it is left there alone, tantalizing us with its enigmatic compression. If only there were other passages which would elucidate it, or with which we could compare or contrast it! We should have so much better a chance of arriving at the solution; then we should not have the critics confusing us with suggested contradictions which we are certain could be reconciled at once by a little more information. We should not have the endless and depressing turmoil of the commentaries, warring with desperate fury often over the simplest and most fundamental of Christ's utterances. So little, so very little, we have been told of Him, the more we love Him, the more we long to know of Him as He moved about among us on earth. "Would not the Christian Church," we ask, "have been spared many of its dismal blunders if it had more of the authoritative and undoubted commandments of Christ to keep it straight, to direct its feet, to enhearten its faith?" Surely if there is one thing about which we can be positively sure, it would be this, that the more we knew about the Lord Jesus Christ the better it would be. If there are many things that could be told us about Him, in God's name,

let them be written down at once and forever. So any one of us would probably argue and conclude.

And yet St. John's deliberate verdict, at the end of his life, is given against that conclusion. He is speaking, as it would seem, to those about him, who felt just what we feel to-day. They are pressing him to tell them everything. He has come already to the close of what he has purposed to say, he is ending his Gospel with the twentieth chapter, at the confession of Thomas, that confession in which the apostolic faith consummated its victory over doubt and fear. Now the whole body has learned to rise above everything that could make it hesitate or despair, it has given out the crowning cry of belief, "My Lord, and my God." And with this the apostle would stop—would be content. Many other things there are, many other signs that Jesus did, but he is not going to tell them. Only, in view of certain intense personal interests and historic affection, he consents, it seems, to add a final chapter, an epilogue—one scene of peculiar significance to the Church of his day; one scene which told of the last bond of memorable tenderness between himself and St. Peter; a scene which recorded how, to the one in his penitent love was committed, after searching inquiry, that tending of the flock from which his threefold denial might have seemed to displace him, while to the other was given that mysterious task of tarrying on in dim days of suspense, in strange uncertainty what the end might be. And then almost as if he were apologizing for having been induced to add even this much to the concluded and sufficient Gospel, he seems to protest that if he were to yield to their pressure, and to write down all he could remember or verify, why, he would never have done! Many other things there were, no doubt, many other signs which He gave in the presence of His disciples. He had thought of that, he had considered it, but he has determined after all to stop at what he has done. It is a selection

only, he acknowledges, out of numberless other sayings and doings; the mere attempt to collect together everything would be a wasteful proceeding, it would not come to any satisfactory conclusion—if they were all written down. "I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that should be written."

Somehow, then, we are not on the track of St. John's mind, when we begin by craving for an indefinite accumulation of Gospel material. He does not consider that that is what we need. He has another purpose in view, as he writes, than that of recording everything that he could recall or discover about our Lord, and this purpose of his is better served by a selection than by an accumulation, and therefore he spends his energy and experience not in gathering, but in sifting. His effort lies in singling out from the swarm of memories those special and typical moments which will best convey the impression he desires. How different from such a man as Papias in the later days, he who had never seen the Lord, but would go about all over the world asking everywhere for some one who could tell him some new story about the Lord! That is not the apostle, his long tarrying has taught him through the selective working of the Holy Spirit, under the pressure of daily circumstances, what to keep in store, what to drop and prune, if the image of Christ is to transmit itself with faithful emphasis to those who are to come after. To secure this he depends not on the quantity, but on the quality, of the matter chosen. We know how, even in his own case, the years as they pass over him have taught him the same lesson—to pare down rather than to expand. Fewer and fewer words, we are told by St. John, have become necessary to him; he would rather repeat and repeat those familiar phrases, into which he has concentrated all his love, than search about for other and more varied expressions.

As life drew to its end, it was enough

for him to say nothing but the one deep word, in which all lay hidden: "Little children, love one another." And so now, in putting his Gospel together, his skill lies in learning what to throw away. As the prime necessity of delivering his message whole and intact bears down upon him, with increasing anxiety, it forces him to an even more and more exact, cheerful, and fastidious choice in determining the limited material of his witness. If he can secure the perfect witness in a few incidents he has done his true part. That will be sufficient to work its way, and if that is insufficient, no additions to it will succeed any better. That is the distinct judgment of the disciple who lay on Jesus' bosom, that is his deliberate mode of giving his testimony—concentration not expansion, selection not abundance; that is his verdict who testifies to these things and wrote these things, and we know his testimony is true.

Why should it be so? Why should that be the fittest method? There is one dominant and effective answer—because Jesus Christ is still alive and at work; Jesus Christ is a living Person, ascended to the right hand of God, reigning in the midst of His Church. He, through His Spirit, is here ready to meet difficulties as they arise, ready to answer the questions suggested by His words, ready to lead His believers on and on in the path on which they had set out. All the Christian religion lies in that: it lies in the actual communion between the living soul and the living Christ, not in reading about Him, not in hearing about Him, not in remembering things that He did, or being convinced that He really did them, or in admiration for his Historical character, or in approving the excellence of His teaching, or in a touching sentiment from the beautiful drama once enacted by Him "who for us men, and for our salvation came down . . . and was made man"—not in any of these does the religion of Christ consist. It begins and ends wholly in an active and ener-

getic contact between the Person of Jesus Christ and the person of His followers—a contract begun in Baptism, realized in Confirmation, discovered in Communion, fed and nourished by the incessant actuality of prayers, aspirations, pleadings, pardons, as the soul travels point by point along the pathway of its salvation, and is faithful to the handling of its Redeemer and its King. The whole secret is here. The whole meaning of everything is to know Jesus Christ, to know Him as a will that governs us, as a Lover whom we worship—there is no other end and aim in our religion than that.

Now, if that be so, what is wanted in the written record? Not to meet every perplexity beforehand, not to explain all the expressions used, not to be a complete statement of all that Christ has to say and do. No; He will Himself be with us to guide and explain; He will have much to say hereafter that we cannot bear now. He will Himself be forever completing what He has begun. He will Himself guide us through our perplexities. There must be nothing in the record that will tend to take the place of the living Lord, nothing that will seem sufficient of itself without Him. The one thing wanted is knowledge of Him who is our invisible Friend, knowledge of Him not merely of what He said or did, but of Him, Him as a personality, a character. It was His character that He revealed through His incarnate acts; His eternal character made known in a visible shape, through definite and intelligible acts of will. We must, by help of the Gospel, know Him as a living Being, as a breathing human Friend who can be spoken to, delighted in as man, and loved and adored as God.

Now, in saying that, we have cleared up the reason for St. John's decision; for a character, as we all are aware, is understood, is revealed, through the quality rather than the quantity of its acts. To get at the heart and the mind of a person we turn to the characteristic deeds and words which come from him

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at the most cardinal and critical moments of his life. We can afford to omit, forget, a thousand details, if only we can single out and fasten upon those peculiar, those unique, expressions which have upon them the special stamp of his individuality. It is the typical facts that we require when the fullest secret of His being emerged and flashed. To know Him, then, at such vivid moments, is to know Him forever, for it is to know Him as He is. A multitude of minor events and records would be full of interest, no doubt, but they would not be essential, they would not really add to our knowledge, they would but corroborate and confirm it. Take the case of a dear friend passed away from us in death. What is it that lives in our faithful memory of him, what is it we love to bring up in imagination and brood over and caress, as it were, with an affectionate recollection? Not, I think, a quantity of details, but rather, I think, the few singular and intimate and memorable characteristics which marked him out from all others, the things which gave him his personal uniqueness, the things which no one else could have done or said, the points at which his innermost nature shot up to the surface, and looked out at us with a sudden intensity, before it fell back again under the veil of ordinary existence. Certain single moments there have been that abide in our mind when he turned his face full upon us—the man himself; certain actions there were that stand out clear from all others as stars in the night. They may be great or little, but they were the windows through which we saw into his soul. Perhaps it is the ring of his voice on a certain phrase that will haunt us; or the turn of his head, as he looked back and smiled; his gait, as we caught sight of him some day, that we remember so well; or that way he had of laying his hand on our arm, and we can feel it warm there to-day; or the sort of word he used, that was a favorite one on his lips, the word that was the key to so much in him, in which we delighted;

or some one happy day, when the blessed home was full of his delightful presence; or, above all, the tune of his laugh when he was merry, or the look in his eyes at the time of some deep sorrow—these are the things that we cling to, and to these and no more than these. To them we recur again and again, we bring them vividly before us, they are the vital relics which our heart treasures up in its sanctuary to kiss, to brood upon, and to think of. They may be few, but they are enough, we can let all the rest go. It is these by which our souls go out to the friend who for a time is gone out of our sight; by these he is back with us, we feel him again at our side, we see him coming in at the door—it is him, it is the old beloved identity, he is ours still.

Now that is the office which the Gospels should fulfil for us. This Friend of ours, gone away through the grave and gate of death, is not, indeed, as our other dear friends. He is alive, and would come back to us, but He is out of our sight, and we want to feel as if we knew Him who draws near us under the veil. And here are the records which propose to make Him intelligible, make Him intimate, make Him vivid as a personal friend. And, moreover, is not that exactly what they do succeed in doing, these Gospels of ours? Read them, and whatever may puzzle you as to what may be meant by this phrase or by that, or as to what He did or said on such a day, is not it absolutely clear to you what type of man He was? Do you not become certain of the sort of effect that Jesus Christ would have upon you? Are you not intensely conscious of being in the presence of One whose character preserves a steady and emphatic identity which you cannot compare with anybody else, which has a particular and unmistakable tinge of individuality through which you feel you could identify Him anywhere? "That is so like Him," you can say; "that has a ring about it, a flavor, an accent which I could recognize anywhere. That is Jesus of Nazareth. I

know Him as I know a personal friend. If He were to come again, if He were to enter into that room and speak, I should know it was the same one whom these Gospels tell us about. Their portrait would make Him entirely familiar, so strong is the impression that they produce of a personal presence, actual, concrete, consistent, uniform, alive, whose every word or look or gesture enables me to cry out: "There is He, that is Jesus!"

How do they manage to do this? Mainly by fixing attention on that cardinal scene in which the deepest significance of His character came to the front—His trial, judgment, and death. That was the moment of moments, in which He made manifest the secret of His life, in which everything that was in Him was put under the sharpest tests and gave experience of its temper and quality. For this He had been sent into the world. That was the work that the Father had given Him to do. In it His whole self was concentrated. In the fiery light that then beat down upon Him, all was revealed that made Him our Master and King. This, then, is the chief, the dominant, thing that the Gospels set themselves to tell. A third of the whole narrative is devoted to it; every incident, every word, every detail, is brought out here vividly and at length. A character, we have said, is known best in its greatest crisis, and what did He do then, how did He bear Himself? So here if you know Jesus in His awful agony, in His bloody sweat, you know Him as He is forever, you are inside His life, you are in possession of His secret. Always and on all occasions He will be the same whom at that hour you recognized and loved and worshipped. They tell, these Gospels, chiefly of the Judgment and the Death; and besides that main event they only aim at giving samples of His characteristic acts, and of His most pregnant and germinal sayings: not a code of laws, not a system of dogma, not a complete ethical handbook, not a body of organized teaching; but germinal sayings—

the sayings which start you thinking, which arrest you, which turn you round, which give you a direction, which put out an influence upon you, which draw you after them, which are felt as a pressure and a weight, which catch hold, and haunt and follow and dog you down; those sayings which creep inside your surface existence, which dig down and burrow and upset and disturb, which pierce and divide asunder to the very joint and marrow. These are the words which carry the personality—the individuality—with them. They come upon you as if with the force of a living presence, standing close by you, and speaking with a voice that compels attention. Many things they leave unanswered; many problems these words will stir rather than compose. The settling of these will come afterward through the life in the Lord, through the Eternal Spirit; or, indeed, they may remain dark for many years. But for the present all that is needed is the touch of person by person, of soul by soul, of will by will. That is life, that is religion, that is Christian faith, that is the Catholic creed. The Gospels have this one aim—to enable us to know Him, whom it is in whom we are asked to believe, "to know Him whom we have believed," to know God and Jesus Christ, whom He has sent. These things are written that we may know. That is the whole business.

Beloved, it is so natural for us to wish to have more written down, but do we not deceive ourselves if we think that by having more we should find our perplexities cleared and our hesitations dismissed? If we had the longest book, and the clearest statement, what would it help, considering that all the main discussions that have gone on have gone on around the clearest words that can be set together: "Eat, this is My body"? How would it help? A book is always in the position that Plato described: "There it stands, and if you want to ask a question it cannot answer." And let us remember how the

Jews heard more and saw more than we have in our hands to-day, and they were only the more baffled and more determined in their hostility. Judas saw and heard far more, saw and heard all these very things which John has left unwritten, and after all he went away and communed with the chief priests how he might betray Him. No, that is not the way out; there is enough in our brief Gospels to challenge us with this Living Presence which we must face, and which, having faced, we must either follow or flee. There it stands, and moves, and speaks. We can all feel it as it draws near, as it passes by. Who is it? The blindest of us find ourselves forced to ask: "Who is it that is passing by?" A personal presence? It is enigmatical enough; it is bewildering, it amazes, it says but few things plainly. But there it is; we cannot escape it: it is a presence which is not to be put by. That is its challenge: it stands there delivering the challenge by its sheer existence—not by arguments, not by explanation, not by persuasion, not by those weapons does it make its attack; no, but by being simply what it is. "I am what I am, I am that which I have been telling you." "Whom say ye that I, the Son of Man, am?" That is the voice that speaks through the written records, speaks as none other ever spake. And it is the voice of a living man, not of a book, using a book through which to speak, but Himself the key of the written word, Himself the power in the book; Himself the argument, the appeal; Himself the soul of the record! Though all the books that the world could contain were written about Him the situation would still be the same. At the close when you have read them all, the one question would still remain to be answered: "After all you have read, after all you have heard, will you follow Me? Will you obey Me? Will you trust Me? Will you put your soul in My hands?" The question would still remain the question which is before you and me to-day. The words that

we read on this printed page pass into the mouth of One who is pressing for immediate response: "I am the Vine," "I am the Good Shepherd," "Come unto Me," "My peace I give unto you," "I am the Resurrection and the Life." So He is saying now to-day, and each soul in this church is listening to Him. And each must do something to meet the voice. No good, no help to read any more. What will you do? How will you act? Puzzles, perplexities, will remain, hesitations, uncertainties. Yes, but the voice will go on still challenging our confidence. "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?" And if so, "when I speak the truth, why do ye not believe Me"? We cannot ignore or avoid that insistent pressure; we must make up our minds how we are going to treat it, for He has met us in a narrow place, and we cannot pass without seeing Him. Oh, now for the brave act of faith, now for the movement of the adventurous will, now for the spring of the soul! No book will give us that; only the Spirit of the living God—the Spirit that works at once through the book, and works also within our hearts; the Eternal Spirit of the ascended Lord, that takes of His and shows it unto us. Take St. John's Gospel, then; it is quite enough for all its purposes, take it and read it, and then lift up your eyes and cry to the Spirit, appeal to Him, surrender to Him; commit life, soul, will, and mind to Him; that so you may pass through the written records into the very heart of Jesus, and may know that you have life in His name.

THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM.

BY STUART MITCHELL, D.D. [PRESBYTERIAN], MOUNT CARMEL, PA.

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.—Heb. xi. 8.

ABRAHAM'S name is one of the most widely known and most illustrious of

all ancient history. Throughout the East legends of the piety of Abraham vie in popularity with legends of the wisdom of Solomon. Jews, Turks, Moors, and Arabs, peoples who know nothing of Julius Cæsar or Alexander, hold in veneration the name of Abraham. And with good reason. For when the religion of Adam and Noah was fading out, and the darkness of idolatry was settling down upon the world through man's unwillingness to retain God in his knowledge, God chose Abraham to retain the light and to form in his family that national church, or ecclesiastical nation, in which the light should live until in it the Sun of righteousness should rise.

Abraham was remarkable not only for his distinguished place in God's plan, but also as an example of strong faith. In the example of faith given in Heb. xi. he occupies more space than any other. His faith was not perfect nor unwavering, and the impartial pen of inspiration records two shameful failures. Yet on the whole it was wonderful, and it is as an example of faith he is held up to us in our text. By faith he obeyed.

He had to meet great difficulties. He was called to leave country, kindred, and home to go somewhere, but whither he did not know. He could not but love his country and feel a pang at parting. He must separate from the companions of his boyhood and the intimate associates and friends of his riper years, and go forth at an age when new friends are not easy to find. It is probable that he would lose property by his migration. Whatever landed possessions, immunities, privileges, or claims upon the gratitude of his neighbors he might have acquired in the past were to be left behind. He must resist the friendly persuasions of his neighbors to remain, and he might have to meet the ridicule of those who were less friendly. For besides all this, there was this greatest difficulty of all, that he himself did not know whither he was going. Imagine your neighbor selling off at a

sacrifice and packing up to move, and when you ask him whither, he tells you he does not know! You will not think it strange if his neighbors ridicule him. You may find it hard to believe that he is telling you the truth. You think it next to impossible that a sensible man could thus prepare for moving without any plan whatever. You may even question his sanity and wish to have the law applied to protect his family. Your views indeed will be changed if you find out that this man, poor and feeble and a bad manager, has a brother who is a capable business man and immensely wealthy, and has written to him to be ready on such a day to put himself and family under his guidance. Then you see that it may be the wisest thing he can do to cast himself thus upon his brother's care. And still you will say that he must have great faith in his brother thus to break up his home, not knowing where he is to go. And so we may easily suppose that Abraham's unbelieving neighbors would try to persuade him to give up his crazy project, and would revile him for an impracticable fanatic when they could not move him by persuasion; and we can see that he would need strong faith to overcome the inclination to plan our course which is so strong in us all, and usually the strongest in the strongest minds.

Difficulties were obvious to his senses, and very great. On the other hand, there were great inducements, but they were such as required faith to make them felt. There was a plain command of God. Though it gave no information as to whither he was going, it was clear as to the starting: "Get thee out unto a land that I will shew thee." There was a large promise, embracing various particulars, as *guidance*: "Unto a land that I will shew thee;" *distinction* of the best kind—not for mischief wrought and misery inflicted, but for benefit conferred: "I will bless thee, and make thy name great;" *greatness for his posterity*: "I will make of thee a great nation." All nations were

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to be blessed through him: "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." All this implied God's protection, and insured his safety wherever he might be led. But all this was only a promise—only words, unbelief would say. All this was nothing to him except as he made it a motive force by believing it.

Through *faith* he obeyed. He trusted the promises. His faith in them told him that he could afford to face trials for such a great recompense of reward. He trusted beyond the bare letter of the promises: Abraham believed *God*. He trusted in God's holiness, justice, faithfulness, and mercy; and so when he received the command, he believed and felt that it was best for him to obey. It was best for him, promise or no promise. God would not give him a command which it would injure him to obey. God was too good to give a command that it would not be a benefit to obey, too faithful to lead him into any difficulty by his obedience, there to forsake him. He believed in God, and so he knew that God's command implied a promise.

By faith Abraham *obeyed*, and having trusted and obeyed so far, he received new encouragements to faith and obedience. Having once turned his back upon Ur of the Chaldees and Haran; having once broken away from his hindering friends and incredulous neighbors; having once taken a step into the dark and found his foot still on solid ground, the great difficulty was overcome. It is true that difficulties remained, and among them his natural tendency to unbelief; but by setting out at God's command, depending on Him, he had thrown himself upon God's faithfulness; and God could not leave him to be put to shame without dishonoring His own name. So, in spite of his human failings, Abraham went on under Jehovah's guidance and protection, gaining new light, receiving fresh promises, and growing stronger in his confidence.

Thus God's promises were fulfilled to

him. He became great. He was blessed with a prosperous and long life and a peaceful death. His name abides in honor wherever men believe in the unity of God. He was no conqueror of nations, no legislator, no builder piling up pyramids for his monument, no poet recording his claim to recollection in immortal verse, no discoverer of useful arts appealing to men's gratitude by some sensible, earthly benefit, but a plain man dwelling in tents and living by pasturage; and yet no conqueror, legislator, builder, poet, or inventor has been so widely known as Abraham the "Father of the Faithful" and the "Friend of God." Wherever the sons of Ishmael carried the conquests of their arms, their religion and their literature, they carried the name of their father Abraham. Wherever the scattered children of Israel have gone with their untiring energy and unflinching faithfulness to ancestral tradition, there, in the very tongue that Abraham spoke, their children read of Abraham, the friend of God. Wherever through the wide world the Christian faith is preached, there the faith of Abraham is held up for an example.

His posterity became great—great in numbers, great for the space they have filled in history, and, greatest of all, for the influence they have exercised and still exercise upon the world's civilization. The promise that all nations should be blessed in him is in part realized and is still fulfilling. His "seed," including all true believers, meant pre-eminently Jesus Christ, in whom the nations have been already so greatly blessed. In Him shall the promise to Abraham meet its complete fulfilment. There has been given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom that all people, nations, and languages should serve Him, an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away.

And now, when Abraham, from his home in that city which hath foundations, looks back to the day when with trepidation in his heart he went out, not knowing whither he went; when Abra-

ham traces down the history of his seed—their exodus from Egypt, their marches guided, like his, by the Almighty, their conquest of the land where he had been a stranger and sojourner, their power under David and splendor under Solomon, their defections, restorations, captivities and persecutions, and through all their marvellous preservation—when Abraham sees born of his seed One who is at once his Son and his God, One who is before Abraham was, One who triumphs over Satan by suffering, defeats death by dying, pays the redemption price of suffering and death for the sins of Abraham and of all believers both before and since, rises from the grave a conqueror, and sits at the right hand of the Majesty on high in a body sprung from Abraham's; when Abraham looks over the earth and sees in how many lands, in how many tongues, of how many races, nations, and families men call on the true God, their God, as the God of Abraham and of Abraham's greater seed—when he looks at this grand result of the step he took when he set out in weakness but in faith to go he knew not whither, does he not see a magnificent reward? God said to him in Canaan, "I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward;" he has been safely shielded; and God Himself, God in the person of His Son made flesh in Abraham's family to be his Saviour, has been, and is, and ever shall be his exceeding great reward.

The history of Abraham's faith is given us for our example and encouragement. We are all called by the Word of God to go on pilgrimage. We are to leave our country, our kindred, and our father's house, if so we may speak of the estate in which we find ourselves by nature, and to go forth to a land that God will show us. We are to leave the condition of alienage from God and attachment to the world in its opposition to Him, and seek eternal blessedness in His communion. All that is characteristic of our natural sinful state is to be left behind us. We are to come out from the world and be sepa-

rate. We need not leave this Christian country in which we dwell. It may not be necessary to leave kindred or father's house literally. With some of you, instead of making a separation of the family, if you should set out for heaven, you would be uniting it. Your kindred have already left the city of Destruction, perhaps arrived at the city New Jerusalem, and are looking for you to join them. But however it may be with family ties and friendships, there is a coming out to be done by all. We have naturally an attachment to the world's ungodliness, perhaps developed and strengthened by indulgence in the world's ungodly practices; against that ungodliness we are to set ourselves; from these practices we are to separate ourselves.

And as in Abraham's case, there may be great difficulties. It may involve loss of friendship, loss of property. It may cross cherished plans for gaining wealth, or may seem to peril the support of a dependent family. It may bring upon one the jeers and quips of ungodly companions, harder to face than a discharge of musketry. Still the command is, "Get thee out." This is not all the difficulty: in many cases, if not in all, the worst hindrance to setting out is the not knowing whither, the not being able to see the way through, the having to go by faith and not by sight. Sometimes, indeed, the sinner urged to set out on the Christian pilgrimage readily resolves to start because he thinks he sees the way clear. His companions are all going, or his feelings have been so moved that he thinks he now has the determination that will carry him through. If he starts because he sees the way clear, there is great danger of his turning back when he comes to find the way blocked.

But we have in view now those who know something of what a Christian life means, and are not altogether blind to the character of their own hearts, and dread to set out lest the effort should end in a mortifying failure. They know the force of evil habit, the

resistance of worldly inclinations. They know that, however their conscience may be roused and their feelings altered for a time by outward influences, there still remains at bottom an ungodly disposition which is at war with the duties and exercises of the Christian life. How can they live a life of prayer and communion with God when their disposition is to avoid and ignore God? How can they live a life of true penitence when they do not really dislike sin, but only fear its results? How can they walk humbly before God with this inclination to excuse and justify themselves and take to themselves credit? The outward forms they could go through, the church and prayer-meeting and family worship; they could give their money or their time, if that were all; but they know that this is not all: the outward exercises are not the real Christian life. They might keep up the show for a while, perhaps for a long while; but the show is not the reality; and could they, knowing and feeling this, even keep up the show? They do not see the way clear a step before them; and how can they take such a bold step when they do not see whether their foot is to come down on solid ground or in a bottomless bog?

Here is a great difficulty, it must be allowed; but still the step is to be taken. There is more than difficulty in the way: there is impossibility; and yet it must be done. We admit the impossibility of the Christian life for a sinful heart, but God calls on us to undertake the impossible if we would be saved. What is impossible with us is perfectly possible for Him, and He offers to be our guide and helper, securing us safety and success. If, then, we undertake the impossible, depending upon Him, He is responsible for the result. If we undertake it because we think it is possible for us, then we are responsible for the success, and He is not bound to carry us through.

We have an illustration of this in verse 29. The children of Israel stood on the shore of the Red Sea, a helpless,

defenceless crowd. The land, as their enemies said, had shut them in. The troops of Pharaoh were marching upon them; fighting and flight were alike impossible. God pointed Moses to the sea, and bade him tell the children of Israel to go forward. It was more than difficulty that faced them; for them to go through was impossibility; yet such was the command, and there was no other escape. In the darkness of the night they went forward and found themselves going on dry land. God had made the impossible possible. The Egyptians saw it, and undertook to do the same. They undertook it not because they had God's command or depended on God's help, but because they saw an open road. They walked by sight, not by faith; and the returning waters engulfed them. God was bound to carry the one party safely through because they went at His command; He was not bound to protect the other, because they went depending on themselves. "By faith they passed through the sea as by dry land, which the Egyptians essaying to do, were drowned."

When God calls on us to undertake an impossibility, He does not intend to leave us to our own weakness, to failure and ruin; He intends to show His power in us. He does not expect the sea of difficulty to be divided and its ponderous mass rolled back by us, but He commands us to march into it, and will not divide it until we march. It was not until the "feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water" of Jordan on its overflowed bank that the water ceased to flow above and ebbd away below. The negro preacher's illustration is to the point: "If God tells me to jump headforemost through a stone-wall, I'm bound to jump at it. Jumping at it belongs to me; going through it belongs to God."

The sinner has great encouragement to set out on pilgrimage. He has exceeding great and precious promises. He has the promise of acceptance: "He

that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." He has a promise of the Holy Spirit to help his infirmities, a promise that he shall not be tempted above what he is able to bear; that as his day, so shall his strength be, that his sins shall be all forgiven, that he shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. The Bible contains a multitude of such promises, and they guarantee all a sinner needs.

But the great encouragement is God Himself. His character includes all promise and guarantee all good. We may trust Him beyond the bare letter of His promise, and such trust turns His commands into promises. The Rev. Richard Cecil and his little daughter sat together, the father meditating and the child playing with a new string of beads. "My daughter," said he, "throw your beads into the fire." The astonished child looked into his face to see that he was in earnest, then turned and threw them into the hottest blaze, and then, with her eyes full of tears, threw herself upon her father's bosom. "You have done well, my child," said the father; "I wished to see if you had faith in me. I will bring you a far prettier string." This was a trial of the child's faith in her father; not of faith in any express promise—for he had given none—but of faith in himself. The child's faith in her father taught her that he could give her no command that it would not be best for her to obey; the command itself thus became a promise of good. So Abraham's faith was tried when he was told to sacrifice Isaac; not his faith in any express promise, but his faith in God.

The best reason, then, for undertaking the Christian life is that God commands it. The command is not to do anything in our own strength, but to leave our salvation to Him, to depend, trust, follow, and so serve Him through Jesus Christ. When He gives a command, obedience to which will bring us into difficulty, we may be sure that He will see us safely through. His own character is implicated. What would be

thought of a general who should send a detachment on a difficult service, and then, with abundance of force at his disposal, allow them to be cut to pieces through their obedience to his orders? You bid a child to come to you across a stream, and the child, depending on your word, walks in and gets beyond his depth; you will save him at the risk of your life, for you are responsible for him. When Israel followed God's guidance into the Red Sea and the desert they were safe because He had taken the responsibility, and for Him there was no more difficulty in leading them through the sea than in leading them through the land of Goshen. It was as easy for Him to feed them in the wilderness as to feed them out of the fleshpots of Egypt.

And so, when a sinner, putting his trust in Jesus Christ, undertakes the task—to him impossible—of living a Christian life, he binds the Saviour by His own character to help him through. The work impossible to him unaided is not impossible when Jesus Christ daily supplies him with spiritual strength. The fear of not being able to hold out is, therefore, no good reason for not following Christ. If we go forward trusting in Christ, our holding out is His affair.

As in Abraham's case, the sinner who thus sets out will receive further encouragement as he proceeds. The great difficulty is at starting. It is while the mind is yet undecided that the persuasions or ridicule of worldly companions have the most force. When the question is once settled, much of this opposition is left behind. The difficulty of walking by faith diminishes as we find that the ground is always there to meet our foot. As Abraham received new promises, so we get more light—for our experience turns our attention to truths and promises of the Bible before unnoticed. Every day's experience of help obtained in answer to prayer increases our confidence of obtaining future help. As faith grows, love grows; and love to God means ease in

duty, pleasure in service, joy in pious exercises.

Thus he who sets out at God's command, trusting simply in Him, however feeble and imperfect he may be, goes surely and arrives safely in the heavenly Canaan. He is blessed himself and made a blessing to others. God is not ashamed to be called his God, for He hath prepared for him a city.

Besides the call of God's word to the Christian life, there is a call of God's providence, of which we may speak briefly. Providence is constantly calling us to go, not knowing whither. It calls the child to go out from the familiar scenes of home to the untried experiences of school; it calls on the young man to plunge into the unknown turmoil of business life; on the young girl to assume the unaccustomed responsibilities of wife; on the parents, with their multiplied life and needs, to meet the exigencies of life in an unfamiliar region. Into an unknown future we are all steadily moving. Like the steamship surging ahead into the pitchy darkness of the stormy night, leaving its phosphorescent track for but a little way behind, so we, driven by the forces of nature within and without, are pressing ever onward into a darkness that no human eye can penetrate, while our past course, luminous for a little, is soon shrouded in oblivion. As to the going forward, there is no choice for us; we can no more stop or stay the forces that impel us than the senseless ship can control the wind or the fires and enginery that work within. What lies in our course, against what unseen obstacles we may be shattered, we cannot know. Although imagination may fill the darkness ahead with pictures of terror, we cannot stop nor slacken speed. We may change our course a point or two, but all courses are alike in the dark, and we know not where may be the greatest dangers. We know that there will be difficulties, temptations, trials, and death, but we do not know whether the pains or pleasures of life's voyage, its failures or suc-

cesses, shall predominate, whether it shall be long continued or whether the next plunge is to end it. So we go on, and must go, not knowing whither.

Though there is no choice as to our going onward, there is as to the feelings with which we shall go. God tells us to go fearlessly, cheerfully, happily, thankfully. "Fear not, little flock." "Take no thought." "Rejoice evermore, and in everything give thanks." This is our duty according to the Bible; and it is our best course according to reason. Yet reason cannot enable us to do it. Men may go forward recklessly, brutalized by ignorance and sin; but that is not wisdom, not courage, not happiness. You may tell people that it is better to look on the bright side and be hopeful instead of fearful, but unless you can convince them that there is good ground for hope and no cause for fear, it is like exhorting a sufferer not to feel his pain.

If we walk by sight, and are reasonable and thoughtful, we are likely to go often anxiously. When a man sees around him a dependent family needing his utmost exertions, and sees that his natural force is failing, and knows not how soon he must leave them, reasoning can only increase his anxiety. When we feel the twinges of pain, and have before us the prospect of wearing out with it; or when we see the sickness and pain of those we love, and know there is no remedy, and cannot but foresee an inevitable parting; when those who have walked together in mutual support and loving sympathy see in the near future loneliness, and hear in their hearts the hollow echo of the coming desolation, philosophy is vain. Only by faith in God can we go fearlessly and happily into the darkness ahead.

And God has not commanded us to do so without encouragement. To render anxiety about earthly wants needless, he has said: "Your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and

all these things shall be added unto you." He has said, "All things work together for good to them that love God," and this covers the whole case. But above all special promises we have God Himself. "He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God." He has marked out every step of our way, and is guiding us over it, and to dispel anxiety we have only to realize that He is at our side. He hides the future from us and reveals the way only as we take each step that we may trust the more implicitly in Him. Thus trusting, we find by experience that we are safely led. So encouragements increase as we proceed. We come to look with less anxiety to the future as we see more of God's guidance in the past.

It is enough for faith that it is God's will we should go on, not knowing whither. Faith says, I know not now, but I shall know hereafter; and for the present I need not know, since God knows for me.

"So I go on not knowing! I would not if I might;
I would rather walk on in the dark with God
than go alone in the light;
I would rather walk with Him by faith than
walk alone by sight."

THE APOSTLES' CREED A GUIDE TO PRAYER.

BY EMIL QUANDT, D.D. [EVANGELICAL], BERLIN.

Let my prayer be set forth as an incense before Thee; the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice.—Ps. cxli. 2.

IN the church year the present Sunday is called "Rogate," and "rogate" signifies "pray." It is a prayer Sunday. It is indeed true that for the true Christian every Sunday, and, indeed, every day, is a day of prayer. As a great Roman *litterateur* made it his motto: "No day without a line;" thus the Christian's rule is, "No day without prayer." Prayer is the life's breath

of the soul of a Christian. It cannot live without prayer. Accordingly, when the present is called a "Prayer Sunday," this must have a special significance. We might take the special significance of the day to consist in this—that on this Sunday the Christian's prayer should be more abundant and fervent than on others; and such a use of this special time would be filled with an abundance of blessings for a Christian congregation. Yet the idea which the ancient Church, in determining this as the Prayer Sunday, was not this but another. It called this day Rogate Sunday for the purpose that the biblical doctrine of Christian prayer should on this day be made the special topic of consideration in the congregation; and in this historic purpose and intent we too will celebrate the day.

The psalmist's words, "Let my prayer be set forth before Thee" will furnish us with a good scriptural basis for our discourse. But how does a discussion of the subject of Christian prayer connect itself with the Apostolic Creed, which has formed the subject of the series now before us? This will appear: the import of the words "set forth before Thee," is, "be acceptable in Thy sight." Accordingly, there must be two kinds of prayer, namely, one which is acceptable before God, and a second which is not acceptable. Our special topic, then, will be the question:

Of what character must our prayer be to be acceptable before God?

The first thought would be to use that prayer which our Saviour Himself taught us to use—the Lord's Prayer. This was given as a direct answer to the request of the disciples, "Lord, teach us to pray." Yet, without in the least detracting from the superiority of the Lord's Prayer, it is nevertheless correct that the Apostles' Creed, too, furnishes us an excellent basis for a biblical study of genuine Christian prayer. In it we learn

- I. To whom we should pray.
- II. For what we should pray.
- III. With whom we should pray.

IV. In what mind we should pray.

I. The psalmist asks that his prayer may be acceptable to Jehovah. If it is to be acceptable in the sight of God, then it must be directed to that very God, to the true God, and to Him alone. It is clear as day that a prayer addressed to another is talking to the wind. Only the Almighty God can hear, and to Him it must be sent. The answer to the first question, then, is that prayer to be acceptable must appeal to the Triune God.

An apostolic faith, which is a faith based upon the revealed Word of Scriptures, knows absolutely of no other being in heaven or on earth that can hear prayer except God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; in other words, the Trinity. All prayers sent forth to other persons are a violation of the apostolic faith. The bitter irony with which the Old Testament condemns the prayer addressed to Baal is equally applicable to all petitions addressed to others save the one Triune God, no matter whether these others are the gods of Greece and Rome, or the saints of the Holy Virgin. The prophets of Baal cried aloud, "Baal, hear us!" but there was neither voice nor answer. They performed their wild orgies around the altar, and even spilled their own blood in their zeal; but all was in vain. None other was the experience of the worshippers of the golden calf, the worshippers of Jupiter and of Venus Anathusia, of Wodan, and of Freia. The same is true of the devotees of the Madonna and of the canonized saints. All these prayers are still-born; they are not acceptable; they aid in no way or manner; they elicit no reply. If a prayer is not to be empty foolishness, but true and genuine, then it must be addressed to the God whom we confess in the Apostolic Creed—the three Persons in the one Godhead. This prayer is addressed to God the Father, the Almighty Creator of heaven and earth; to Him to whom the most fervent prayers ever uttered on earth were directed, namely, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, who appeals to Him as the Father and

Lord of heaven and earth, as the just Father whom the world does not know, and in other endearing and trustful terms. It is to God as His Father that the Saviour of the world speaks in this prayer. And to this Father He instructs His followers to raise their hearts and voices. Their request for an acceptable formula of petition was answered by the injunction that they should address their petitions, "Our Father, which art in heaven." And that same Saviour who directed His followers to the Father certainly never forbade them to pray to Himself also. When in danger His disciple cried, "Lord, help me, or I perish!" and His help was not refused, even in the days of the flesh. On the contrary, He even demanded such a recognition. He declared that He and the Father are one, and that whosoever would honor the Father must also honor the Son. And when He had arisen from the dead He accepted the worship of Thomas and his prayer "My Lord and my God!" Prayer addressed to the Son is therefore scriptural and right; and it is a poor kind of Christianity which would forbid us to do this. Whoever believes accepts the second article of the Apostles' Creed, and believes that Jesus Christ is God, born from eternity from the Father, and true man, born of the Virgin Mary, must also join in with the prayer of St. Paul, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me do?" He must also pray with John, "Amen, come, Lord Jesus;" and with the martyr Stephen, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit;" and will also pray with the entire Christian Church, "O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us!" Prayer to Christ is the logical consequence of an honest biblical faith. And the same is true of prayer to the Holy Spirit that proceeds from the Father and the Son. We confess our faith in the Holy Spirit, and therefore pray also to Him. To sum up, the Apostles' Creed teaches us to whom to pray, namely, to the Holy Trinity.

II. If the prayer addressed to the Holy Trinity is to be acceptable in the sense of our text, then its contents must be of the proper character and kind. The solution of this problem we also find in the Apostolic Creed, where we are taught what we should pray for.

The first article treats of the creation, of an event long since past. For this act we cannot longer pray, but only render thanks. And these thanks we should render daily that God has created us and has preserved us and provided us with all the necessities of life. And with these thanksgivings must be joined daily the prayer and petition that God would continue to bestow upon us the blessings of His providential care and protection.

The second article of the creed treats of the redemption through the life and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. But the work of redemption in this objective sense is also a completed fact. The crown of victory has already been prepared, and we can add nothing to its glory. We need not, as do the blinded Jews, yet wait for a Messiah to come, and to pray for His coming. We can joyfully proclaim that the longings and desires of the prophets of old have become glorious realities for us. And yet with this glad tidings of great joy we unite a prayer to our Saviour to make us entirely His own, to guard and protect and advance us in our Christian faith and life, and to preserve us in faith until a blessed end in eternal life.

The third article of the Apostles' Creed treats of sanctification; but the process, unlike creation and redemption, is not something already completed and finished, but something going on and developing as long as we are in the flesh. Here then we have the chief object for which we should pray daily as believers and as followers of Christ. The work of sanctification is as much a gracious act of God as is creation and redemption. Just as little as a man can create himself or redeem himself, just so little can he effect his own sanctification. It is God who must do this for him and

in him, and our task it is to appeal to Him for this grace and mercy. Therefore our daily prayer to the throne of grace should be, "Sanctify us, oh Lord, through Thy truth! Create in me a clean heart, and give me a new spirit." Daily sanctification has its roots in the forgiveness of sins; for it is a sad truth that, notwithstanding that we are forgiven and stand in grace, we yet sin daily and often, and for that reason the progress of sanctification must go on constantly. Daily must we pray that God should forgive us our trespasses, and not hide His face from us, and remove all our sins. Sanctification finds its completion in eternal life, in eternal blessedness. Hence the burden of our daily prayer should be the eternal rest of the saints with God. We should be content with whatever fate or destiny may befall us while here on earth, if only at the end of our career our home in heaven is assured to us.

In this way the Apostolic Creed teaches us what we should pray for. In one word, it is for eternal life. He who from the bottom of his heart has his faith centred upon God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, can and must pray constantly, "Only this one thing—eternal blessedness, oh God of mercy!"

III. But this same creed tells us, too, what companionship we should seek when we pray to the Triune God; with whom we should associate in our devotion of petition. This the third article tells us, in which we confess our faith in a holy Christian Church, the communion of saints. Certain it is that there are times and occasions when a prayer in secret and alone is commendable and wise. Our Lord Jesus Christ frequently withdrew into solitude and prayed to His Father alone. All the saints of God have at times prayed alone and in secret. And it is my conviction that just the Christians of our day have a great deal to learn in this respect from the saints and seers of old. In our day the practice has fallen more into disuse, and no spiritual discipline is

more neglected than the prayer in the closet. The believers, too, do not commune sufficiently with themselves and their God. The spirit of a Mary sitting and learning at Jesus' feet is rare in our generation. Let us all be watchful in this regard.

And yet it is true that we have been called not for ourselves, but for association and intercourse with others, especially for religious and spiritual communion with those of our faith. For this reason we are urged to prayer and petition in communion with the saints. The Lord Jesus did not teach us to pray, "My Father," but "Our Father;" and prayer for "Our Father" is prayer in conjunction with others of the same mind and heart; it is a prayer with the entire Christian Church, of which we are members; a prayer with the entire company of saints, to belong to which is the greatest joy of our life.

"I believe in a holy Christian Church" are the words of the Creed. Therefore, too, we delight to pray there and then where those of the same faith are assembled for common worship and praise, in the house of God and the place where His honor dwelleth. And there we are assured of the blessing of God's holy presence. Where two or three are assembled in His name, there He will be in the midst of them, is the promise of our God. Going to church signifies more than merely listening to a sermon; it means to worship God in company with the believers. Just as divided joy is double joy, thus, too, the divided happiness of prayer is double happiness. I know Christians whose ears are deaf, who cannot hear the sermon or the song or the prayer, and yet they each Lord's Day go to the Lord's house in the hour of worship. And why is this? Because there they feel the consciousness of intercommunion with the saints, and in the prayers of their hearts they feel the union with others. And truly this is no self-deception. Lay down burning coals apart from each other, and they are soon extinguished; but put them together, and

they produce flame and fire. The prayer of a single believer when spoken while alone can indeed not fail of its object; all the more is this the case when all the believers unite in what they ask and pray for.

To pray in common; how beautiful it is on the Lord's Day to unite hearts and voices in the communion of saints — *i. e.*, in the communion of those who, like ourselves, have been saved and redeemed through the mercy of our God, and know themselves united in a common faith in the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no better source of renewed strength to our spiritual life than kneeling together with close friends in Christ Jesus. If ever the heavens with their blessings are opened for man, it is on such occasions, when parents and children, friend and friend, the pastor and the people, come together to pour out their hearts before the mercy seat of their God. Happy the man who knows a pious soul with which he can unite in his devotions and prayers.

IV. In conclusion, a few words yet concerning the mind in which we should pray. This we have by looking more closely at the word "Amen," with which the Apostolic Creed ends.

The word "amen" signifies "Yea, yea," "thus shall it be." Amen was a favorite word of Jesus. In most cases where our version translates "Verily," He used the word "Amen." And as it often happens that a man is named according to some favorite word or phrase of his, thus the revelation of St. John gives Christ the appellation "Amen." This is done in the apocalyptic letter addressed to the congregation at Laodicea.

And as often as we in conjunction with other believers confess our most holy faith and add the Christ-word "Amen," we thereby impress the stamp of absolute truth upon the truths that are confessed in the Creed, and declare that in this faith we will live and die. And when we add this Christ-word "Amen" to the close of our prayer, we thereby signify our as-

surance and certainty that God, for Jesus Christ's sake, will graciously hear and answer our prayer. "Amen" at the close of our prayers declares our conviction that our petitions are in reality acceptable in the sight of God. In this mind, then, a Christian is to pray that he does not mechanically add the word "Amen," but does so with the full consciousness of the trust and confidence in God's grace which is implied in its use and significance. And such a trustful confidence in our Lord Jesus Christ will not be put to shame. The Lord hears, no matter how unfavorable the circumstances may seem to be, although He always hears and answers in His own wise manner and way, for His thoughts are higher than our thoughts. When our faith shall have been changed into sight, then we will learn that each and every one of our petitions uttered in faith have in reality and in truth been heard and answered, although we may not on earth have been able to see this. Therefore a confidence in the grace and promises of God is a prime virtue and necessity in Christian prayer.

The Apostolic Creed is thus an excellent guide to Christian prayer. From it we learn that we should pray to the Triune God, should pray especially for eternal life; should pray in the communion of saints; should pray in faith and trust in God. May we all learn these lessons well, and then our prayers will be set forth as an incense and as an evening sacrifice before the throne of our God. Amen.

HID IN LIGHT.

BY ALEXANDER MACLAREN, D.D.
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Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy presence from the pride of man: Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.—Ps. xxxi. 20.

THE word rendered "presence" is literally "face," and the force of this very remarkable expression of confi-

dence is considerably marred unless that rendering be retained. There are other analogous expressions in Scripture, setting forth, under various metaphors, God's protection of them that love Him. But I know not that there is any so noble and striking as this. For instance, we read of His hiding His children "in the secret of His tabernacle," or tent; as an Arab chief might do a fugitive who had eaten of his salt, secreting him in the recesses of his tent while the pursuers scoured the desert in vain for their prey. Again, we read of His hiding them "beneath the shadow of His wing;" where the Divine love is softened into the likeness of the maternal instinct which leads a hen to gather her chickens beneath the shelter of her own warm and outspread feathers. But the metaphor of my text is more vivid and beautiful still. "Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy face." The light that streams from that countenance is the hiding-place for a poor man. These other metaphors may refer, perhaps, the one to the temple, and the other to the outstretched wings of the cherubim that shadowed the mercy-seat. And, if so, this metaphor carries us still more near to the central blaze of the Shekinah, the glory that hovered above the mercy-seat, and glowed in the dark sanctuary, unseen but once a year by one trembling high-priest, who had to bear with him blood of sacrifice, lest the sight should slay. The psalmist says, into that fierce light a man may go, and stand in it, bathed, hid, secure. "Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy face."

I. Now, then, let us notice, first, this hiding-place.

The "face" of God is so strongly figurative an expression that its metaphorical character cannot but be obvious to the most cursory reader. The very frankness, and, we may say, the grossness of the image, saves it from all misconception, and as with other similar expressions in the Old Testament, at once suggests its meaning. We read, for example, of the "arm," the "hand,"

the "finger" of God, and everybody feels that that means His power. We read of the "eye" of God, and everybody knows that that means His omniscience. We read of the "ear" of God, and we all understand that that holds forth the blessed thought that He hears and answers the cry of such as be sorrowful. And, in like manner, the "face" of God is the apprehensible part of the Divine nature which turns to men, and by which He makes Himself known. It is roughly equivalent to the other Old and New Testament expression, the "name of the Lord," the manifested and revealed side of the Divine nature. And that is the hiding-place into which men may go.

We have the other expression also in Scripture "the light of Thy countenance," and that helps us to apprehend the psalmist's meaning. "The light of Thy face" is "secret." What a paradox! Can light conceal? Look at the daily heavens—filled with blazing stars, all invisible till the night falls. The effulgence of the face is such that they that stand in it are lost and hid, like the lark in the blue sky. "A glorious privacy of light is Thine." There is a wonderful metaphor in the New Testament of a woman "clothed with the sun," and caught up into it from her enemies to be safe there. And that is just an expansion of the psalmist's grand paradox, "Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy face." Light conceals when the light is so bright as to dazzle. They who are surrounded by God are lost in the glory, and safe in that seclusion, "the secret of Thy face."

A thought may be suggested, although it is somewhat of a digression from the main purpose of my text, but it springs naturally out of this paradox, and may just deserve a word. Revelation is real, but Revelation has its limits. That which is revealed is "the face of God." But we read, "no man can see My face." After all revelation He remains hidden. After all pouring forth of His beams He remains "the God that dwelleth in the thick dark-

ness," and the light which is inaccessible is also a darkness that can be felt. Apprehension is possible; comprehension is impossible. What we know of God is valid and true, but we never shall know all the depths that lie in that which we do know of Him. His face is "the secret;" and though men may malign Him when they say, "Verily, Thou art a God that hidest Thyself, O God of Israel," and He answers them, "I have not spoken in secret" in a dark "place of the earth," it still remains true that Revelation has its mysteries born of the greatness of its effulgence, and that all which we know of God is "dark with excess of light."

But that is aside from our main purpose. Let me rather remind you of how the thought of the secret of God's face being the secure hiding-place of them that love Him points to this truth—that that brightness of light has a repellent power which keeps far away from all intermingling with it everything that is evil. The old Greek mythologies tell us that the radiant arrows of Apollo, shot forth from his far-reaching bow, wounded to death the monsters of the slime and unclean creatures that crawled and revelled in darkness. And the myth has a great truth in it. The light of God's face slays evil, of whatsoever kind it is; and just as the unlovely, loathsome creatures that live in the dark and find themselves at ease there writhe and wriggle in torment, and die when their shelter is taken away and they are exposed to the light beating on their soft bodies, so the light of God's face turned upon evil things smites them into nothingness. Thus "the secret of His countenance is the shelter of all that is good."

Nor need I remind you how, in another aspect of the phrase, the "light of His face," is the expression for His favor and loving regard, and how true it is that in that favor and loving regard is the impregnable fortress into which, entering, any man is safe. I said that the expression the "face of the Lord" roughly corresponded to the other one,

"the name of the Lord," inasmuch as both meant the revealed aspect of the Divine nature. You may remember how we read, "The name of the Lord is a strong tower into which the righteous runneth and is safe." The "light" of the face of the Lord is His favor and loving regard falling upon men. And who can be harmed with that lambent light—like the sunshine upon water, or upon a glittering shield—playing around Him?

Only let us remember that for us "the face of God" is Jesus Christ. He is the "arm" of the Lord; He is the "name" of the Lord; He is the "face." All that we know of God we know through and in Him; all that we see of God we see by the shining upon us of Him who is "the irradiation of His glory and the express image of His person." So the open secret of the "face" of God is Jesus, the hiding-place of our souls.

II. Secondly, notice God's hidden ones.

My text carries us back, by that word "them," to the previous verse, where we have a double description of those who are thus hidden in the inaccessible light of his countenance. They are "such as fear Thee," and "such as trust in Thee." Now, that latter expression is congruous with the metaphor of my text, in so far as the words on which we are now engaged speak about a "hiding-place, and the word which is translated "trust" literally means "to flee to a refuge." So they that flee to God for refuge are those whom God hides in the "secret of His face." Let us think of that for a moment.

I said, in the beginning of these remarks, that there was here an allusion, possibly, to the temple. All temples in ancient times were asylums. Whosoever could flee to grasp the horns of the altar, or to sit, veiled and suppliant, before the image of the God, was secure from his foes, who could not pass within the limits of the temple grounds, in which strife and murder were not

permissible. We too often flee to other gods and other temples for our refuges. Ay! and when we get there we find that the deity whom we have invoked is only a marble image that sits deaf, dumb, motionless while we cling to its unconscious skirts. As one of the saddest of our modern cynics once said, looking up at that lovely impersonation of Greek beauty, the Venus de Milo, "Ah! she is fair; but she has no arms." So we may say of all false refuges to which men betake themselves. The goddess is powerless to help, however beautiful the presentiment of her may have seemed to our eyes. The evils from which we have fled to these false deities and sheltered sanctuaries will pursue us across the boundary; and, as Elijah did with the priests of Baal upon Carmel, will slay us at the very foot of the altar to which we have clung, and vexed with our vain prayers. There is only one shrine where there is a sanctuary, and that is the shrine above which shines the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; into the brightness of which poor men may pass and therein may hide themselves. God hides us, and His hiding is effectual, in the secret of the light and splendor of His face.

I said, too, that there was an allusion, as there is in all the psalms that deal with men as God's guests, to the ancient customs of hospitality, by which a man who has once entered the tent of the chief, and partaken of food there, is safe, not only from his pursuers, but from his host himself, even though that host should be the kinsman-avenger. The red handed murderer, who has eaten the salt of the man whose duty it otherwise would have been to slay him where he stood, is safe from his vengeance. And thus they who cast themselves upon God have nothing to fear. No other hand can pluck them from the sanctuary of His tent. He Himself, having admitted them to share His hospitality, cannot and will not lift a hand against them. We are safe *from* God only when we are safe *in* God.

But remember the condition on which this security comes. "Thou shalt hide *them* in the secret of Thy face." Whom? Those that flee for refuge to Thee. The act of simple faith is set forth there, by which a poor man, with all his imperfections on his head, may yet venture to put his foot across the boundary line that separates the outer darkness from the beam of light that comes from God's face. "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" That question does not mean, as it is often taken to mean—What mortal can endure the punishments of a future life? but, Who can venture to be God's guests? and it is equivalent to the other interrogation, "Who shall ascend to the hill of the Lord, or who shall stand in His holy place?" the answer is, If you go to Him for refuge, knowing your danger, feeling your impurity, *you* may walk amid all that light softened into lambent beauty, as those Hebrew children did in the furnace of fire, being at ease there, and feeling it well with themselves, and having nothing consumed about them except the bonds that bound them.

Remember that Jesus Christ is the hiding-place, and that to flee to Him for refuge is the condition of security, and all them who thus, from the snares of life, from its miseries, disappointments, and burdens; from the agitations of their own hearts, from the ebullition of their own passions; from the stings of their own conscience, or from other of the ills that flesh is heir to, make their hiding-place—by the simple act of faith in Jesus Christ—in the light of God's face, are thereby safe for evermore.

But the initial act of fleeing to the refuge must be continued by abiding in the refuge. It is of no use to take shelter in the light unless we abide in the light. It is of no use to go to the temple for sanctuary unless we continue in it for sacrifice and worship. We must "walk in the light as God is in the light." That is to say, the condition of

being hid in God is, first of all, to take refuge in Jesus Christ, and then to abide in Him by continual communion. "Your life is hid with Christ in God." Unless we have a hidden life, deep beneath, and high above, and far beyond the life of sense, we have no right to think that the shelter of the Face will be security for us. The very essence of Christianity is the habitual communion of heart, mind, and will with God in Christ. Do you live in the light, or have you only gone there to escape what you are afraid of? Do you live in the light by the continual direction of thought and heart to Him, cultivating the habit of daily and hourly communion with Him amid the distractions of necessary duty, care, and changing circumstances?

But not only by communion, but also by conduct, must we keep in the light. The fugitive found outside the city of refuge was fair game for the avenger, and if he strayed beyond its bounds there was a sword in his back before he knew where he was. Every Christian, by each sin, whether it be acted or only thought, casts himself out of the light into the darkness that rings it round, and out there he is a victim to the beasts of prey that hunt in darkness. An eclipse of the sun is not caused by any change in the sun, but by an opaque body, the offspring and satellite of the earth, coming between the earth and sun. And so, when Christian men lose the light of God's face, it is not because there is any variableness or shadow of turning in Him, but because between Him and them has come the blackness—their own offspring—of their own sin. You are not safe if you are outside the light of the countenance. These are the conditions of security.

III. Lastly, note what the hidden ones find in the light.

This burst of confidence in my text comes from the psalmist immediately after plaintively pouring out his soul under the pressure of afflictions. His experience may teach us the interpretation of his glad assurance,

God will keep all real evil from us if we keep near Him; but He will not keep the externals that men call evil from us. I do not know whether there is such a thing as filtering any poisons or malaria by means of light, but I am sure that the light of God filters our atmosphere for us. Though it may leave the external form of evil it takes all the poison out of it and turns it into harmless ministers for our good. The arrows that are launched at us may be tipped with venom when they leave the bow, but if they pass through the radiant envelope of Divine protection that surrounds us—and they must have passed through that if they reach us—it cleanses all the venom from the points though it leaves the sharpness there. The evil is not an evil if it has got our length; and its having touched us shows that He who lets it pass into the light where His children safely dwell knows that it cannot harm them.

But, again, we shall find if we live in continual communion with the revealed face of God, that we are elevated high above all the strife of tongues and the noise of earth. We shall outsoar the shadow of the night, and be lifted to an elevation from which all the clamors of earth will sound faint and poor, like the noises of the city to the dwellers on the mountain peak. Nor do we find only security there, for the word in the second clause of my text, "Thou shalt *keep* them *secretly*," is the same as is employed in the previous verse in reference to the treasures which God *lays up* for them that fear Him. The poor men that trust in God, and the wealth which He has to lavish upon them, are both hid, and they are hid in the same place. The "goodness wrought before the sons of men" has not emptied the reservoir. After all expenditure the massy ingots of gold in God's storehouse are undiminished. The mercy still to come is greater than that already received. "To-morrow shall be as this day and much more abundant." This river broadens as we mount toward its source.

Brethren, the face of God must be either our dearest joy or our greatest dread. There comes a time when you and I must front it, and look into His eyes. It is for us to settle whether at that day we shall call upon the rocks and the hills to hide us from it, or whether we shall say with rapture, "Thou hast made us most blessed with Thy countenance." Which is it to be? It must be one or other. When He says, "Seek ye My face," may our hearts answer, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek," that when we see it hereafter, shining as the sun in his strength, its light may not be darkness to our impure and horror-struck eyes.

THE PRIVILEGES OF SAINTS.

By A. T. PIERSON, D.D. (PRESBYTERIAN), LONDON, ENG.

The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.—Rom. viii. 16, 17.

THIS eighth chapter of Romans is one of the mountain-tops of the New Testament. It is the grandest thing Paul ever wrote, and if he had written nothing else, he has here given us a continent of thought, broad as the grace of God; and we might spend eternity in exploring it and still feel that we had touched but the borders of this wondrous theme.

The text forms the centre of the whole epistle. Taking the entire argument, the exact verbal centre is found in these words: "We are children of God: and if children, then heirs."

The word "child" expresses being born of God and belonging to Him; but the word "heir" suggests being one in a family of children that come together into the inheritance of an estate. There are here twelve great thoughts—six of them referring to the child life and six of them referring to the family life.

Seven chapters are taken up in de-

scribing the condition of a soul that has not yet found perfect rest and satisfaction in God. They exhibit all mankind as in a state of sin and misery, with no hope except in Christ. Three words express this condition—"condemned," "enslaved," "dead"—condemned by the law; enslaved or sold as a slave under sin; and dead in trespasses and sins. To be children of God, we must get out of this threefold state, and this chapter begins by reminding us that a child of God is no longer condemned, enslaved, or dead. "There is therefore now *no condemnation*," no longer condemned; "the law of the *spirit of life*," no longer dead; "hath made me *free*," no longer enslaved.

Of these six thoughts that have to do with the child as such, the first is the *idea of life* itself. "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus." Every child begins by being alive. The breath of life marks the beginning of existence. We are taught here that the first sign that we are children of God is that we have spiritual life. "Spirit" means breath; no symbol represents so beautifully the Spirit of God as breath. When God created man He breathed into his nostrils the spirit or breath of lives—plural—not only animal life and soul life, but spirit life; and when man sinned he lost the spiritual life. Made, at first, body, soul and spirit, a house of three parts: basement, which is the body; intermediate story, which is the soul, with its various faculties of intellect and heart; but, above that all, the upper story, with windows that look out on heaven, and through which man had communion with God. When man sinned that upper story became a "*death chamber*," and so remained until Christ breathed on His disciples and said, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit"—the breath of God again. The spirit is the element in which the child of God lives. Ye are "in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." How can I be in the Spirit and the Spirit in me? If you dip a pitcher in the sea the water is in the pitcher and

the pitcher is in the water. Air is the element of the bird, but while the bird is in the air, the air is in the bird. The element of the fish is water, because the fish is in the water and the water is in the fish; and the Holy Ghost is the element of the Christian disciple, because he is in the Holy Ghost and the Holy Ghost is in him. And so Jude says "praying in the Holy Ghost," like a man in the atmosphere, which is both breathing in and breathing out; and when you truly pray you are first breathing in the Spirit and then breathing out the Spirit in prayer.

2. The second sign of a child of God is the *spiritual mind*. "The carnal mind is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." But "they that are after the Spirit mind the things of the Spirit;" "to be spiritually minded is life and peace." If you have the spirit of life, you will have the mind of the Spirit, too; as a living child begins to think, to be conscious, to exercise the powers of the mind, so the child of God will begin to exercise and manifest the mind of the Spirit given him in his regeneration. What is the "mind of the Spirit?" To be carnally minded is to turn your eyes downward, to think about earth and earthly things, labor for them, desire them, strive to accumulate earthly wealth and enjoy earthly pleasure, and shut out the things of God from your sight. To be "spiritually minded" is to turn your eyes upward, away from earth, to give yourself wholly up to God and to be filled with a desire after holiness and heaven. Three similar words will explain that "spiritual mind"—"reference," "deference," and "preference"—that is to say, he who is spiritually minded lives with supreme reference to God, deference to the will of God, and preference for the approbation of God.

3. The third thing about the child of God is his walk. Being led by the Spirit, he walks in the Spirit. A little child under the leadership of those that are older learns the art of walking.

Others take hold of both hands at first and help him to stand and take a step ; and then they lead by one hand, and afterward just by the tips of the fingers, so that the child feels that he has a support, though he has not ; and so he learns to walk alone. The Spirit of God leads the child of God along until he learns first to stand and then to walk in Jesus. To walk in God is to make progress. Three words in the New Testament cover our whole experience as disciples—"stand," "walk," and "sit." "Standing" represents our position the moment we believe ; justification in Christ. Walking is making progress after one has learned to stand ; daily sanctification getting nearer to the Father's house, heart, and image. Sitting is getting through the walking, and taking one's place with Christ on His throne, perfected in holiness.

4. Next comes *talking*. The words "papa" and "mamma" we can trace to no etymological source ; they come from the grammar, the etymology of nature. When a child begins to talk, he uses the simplest consonants and vowels, and repeats the syllables. He says "pa-pa" and "ma-ma." God gives the Spirit of adoption, and we cry, "*Ab-ba*," the Aramaic for "papa ;" it is the two simplest syllables, repeated *Ab-ba*.

When one can walk and talk he has access to the Father. The Spirit who leads and teaches us to say "Father" also teaches us to pray—"maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered." A little boy has something to ask of his father, and is a little timid about it ; he does not exactly know how to put it. His mother says, "When father comes home to-night you shall go and ask him yourself ;" and she takes him by the hand and leads him up to his father and says, "Don't be afraid ; he is your father ; ask him for whatever you want." Then if he tries to ask something and does not get it out with clearness, she says, "Father, this is what he wants to say to you," and she puts it in her own

language. Here some such picture of God's family life is to be found. The Spirit leads the child of God to the Father, and then, as he approaches and is a little timid, the Spirit says, just like a mother, "Now, do not be afraid, He is your Father," witnessing with our spirit that we are the children of God, and teaching us to say, "*Abba, Father*." Then as we try to put before God our request, and do not exactly know how, the Spirit takes up the imperfect prayer and interprets our desires in His own dialect.

5. Next comes *growth*. God would not have us always children ; He would have us get out of our infancy and minority and be fullgrown, "into the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Growth is a twofold process ; there is effluent and affluent action, excretion, secretion, adding to and throwing off. "If ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Mortification is throwing off that which is dead. On the other hand, we must be led, instructed, and guided by the Spirit, and so become more and more like God, conformed to His image ; that is the other aspect of growth, mortification on the one side, sanctification on the other ; throwing off what is old and dead ; taking on what is new and living. The child of God thus grows by the daily mortifying of the deeds of the body, and the daily vivifying of the spirit through Christ Jesus ; putting off the old man of sin, putting on the "new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

6. So the child comes at last to what is called here "*adoption*," or "majority." We adopt children when we have none of our own by nature, but as the Lord begets children in His own likeness by the natural process of regeneration, He does not need to adopt them. Adoption here does not mean taking into the family a child that is not born into the family, but is somebody else's child. "Adoption" means here *attaining "majority"*. In Latin

the word "adoptio" referred to the declaration of a son's majority. When a young man attained the legal age, his father took him into the Forum and from the Bema, or platform, said to the citizens, "This is my son; he has now come to full age; he inherits my name, property, and social position." Then he took off the "*toga pretexta*"—the boy toga or coat—and put on the *toga virilis*, the manly toga; thus invested him with the sign of full manhood.

"The adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." A day of revelation is coming, of manifestation, when God shall take His child and set him on the forum of the universe, and shall before that universe say, "Bear witness, this is My son; in Christ he is the joint-heir of My name, of My nature, of My dignity, of My possessions, of My throne." And then we shall lay aside the body of our humiliation, the toga that we wore when we were minors, and put on the body of our glory, which is the garment we shall wear when we get to our majority, and this new investment of the redeemed in the presence of the universe is ADOPTION.

The family life is also indicated in this chapter. Six thoughts have to do with this also.

1. *First, conformity to one likeness.* In human families "heredity" sometimes takes strange freaks. A child is born who looks like neither the father nor mother; you must go back to grandfather, grandmother, or great-grandparents to find the type of likeness which that child inherits. It is not so in God's family. Every child born into that family by regeneration is conformed to His image, so that the Son is the "firstborn among many brethren," all bearing the same likeness.

2. *Secondly, harmony with the family.* "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." The sinner is not in God's harmony, but the moment he wheels into his orbit, like a planet

round the sun, nothing can harm him as a member of the family of God. In every well-regulated family there is not a child that is not thought of or a need that is not supplied. So God forgets none of His children. You may be never so obscure in human eyes, and live down in the lowest slums, but He never forgets you nor any of your needs; nor is there a cry or upward glance that He does not hear or see. In God's harmony all things work together for good, even what seem to be working together for harm.

3. This family life insures *security*. We are not always secure under a human father's roof; lightning may strike the house, or earthquake may rock it, or disease and death, famine and all sorts of calamity enter; but in our Father's family His Divine arms are beneath us, and His precious wings are over us, the roof under which we hide. No evil can befall children of God. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" This chapter opens with "no condemnation" and ends with "no separation."

4. In the family of God there is *discipline*, which includes two things—education and correction. In human families the latter is largely left out, and so children in these days do not obey their parents. The rod has been broken or banished, and we lack the corrective influence of chastisement. Every child of God is led, instructed by the Spirit; and is also corrected, "the sufferings of this present world" thus prepare for "the glory which shall be revealed in us." That is a very spiritual prayer, "Take me, break me, make me." Sometimes God cannot make us until He first breaks us. I saw a golden cup made of old gold coins; they had lost the original image and superscription, and had been put into the melting pot and wrought into a new and beautiful vessel. Sometimes God takes poor sinners from whom His image and superscription have been worn off in a world of sin; He takes them and breaks them in pieces

and melts them and then makes out of them a vessel unto honor. Peter speaks of the "trial of faith," "much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire," "that it might be found unto *praise* and *honor* and *glory* at the appearing of Jesus Christ." A goldsmith makes a chalice for a king's table. He first refines the metal till all the dross is out of it, and then he stamps it approved; that is praise; then he moulds it for the noble ends to which it is destined; that is honor; then he takes the graving tool and polishing instrument, covers it with ornamental inscriptions and devices, and sets it round with gems until it flashes back the many colors of the rainbow; that is glory. So the Lord puts you into His crucible, refines away your dross, and marks you with His approval; that is praise or approbation. Then He shapes you into a vessel for holy uses; that is honor. Then He grinds you on the wheel of affliction, and finishes you with His polishing instrument until you reflect the glorious likeness of His dear son, and that is glory.

5. Another feature of family life is liberty, "the glorious *liberty* of the children of God." Some think that liberty is the absence of law, but the fact is it implies the presence of law. If all law were banished from this city, you would want to get out of it to-morrow early. It is obedience to law that constitutes liberty, and the more you obey the law the less you know about it. If you are not stealing, murdering, or doing anything contrary to law, you have no practical knowledge of law at all. It sits easily upon you, it is like a well-fitting garment; but the moment you disobey, the law lays its restraint on you and the easy-fitting garment becomes a strait-jacket. Paul says, "The law was not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and the disobedient." Gabriel has no idea of law because he has never thought of doing what is contrary to the will of God; but the angels that sinned found there was law that sunk them to the depths

of perdition. If you will obey God's law absolutely in everything possible, you will forget all about law, and there will be for you no law at all; it will be your delight to do the will of God.

6. The last of these thoughts about family life is *legacy*. We are heirs. One can never make out the full catalogue of that estate. Paul says, "All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life or death, or things present or things to come. ALL THINGS ARE YOURS." Four things about this inheritance which are peculiarly wonderful. First, a soul that has no sin left in it; secondly, a body made like to Christ's glorious body; thirdly, a home in which the slime of the serpent is no more to be seen, and where there are no more tears; and in the last place, what is greater than all—what includes all, *God Himself*. According to human law, a person enters upon an inheritance only after the other party is dead; the testament has no force while the testator liveth. How can God make you His heirs since He never dies? He includes Himself in your inheritance! He says, "You shall have Me and everything else in Me; you shall have a sinless soul because you are partakers of My nature; you shall have a resurrection body because you are like unto My glorious Son, who represents a redeemed humanity; you shall have this heavenly home because that is where I live, and I am Myself the centre of its glorious attractions." Believers are not heirs of God's universe only, but heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.

Ought we not to be ashamed to go about with our heads bowed down like a bulrush, looking as though we had no friend and no joy? Let the men of grace show that they have found

"Glory begun below,
Celestial fruits on earthly ground
From faith and hope may grow."

We have not reached our majority yet; but we have the earnest and foretaste of our heavenly inheritance. The minor has not his full property yet, but gets

the interest of that property paid up to the point of majority. Cross-bearing is not the whole of the Christian's life; there is more of the crown in it than there is of the cross; and if we could only persuade others that coming to Jesus Christ is not only bearing of burdens, carrying a cross, restraining desires, impulses and inclinations, but is being filled with God Himself, might we not lead them to Jesus Christ?

There is a myth about the birds, that when they were first created they had no wings, and that God made the wings and bade the birds take the burdens up and bear them. Hitherto they had beautiful plumage and voices; they could sing, but not soar; but they took up the wings and laid them upon their shoulders. At first they seemed a heavy load; but as they cheerfully and patiently bore them, and folded them over their hearts, lo, the wings grew fast, and that which they once bore now bore them! The burdens became pinions, and the weights became wings.

We are the wingless birds, and our duties are the pinions. When at first we assume them they seem loads; but if we cheerfully bear them the burdens change to pinions, and we who once were servants bearing loads, become free to mount up with wings as eagles, running without being weary, walking without being faint.

THE CHRISTIAN CITIZEN.

BY REV. SAMUEL SCHWARM [ENGLISH LUTHERAN], TIFFLIN, O.

Authorized Version.—*Only let your conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ.*—Phil. i. 27.

Revised Version.—*Only let your manner of life be worthy of the Gospel of Christ.*

THE word translated "conversation" in the A. V. and "manner of life" in the R. V. really means to act the part of a citizen. "This word," says Dr. Meyer, "which is not used by Paul elsewhere to express the conduct of life,

is here purposely chosen, because he has in view the moral life, internal and external, of the Christian commonwealth, corresponding to the purport of the Gospel." Hence the translation found in the margin of the R. V. is probably more nearly correct—viz., "Only behave as a citizen worthy of the Gospel of Christ;" and that given by Dr. Farrar is still more forcible—viz., "Play the citizen in a manner worthy the Gospel of Christ."

The idea the apostle sought to impress upon the minds of the Philippians was that they should be *Christian* citizens. This is an idea which every minister of the Gospel should at this time try to impress upon the minds of his hearers. There are many men who seem to think the Gospel of Christ has nothing whatever to do with their political relations. They may be professed believers of the Gospel, but nevertheless they run with their party and never stop to ask whether their actions correspond with the Gospel of Christ. Many of the so-called patriots of our day talk and act as though governments existed merely to afford them spoils. So much so is this the case that the contest between the two great political parties of our country has narrowed itself down to a squabble for office. Party success is the all-important end. Anything and everything is said to be legitimate if it only brings success to the party. The principle embodied in the old Jesuitical maxim, "The end justifies the means," has taken complete possession of our old political parties. Truth and righteousness have been voted old fogies, and have been drummed out of politics.

What is to be done? Who is to stay this tide of iniquity? The ministers of the Gospel must fall back upon the example of the apostle and exhort their hearers to "Play the citizen in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ." They must teach them, *first*, that government was instituted by God Himself, and that it is not a mere social or civil compact that can be dispensed with,

disannulled, or degraded at will; that it is not the creature of any party, or clique, or individual, but of the Almighty God. The form of government may be the creature of man, but not the fact of government. "The powers that be are ordained of God," says Paul. Anarchy and lawlessness are contrary to the thoughts of God. Hence to rebel against government is to rebel against God, and also against a necessity of our own natures. For no nation or people has been able to live and progress without some form of government. Hence, when men, for the success of party, do that which weakens and destroys the government, they are the enemies of both God and man. It is a fatal mistake to think that the government does not rest upon God, that the Church alone is His institution. The Church is, indeed, God's institution, founded and established for a glorious mission, but the State is also His institution just as really and as truly. They both belong to Him; and a man has no more right to do that which will tend to destroy the one than the other. He has no more right to lay aside the principles of the Gospel of Christ in his acts as a citizen than as a churchman.

The minister must also teach, *second*, that God has ordained the purpose, or end, which government is to subserve. Paul says, "Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers; for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment. For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. And wouldst thou have no fear of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same, for He is a minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for He beareth not the sword in vain; for He is a minister, and an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil." The fundamental idea, then, of

government, as instituted by God, is the encouragement of the good and the restraint of the evil-minded. What a travesty on God's idea of government it becomes then when parties league with evildoers in order to share with them the spoils of government. What right has any citizen, and especially a Christian citizen, thus to destroy God's purpose in government? But what else does he do when he votes with parties whose only chance of winning lies in the bought votes of the most vile and degraded; those whom government ought to punish rather than shield and reward. Those who think God will take no notice of the degradation of government through intrigue and party fraud should read the history of ancient Nineveh, of Babylon, of Syria, of Tyre, of Egypt, and especially of Israel. God's intention in government is the elevation and betterment of mankind; but if men through their ungodly ways thwart Him, He will most assuredly overwhelm them in destruction. The government cannot be made to subserve the interests of corrupt parties without great danger to the whole people, for it is contrary to the Gospel of Christ.

The minister should also teach, *third*, that God has unmistakably ordained or declared the character of the men who, according to His will, shall carry out His idea of government.

In the eighteenth chapter of Exodus we read this advice, given by Jethro to Moses, which was in accord with the mind of the Lord—viz., "Thou shalt choose out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and set them up to be rulers;" and in Deut. i. 13, in the instruction of Moses to the people on this subject, we read, "Take you wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you."

The men, then, whom God has ordained to carry out His idea and purpose in the government are

(a) Able men, men of wisdom and

understanding—that is, men who understand God's purpose in government and who have the requisite wisdom to carry it out.

(b) Men fearing God, loving truth, and hating covetousness—that is, truly pious and righteous men; not evil-minded men, deceitful men, seeking spoils and not righteousness.

(c) Well-known men—that is, men who have been tried in minor trusts, and not men who, for all that any one knows, though seemingly good men, may be handled and used by evil and desperate men.

These are the kind of men whom God has declared necessary to carry out His idea of the institution of government among men—viz., "The punishment of evildoers and the praise of them that do well."

What, then, is the duty of the *Christian* citizen? How can he "Play the citizen in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ?" Not by stopping to discuss the point whether there shall be a government among men, or what the purpose of that government should be—these points have been settled by God Himself, they are clearly revealed—but by helping to establish, if not already established, a form of government most in accord with the will of God, and then by doing all he can to place men of such a character as God has indicated at the head of this government to administer it according to God's will. In this last respect a great duty has been laid upon the citizens of this country—a duty which did not devolve upon the citizens of scarcely any government in the days of Paul. Then the emperor reigned supreme. He ascended the throne by hereditary right, or by intrigue and fraud. He appointed all his subordinate officers. They were responsible to him alone. The private citizen was in no way responsible for the conduct of these officers. He was responsible only for his individual conduct. If the government was a good one, the king received all the praise; if evil, the blame. But it is not so in

this country. The people are the sovereign here. They elevate to office. They are those consequently on whom the responsibility devolves. If they place in office good and tried men, the government will be good; if bad and untried men, it will be bad. American citizens, therefore, occupy a more responsible position than those of any other country. They need to be intelligent and moral; and they need to especially heed the injunction, "Play the citizen in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ." They are not only to be obedient to the laws, but they have also to choose the law-makers and the law-enforcers. They cannot "Play the citizen in a way worthy of the Gospel of Christ," and meet their obligation by putting ward bumpers, demagogues, and corrupt partisans into office. Such men are not a "terror to evildoers and a praise to them that do well." No Christian citizen has any right to vote for such men for offices, or for any men who are after the spoils, or who are incompetent or immoral. No man can play the citizen worthy of the Gospel of Christ by using his citizenship in such a way as to make the very purpose God has in government miscarry. While we should be slow in establishing a religious test for candidates for office, yet we dare not ignore or reject the great moral test which God Himself has established. The candidate for office should be one who fears God, loves righteousness, and hates covetousness; one who is wise, and understanding, and well known. How can an officer meet the requirements of government as instituted by God if he does not believe in the existence of or has no fear for its founder? What check is there against evil-doing for such a man except fear of detection, which is not great when the other officers are like himself? No man can "Play the citizen worthy the Gospel of Christ" and yet vote for such men.

And then, if we want to play the citizen as Paul exhorts us to, we must also see to it that we not only place

good men in authority, but that they are not controlled by wicked cliques and parties—that is, we must take such as are separated from evil influences and are free to do well.

It will be said that this theory of government and citizenship is too good for this world. Not at all. It is just the one that God wants us to put into operation here, and we cannot play the citizen worthy of the Gospel unless we strive to do so. It may compel us to leave our old parties; but what of that? We are not exhorted to be Republicans or Democrats, but to "play the citizen in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ." If the time has come when we cannot do this and remain in our old parties, we must get out if we would remain guiltless. The government is greater than the party. If the party has ceased to be a help to righteous government, then it should be swept aside. It has no right to hinder God's institution. "The King must not bear the sword in vain," "He must be a terror to evil-doers and a praise to them that do well," though it should necessitate the sinking of parties into oblivion. God has so ordained it. Let us, then, "play the citizen in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ," so that God's will may be done in our government and His kingdom established among us.

BURDEN-BEARING.

BY REV. T. R. BRIDGES [CHRISTIAN],
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Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.—Gal. vi. 2.

DR. TALMAGE says: "When I look into the faces of men in my audiences or upon the street, I know there is one thing they all want—*help*." It should be the Christian's greatest joy to help his fellow-men. The practical question is, How? Along what lines shall we work? How shall we bear one another's burdens and fulfil the law of Christ?

We may help a man in two ways—

directly, by bearing his burden for him, or indirectly, by making him strong enough to bear it.

There are occasions where the direct help must be given. Men sometimes get so embarrassed in business life that if their creditors demand immediate payment they are ruined. In such cases the Christian may not, like Shylock, stand upon the letter of the law and demand the pound of flesh nominated in the bond. The quality of mercy twice blessed must be his guide.

A few months since the cry for direct help arose from famine-stricken Russia; and by her generous reply, America proved her right to be called a Christian nation. But these opportunities do not come often, and many cannot respond when they do. I am glad to say that the world is vastly more in need of another kind of help, and a kind that we can all give, from the least to the greatest; it is the indirect help, the help of sympathy and encouragement. The field here is much broader than in the former case. There are burdens that cannot be lightened by the labor of our hands or the gift of our gold. There are broken hearts that can be healed only by the touch of a loving, sympathetic friend.

We realize the opportunities for help in this direction when we contrast the vastness of the world's need with the littleness of its response. Man's inhumanity to man has been a theme for sentimentalists in all the ages. Who can forget, in "Vanity Fair," Thackeray's picture of society? The different grades are represented on the social ladder, and the climbers are likened to a pack of dogs, snapping and snarling at those below, and licking the feet of those above. Instead of helping men, the world seems to find its greatest pleasure in destroying them. This inhumanity has never been more clearly seen or terribly rebuked than in an incident recorded by the Evangelist John. A poor woman had been taken in adultery, and her accusers asked the consent of Jesus that she might be stoned. The

Saviour, looking to the depths of their false hearts, made reply: "He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone at her." For a moment they stood self-condemned, then slunk away in silence and disgrace.

Since thus coldly the world responds to its own despairing cry, how large of heart and charitable ought Christians be! I purpose speaking to you of the universal *necessity* for sympathy; the *power* of sympathy; then to suggest *ways* of cultivating sympathy.

The stoic dreamed of an ideal existence, where he should possess in himself all things necessary for a happy and successful life. But the greatest philosophers of the school, by their lamentable failures, only brought into higher relief the doctrine of man's universal dependence upon his fellows. The heart thirsts for sympathy as the tender plant for the vernal showers, failing to receive which, it withers and dies. No man can do his best when he feels himself a stranger to human and Divine sympathy. If you would make him great, get him to realize that others are looking to him and depending upon him. It is the thought of fatherland and home, wives and little ones, that has inspired the martial heroes in all the ages.

In the lives of Paul and Jesus, we see illustrated the needs of our common humanity. The great apostle lies in a Roman dungeon. For the second time he is to appear before Nero's bar, and this time he knows the charge will not break down. In almost the last words that have come to us from his inspired pen, he requests his beloved disciple, Timothy, that he will bring him a cloak he left at Troas; that he will bring him his books; but above all he desires that he will come himself, for he wants to look into a friendly face and clasp a friendly hand before he dies.

Who can forget in the life of Jesus the pathetic scene in the garden? Satan has suggested a way of escape from the cross. He chooses His favorite retreat, takes His favorite disciples, goes into

the thick shade of the olive trees and falls upon His face in an agony of weeping and prayer. Exhausted by the struggle, He comes to His disciples for help. He finds them sleeping, dull, unresponsive to His need. A heart-broken lament falls from His lips: "What! Could ye not watch with me one hour?" Twice and thrice this sad scene repeats itself. In the hour of His greatest temptation Jesus leaned upon human sympathy, and, like thousands before and since, He found it a broken reed.

I come now to speak of the *power* of sympathy. To what can I liken it better than to the electric fluid that permeates all space, and has now become our most obedient servant? Just as electricity gives us light and the means of locomotion, so sympathy dispels moral darkness and turns the complicated machinery of our social life. I cannot express its power better than to say it saves men when all else fails. No man is so near destruction as the one who feels that nobody cares for him. We ought to remember this when the prodigal returns to the father's house. Instead of standing aloof in our Pharisaic righteousness, and saying one to another, "I bet he won't stick," we ought to take him by the hand, tell him the joy we feel that he has come back to the Church, the sympathy we have for his struggle against temptation, and the prayerful interest with which we shall follow his steps. Thus alone may he be saved. Francis Murphy, the great temperance advocate, lay a hardened criminal in one of the jails of Maine. Appeals to honor, manhood, self-respect touched him not. But his little boy was admitted to his cell, and, while a tear fell upon his cheek, he said: "Father, we are very lonely at home without you." His heart was touched, and a very useful man was saved for God and the world.

I ask you, is not the drawing power of the Gospel found in the sympathy of Jesus? "We have not a high priest

who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities," says Paul. Dear to our hearts are the invitation and promise of the Saviour: "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Admitting the universal necessity and wonderful power of sympathy, the practical question yet remains, "How may we most effectively cultivate it?" Remember,

First, Your Own Weakness. In Gal. vi. 1 Paul says: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." It is the man who forgets himself in whom is found the heart of stone. We need the spirit that was in the little band of disciples, when Jesus said to them, "One of you shall betray Me." It was a bomb thrown into a peaceful camp. Their consternation has been matchlessly expressed in Da Vinci's "Last Supper," beautiful in its ruins, as it may yet be seen on the wall in the old monastery in Milan. Could one of their number be so base? Instead of accusing one another, each almost held his breath with fear as he asked, "Lord, is it I?" A little introspection now and then will help us to regard the failures of others more charitably. Remember,

Second, Extenuating Circumstances. Men may be born free and equal before the law, but in no other way. The laws of heredity and environment rule almost as absolutely in the lives of men as in the lives of plants. We are very much the creatures of circumstances.

The wise man can cast successfully the horoscope of almost any life, when he knows its antecedents and surroundings. Our boasted freedom of the will is oftentimes a delusion and a snare. I cannot but think of man as like unto a tiger in his cage. Back and forth a little distance he may walk, but the limits to his freedom are fixed and unalterable. Let us remember that an offence has both a legal and a moral criminality,

and that it can only be justly estimated by the latter. We cannot understand the degree of a man's guilt until we know the various circumstances leading up to his transgression. The man who steals a loaf of bread to save his family from starvation, the cashier who uses money not his own to save a friend from ruin, cannot be so guilty, I think, in the eyes of that God, who "regardeth not the outward appearance, but looketh upon the heart." Remember,

Third, the Example of Christ. If you would be sympathetic, do this one thing before all else—study the life of Jesus. You will find that back of every action was throbbing the great heart of His love. The motto of His life is expressed in John vi. 37: "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out." The sick, the afflicted, the bereaved, the outcast, came to Him for sympathy, and never came in vain. It was this that made the multitudes in Galilee follow Him with a wildness of enthusiasm that is unparalleled. This Christ spirit is beautifully expressed in an incident recorded in "Ben Hur." You remember how the young Jew had been condemned for a crime of which he was innocent, and was being led away to the galleys for life. The Roman soldiers passing through Nazareth halted about the village well to rest and refresh themselves. The boy Jesus was standing there, interested to see the soldiers in their glistening armor. But His sympathies were aroused when his eyes fell upon the poor prisoner. There lay Ben Hur, weary and almost choked by the dust and heat. No one had given him a thought. Jesus took a cup of cold water and held it to his parched lips. This little act of kindness was remembered by the prisoner in all the sufferings of later years, and kept him from utterly hating his fellow-men. Although without historic foundation, this incident is conceived in the true Christ spirit, and may be accepted by those who would know Jesus. God help us to be like Him.

FRETFULNESS.

BY PROFESSOR WILLIAM R. DURVEA,
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Fret not thyself.—Ps. xxxvii. 8.

THE root idea of this Anglo-Saxon word is to eat away, rub, corrode. It is applied here to mental solicitude or spiritual anxieties which eat away and destroy the texture of the soul as the moth spoils the cloth which it gnaws. Worry is a synonym, and carries the idea of disturbance, something that wrings the sensibilities and takes from life its strength and beauty. The source of fretfulness is separation of the heart from God, causing an unrest pictured in the Scriptures by the sea whose waters are never still. Estrangement from God leads the prodigal to set up for himself in a far country. The mind is full of cares. What shall we eat, drink, and wear? or, if impelled by ambition, how shall we gain and hold this position? So in the effort to secure wealth, they who will be rich are vexed by rivalries and plagued by fears. The millionaire often worries over his vast property as truly as does the servant in reference to his utter lack. Military men tell us that to every one who dies in battle twenty die in the hospital; and so we may say that a hundred are killed by worry to one whose life is lost by some violent outbreak of sin. Fretfulness mars everything. One's breakfast may be spoiled by bad humor. The beauty of the natural world, the happiness of friendship, the peace of home, and the quiet of the soul are ruined by worry and ill temper in parlor, kitchen, and office. Shall we never learn to dismiss these corroding cares and cease to fret? A heart at peace is a fountain of perpetual youth, whereas a fretful man is a victim to his own self-inflicted pains. As Shelley says, he flees astray like Actæon of old, torn by his own dogs,

"And his own thoughts, along that rugged way,
Pursue like raging hounds their father and their
prey."

The text refers to evil-doers, and assures us that they shall be cut off, while those who wait upon God shall inherit the earth. Christ teaches us to take no anxious thought for the morrow, and gives us the true grounds on which we may rest in peace. There are two simple facts which may serve as antidotes to this unlovely and destructive spirit of complaint.

1. God has supreme control of the affairs of this life. It is an absolute and continuous supervision. He says, "I kill and I make alive." It is a control that enters into the minutest matters. No one of us by taking thought can add to our stature in the smallest measure or to our life a moment. If we put all into His hands and consent to be guided and guarded by Divine wisdom, we shall be at peace. Bird and beast have no anxiety as to where they shall dwell or how they shall be clothed and fed. They live and perpetuate their kind. They are sheltered and clothed by their Maker. The very flowers are cared for, though they neither toil nor spin. What we call nature is God. He cares alike for the lower and higher existences. Shall we be so blind to God's loving and perpetual care as to worry and complain? To-morrow is in God's own hand. Fret not.

2. God has bound Himself to care for us. He has pledged Himself to care for our daily wants and for the soul's supremest needs. He knows that we have need of the lower and the higher good. As the Father of the family He is Provider of supplies. He binds Himself to supply all things according to the riches of His grace in Jesus Christ. If we will seek first His kingdom, the promise will be fulfilled. "I will be a Father unto you." This pledge is a fact as sure as the law of gravitation. It ought to inspire us with as uniform and settled confidence. The Psalmist said, "I have been young, and now am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his seed begging bread." Do not, therefore, be anxious as to the things after which "the Gentiles seek."

Do not link yourselves with the ungodly by such anxiety. "Our Father in heaven" is our Care-taker. Faith in God is the cure of fretfulness.

From this subject we infer that we should make paramount in our thought God's kingdom rather than self. We are too apt to work on the lower plane of self-seeking and personal advantage. Our prayer ever should be, "Lord, what wilt THOU have me to do? Whatever we do we should do it unto the Lord. As Baxter says :

"Who sweeps a room as in Thy sight,
Makes it and the action fine."

This rule of life does not hinder us from any work or pleasure, but rather increases our satisfaction and usefulness. It may be best that we should not have riches, but we shall have what is best for our genuine comfort—peace and efficiency. Those who are most active in the work of the Lord are not those who worry and complain. The light of His countenance drives away the fog and miasma which linger over the lowlands of unbelief and self-seeking.

A second lesson is this: Live by the day, and do not brood over the possibilities of the future. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Proper foresight is reasonable and necessary. "If the Lord wills, we shall do thus and so," this should be our language; but duty lies in the present, and what our hand finds to-day to do we should do with our might. Thirty years ago I heard Spurgeon say, speaking on this point, "Clean the pavement before your own door, and soon the city will be clean." Let each of us now and here faithfully and cheerfully do his own work, and God's cause will be everywhere triumphant. So long as there is sin in the world there will be disquiet. In the world we have tribulation, in Christ alone we have peace. As our day is, so our strength shall be. Death may come to us as the tropic twilight falls, suddenly. Happy shall we be if ready; not wishing, with Elizabeth the queen, for "another inch of time" to

do life's neglected work, but saying, with Paul and with Paul's Divine Master, "I have finished the work which THOU gavest me to do." Casting all our care on Him, for He careth for us, we can trust, and as we trust, can sing. The happy servant waiting for his Lord is not only ready, but expectant, and may gladly cry, "Even so, come quickly!"

CHILDHOOD AND THE CHURCH.

By CHARLES W. PARSONS, D.D. [METHODIST], BROOKLYN, N. Y.

The promise is unto you and your children.—Acts ii. 39.

THAT God has not failed to provide for the children of believers is a conspicuous fact of Scripture. He chose Abraham and made a covenant with him and with his seed after him. He reiterated the promises to Isaac and Jacob. Joshua declared, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." He spoke as one who felt it to be his right and duty to make pledges for his family. Peter at Pentecost explicitly said, "The promise is unto you and your children." We are to examine the relation of the Church to the children of her members. We do not make baptism a saving ordinance, but rather an outward sign of an inward grace, a rite of initiation to the Church, as was circumcision in the ancient days. We believe that the offspring of believers are covered by the grace of Christ, that they in their infancy are not sinners, though in after years, if neglected, they may go astray and reject Christ. Our Lord says that we cannot enter the kingdom of God unless we become like these little ones.

Three theories have prevailed. First, that of special election; once held with great intensity, but now with less emphasis and by fewer people. Second, that of baptismal regeneration. This also we reject as unscriptural. Augustine believed that infants were saved; and Pelagius, that all were lost if un-

baptized, because of the inherited sin of Adam. Some have held to the notion of elect infants, which idea is not in harmony with the conception of a loving Saviour. The third and true theory is that of the universal salvation of infants. As death came upon all by the sin of one, life and grace came through Jesus Christ. If the little ones die before the age of accountability they are saved. If they grow up and refuse Christ they then are sinners. The Church has not been awake to the duty of caring for her jewels, but a renewed interest is being felt. We are rousing from sleep and beginning to see our privilege and obligation. Notice these points :

First. We are to regard the children of believers as members of the Church, and so treat them. They are such by birthright and not by sufferance. They have inherited misfortune and find it easier to do wrong than to do right ; but we are to nourish the work of God in their hearts and keep them so near to Christ that they will stay there always. We are to care for all the little ones, specially for those of the household of faith, remembering that "the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." Here religion and patriotism unite. America's leading statesman, Daniel Webster, once was asked what would be the salvation of this republic. His was a prompt reply. He did not refer to party, to tariff, to the silver problem, or any material relations, but said that it was only by leading the children to Christ that the future would be made secure.

Second. The evangelistic methods of the Methodist Episcopal Church are particularly helpful in this work. We have welcomed two and a half million to our communion the past century, and have a right to speak with some assurance. We have a creed that needs no revision. Our doctrines are those of free grace, and we do well to proclaim them far and near. The Protestant Episcopal Church, and the papal as well, are wise in teaching their children

from their earliest years the doctrines, the ordinances, the feasts and fasts of their respective communions. We also have insisted on this. The Church does not leave it optional with the pastor, but makes it his duty to maintain weekly catechetical classes. Therefore :

Third. Parents should co-operate with the Church in securing the uniform attendance of their households at these classes. There is a great lack of knowledge not only on the part of the young, but of older persons. A lawyer once said to me, "How can you believe in orthodoxy?" I asked him his idea of orthodoxy, and he repeated some of the declarations of John Calvin. I told him that these did not represent my idea of what orthodoxy was, and explained to him my idea of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This he accepted, joined the Church, and has been a member ever since.

Again, we are not to delay this matter through indolence or indifference. One mother said to me, "I don't say anything to my children about joining the Church ; indeed, I don't care what church they go to." Another said to me, "When they are old enough to go out into society, then—" This is most culpable and blameworthy. I repudiate the idea that the Church is a club or mere social organization ; that entrance into it is to be conditioned upon worldly considerations ; or that it makes no difference what communion we choose, if any. No one loves all God's people more than I do ; but this Church of our fathers, this Church of our affection, deserves our special, loyal regard. See to it, then, that you bring your children with you to the sanctuary. I asked a lad last week if he were present here the previous Sunday, and he said, "No, I go to Sunday-school, but not to church." This is wrong. Character will lack fibre and strength formed without the "help from the sanctuary" which God gives us. A little fellow who asked the privilege of going with older ones to church was told that he was too young, but that he would be

allowed to go when he grew up. With not a little far-sightedness the child replied, "Better let me go now, for by and by I won't want to go."

Finally, there is great encouragement to be had from the fact that God's favor has richly crowned these efforts of His people for the young during recent years. It is sometimes sneeringly said that the children of preachers and deacons are worse than others. Facts contradict it. A long list of sons of ministers might be given from the days of Macaulay, Nelson, Sir Christopher Wren, and Coleridge to those of our own Professor Lowell and the Beechers. Common-sense teaches that thorns grow not from grapes. From our Christian homes and colleges are going forth all over this land and to far-off lands those who are blessing the world. During six months twenty-five thousand souls have been converted in India by Methodist preaching. In Yale College seventy years ago there were not more than five pious undergraduates. Many students were atheistic and profane, but now 123 of the 179 seniors are church-members.

He starts in the race of life with a great advantage who comes forth from this faithful, systematic, and continuous Christian culture. Let me, therefore, urge this duty upon you for the sake of those under your watch. Co-operate with the church and pastor. Prolong and deepen the influence of the Sabbath and the sanctuary. Avoid fault-finding, and guard the reputation of the church in the eyes of your children. The work you are doing may seem hidden, but the impressions of truth will abide when

"the stars grow old,
And the sun grows cold,
And the leaves of the judgment books unfold."

An ancient architect put by royal command the name of Ptolemy upon the lighthouse he reared, but only on a thin surface of limestone, with which he coated the rock. As the years passed away there appeared the name of Sostatus, which he had cut deep into the

imperishable granite. Transient and fugitive impressions may pass from childhood's memory, but if you engrave the name of JESUS on the heart and instil His love in the soul, eternity will reveal the ineffaceable inscription. You and the children God has given you will then rejoice together at Jesus' feet, as with a royal diadem you together crown Him Lord of all!

STRIKING THOUGHTS FROM RECENT SERMONS.

THE will is the germinal element in faith. As some one has said, the flower must open by an act of its own before the sunbeams can enter into it. Though it opens under the warmth of those very rays which before they gain an entrance lie fosteringly about it, still unless there were a living principle in the plant the warmth of the sun could no more unfold the blossom than it can open an artificial plant or a painted one. A proposition which does not have the assent of the will takes no vital hold upon our life. It is an object contemplated. It is the will that appropriates truth, that decides the end of our activities. Only when truth has found a lodgment in the will has it become a matter of faith.—*Mitchell.* (1 John v. 4.)

God is true to His fatherhood of His church, and to the obligation which He imposes upon Himself when He receives us, you and me, through that adopting act into His household to make us meet by His discipline, by His chastening for our inheritance with the sons in light. And He takes us in this, our mortal life, and through the conditions of that life, through its circumstances, through those changes that come with it, through its vicissitudes and its contingencies, and through the impressions wrought upon us by its adversities. He takes you and me and deals with us as the sculptor deals with the marble that is brought out from the mine. He takes the rude stone and with his skill, with that power of genius that is his, that skill to execute the directions of that genius, he takes his chisel and with his mallet, here and there, he takes away the superincumbent stone, and after he has wrought upon it as a great master, there comes forth the finished statue, all perfect and symmetrical, and complete, well declared a thing of beauty that is to be a joy forever, which as long as it lives in that perfect and exquisite form into which he has wrought it is the delight of all eyes and tastes through all time.—*Markham.* (Heb. xii. 7.)

A MAN did not know his worth, he did not know his vileness either. To put that on exhibition was part of the errand of Jesus. It was done. All the malice and meanness of human nature is on the stage in these last days of Jesus. The cross exactly measures what a man may be in the high and in the low. It is dramatic; nothing is left out. I see that man has such value in him that he is worth saving, worth dying for. I see also that he is so low that nothing but dying for him will save him.—*Reed.* (John xix. 30.)

SENSE and reason suffer illusions which faith has to correct. As you stand on a railroad track, at a distance the rails seem to meet. An eyeglass removes the point at which they meet. If one travel to the end of the road he finds that they do not meet at all. Experience has shown

an illusion of the eye. But our intuitive judgment could have shown you in the first instance that two parallel straight lines never meet. In the midst of problems of this world which our finite reason cannot solve, let us take refuge in that higher intuition, in that spiritual faculty, in faith, which leads us to true conclusions in spite of the seeming contradictions of sense. Yonder in the heavens the eye sees only darkness, but the powerful telescope reveals innumerable fixed stars. Faith is that telescope which sees in the spiritual heavens realities that sense does not discern. All apparent facts favor the geocentric, all true facts favor the heliocentric theory of the universe. It is only when Copernicus looks behind the immovable earth, the rising and setting of the sun, the culmination of the stars, that the true celestial harmony is revealed. The invisible is the real.—*Mitchell*. (1 John v. 4.)

As Luther took the forty-sixth Psalm and set it out in his own poetical strain, "*Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*," till it thrilled and inspired the German revolt against the impurities and iniquities of Rome; as our Cromwell fired the martial ardor of his soldiers with the message of the sixty-eighth Psalm, so Carey stood here a century ago, his soul bathed in tender pity and his tones full of pleading love, and having stripped the thoughts of this seer of their Oriental garb, then set them forth in the plain, practical, pungent, quotable lines, "*Expect great things from God; Attempt great things for God*," and afterward embodied them in a life of beautiful devotion and heroic self-sacrifice, which effectually carried the missionary idea in its original New Testament fullness to ascendancy in the life of modern Christians.—*Clifford*. (Isa. liv. 2, 3.)

NATURE incites to praise by the moral qualities she educes in man. This is Nature's chief glory, her highest honor, that she is the instrument by which God educates human souls and fits them for their immortal destiny. For we are placed here under the discipline of Nature, and she is a severe task mistress, from whom nothing is to be had for the mere asking. Nature exacts laborious toil in exchange for all her gifts. She hides her pearls in the depths of the sea, her gold in the sands of the river or the crevices of the rocks; she buries the metals, man's most useful allies, and the coal to smelt those metals, deep down in the heart of the earth; she secretes her balms and her subtle essences where even the cunning chemist can scarce track them. Her most powerful forces, such as electricity, are ever the most elusive and the hardest to be subdued. Everything man extorts from Nature he must win, not only by the sweat of his brow, but by the sweat of his brain. He wrestles with her for her blessing as Jacob wrestled with the angel at Penuel, till almost he seems crippled with the strain. But the conflict proves at last that as a prince he has power with God and has prevailed; he wins the blessing, and, lo! it is not only corn and oil and wine, but rich endowments of mind and heart as well.—*Mackay*. (Ps. xxix. 9.)

We do not love men for their own sake or for God's sake. It is this we need; a love like Henry Martyn's, when he "lay in tears interceding for the unfortunate natives of India, thinking within himself that the most despicable Soodra of India was of as much value in the sight of God as the King of Great Britain." It is love for man as man. O Christ Jesus! fire us with that love now, that so we may belong to that

sect which hath no dread of death, But will spend life and breath, and gold and pains To succor any wretch; because they hold This Christ did die for him."

Michael Angelo once visited the study of the young Raphael. The junior artist was not in, and Angelo departed without leaving his name;

but before he left, he took a piece of chalk and drew on the canvas underneath the poor and meagre design of Raphael, a bold, sweeping line, and added the word "Amplius." Raphael seeing this, knew at once who had been there, and "forthwith changed his style, and became the painter the world calls divine." Brothers, Christ Jesus comes thus to us, and looking at our contracted aims and poor schemes and meagre work, He writes underneath: "*Amplius, Amplius—WIDER AND FURTHER; MORE AND STILL MORE.*"—*Clifford*. (Isa. liv. 2, 3.)

THEMES AND TEXTS OF RECENT SERMONS.

1. A Chastening God. "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom his father chasteneth not?"—Heb. xii. 7. Thomas R. Markham, D.D., St. Louis, Mo.
2. The Golden Rule in its Application to Business. "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."—Luke vi. 31. A. J. Hutton, D.D., Rochester, N. Y.
3. Rights of Property in Capital and Labor. "It is abomination to kings to commit wickedness; for the throne is established by righteousness."—Prov. xvi. 12. Richard Montague, D.D., Colorado Springs, Colo.
4. The Study of Quietness. "Study to be quiet."—1 Thess. iv. 11. Bishop O. P. Fitzgerald, D.D., Atlanta, Ga.
5. The Warrant of Faith. "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins."—1 Cor. xv. 17. President J. P. D. John, D.D., Indianapolis, Ind.
6. The Recognition of God the Pledge of the Perpetuity of our National Power and Glory. "The people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits."—Dan. xi. 32. Rev. F. G. Browne, Ph.D., Huntington, Ind.
7. The Church Saloon. "Some affirm that we say, Let us do evil that good may come, whose damnation is just."—Rom. iii. 8. John A. B. Wilson, D.D., New York.
8. The War of Righteousness. "And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war."—Rev. xix. 11. W. H. Bolton, D.D., Chicago, Ill.
9. Victory Through Faith. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."—1 John v. 4. Professor Samuel C. Mitchell, D.D., Louisville, Ky.
10. The Search for Rest. "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."—Matt. xi. 29. J. M. Richmond, D.D., Louisville, Ky.
11. The Christian Armor. "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God," etc.—Eph. vi. 10, 11. A. T. Pierson, D.D., London, Eng.
12. Knowledge that Sneers. "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called."—1 Tim. vi. 20. Herrick Johnson, D.D., Boston, Mass.

13. Practical Christianity. "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?" etc.—Psalm xv. Ven. F. W. Farrar, D.D., London, England.
14. Nature's Shout of Praise. "In his temple everything saith Glory."—Psalm xxi. 9. [Rev. Ver., Rev. Angus W. Mackay, B.A., Aberdeen, Scotland.]
6. Human Limitations of Divine Action. ("Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither."—Gen. xix. 23.)
7. A Threefold Reason for Obedience. ("Ye shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye shall possess."—Deut. v. 33.)
8. Renunciation and Annunciation. ("We have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by the manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."—2 Cor. iv. 2.)
9. A Mutual Keeping. ("Because thou didst keep the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."—Rev. iii. 10.)
10. The Divine Law for the Indolent. ("When we were with you this we commanded you, If any will not work, neither let him eat."—2 Thess. iii. 10.)
11. The Divine Confirmation of the Human Promise. ("And Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, answered the king and said, Amen; the Lord God of my lord the king say so too."—1 Kings i. 36.)
12. The Evidential Value of Experience. ("And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came and stood before him; and he said, Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel."—2 Kings v. 15.)

Suggestive Themes for Pulpit Treatment.

1. The Invulnerability of Goodness. ("And who is he that will harm you, if ye be zealous of that which is good?"—1 Pet. iii. 13.)
2. Rejected Evidence and Withdrawn Opportunity. ("It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken unto you. Seeing ye thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo! we turn to the Gentiles."—Acts xiii. 46.)
3. The Brute's Sermon to the Ingrate. ("The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider."—Isa. i. 3.)
4. God's Enemies His Unconscious Servants. ("Howbeit, he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few."—Isa. x. 7.)
5. Courage and Speed in Service. ("And of the Gadites there separated themselves unto David, into the hold of the wilderness, men of might, and men of war fit for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as the roes upon the mountains."—2 Kings xii. 8.)

HELPS AND HINTS, TEXTUAL AND TOPICAL.

BY ARTHUR T. PIERSON, D.D.

Heart-Keeping.

Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.—Proverbs.

What to do—Why to do—How to do—are the three questions suggested.

I. "Above all that thou keepest, keep thy heart." The word here used is a common, popular word to express the inmost self.

Often in the Word of God we are warned to keep the feet, as the representatives of our *walk*; the tongue, mouth, lips, as the representatives of our *talk*; the hands, as the symbols of our *work*; but *above all* else, the heart. If a "double watch" is needed at the door of the lips, what a legion of sentries at the gates of the inner man!

II. For out of it flow the issues of life—*i.e.*, the heart is the determining factor in all life's problems—the fountain of all final issues for good or evil. There are formed the materials of history and destiny.

1. Here *thought* first takes form; it is the source of all our conceptions. Thought matured into conviction is belief; matured into purpose, is motive; thought vitally linked with thought becomes argument, etc.

Even our creed is thus the product of our heart—for the heart makes the theology. Atheism is the creed of the fool—*i.e.*, the moral fool, who in his heart first wishes there were no God (Ps. xiv.

1). The wish is parent to the thought. No holy man ever was an atheist.

2. Out of the heart proceed all our *words*. The tongue is untamed and untamable because the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Speech is born of the thoughts and is thought incarnated.

3. Out of the heart proceed our *actions* good and bad; our *works* take their character from our hearts. Man may misread and misjudge, but God, who knoweth and trieth our hearts, makes no mistake.

4. Hence, out of the heart proceeds the *character*, which is, after all, the sum of our thoughts, words, works. Character is the sum total of our secret and manifested history. Reputation may sometimes belie character, and is, therefore, of little consequence in comparison. Character is what I *am*—reputation is what others take me to be.

5. Hence *destiny* is another issue of the heart, for ultimately character fills condition.

III. How to keep it.

Manifestly, 1. By constant communion with the *Word of God*. Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee.

2. By constant *self-scrutiny*. An eye upon one's self—one's habits of thought, desire, feeling, etc.

3. By constant *prayer* to God.

4. By constant *culture of holiness*.

The first supplies a *standard*; the second, an open and vigilant *eye*; the third, a source of *help*; the fourth, a practical *diligence in endeavor*.

The Unity of the Bible.

THE *unity of the Bible* is one of the most remarkable proofs of its inspiration. All the human conditions were fatal to unity. Here is a small library of sixty-six books, by forty authors, in three tongues, and composed during twenty-five centuries. The unity is not always apparent at first, but reveals itself on closer examination as the pictures of a stereoscope blend after finding the focal centre. The unity of the Bible is *sevenfold*.

1. *Organic*. More like the unity of a body than of a building. Cuvier's laws of organized being were:

(1) All parts are necessary to completeness.

(2) Each complements the other.

(3) All are pervaded by common life.

Here we find all making one whole, and each helping to make the rest complete.

2. *Historic*. The Bible is the history of the kingdom of God. Israel was its chosen representative, and about its history all centres. With the apostasy and dispersion of Israel all Old and even New Testament history stops, and the times of the Gentiles constitute an interval having no definite history. Prophecy takes up the thread with the resumption of the Israelitish covenant.

Consequently we have seven dispensations, each marked by seven features, all beginning, continuing, and ending alike. The seven dispensational features are: advance in revelation; decline in piety; worldly alliance; corrupt civilization; parallel development of good and evil; apostasy; judgment—in the order here indicated.

3. *Prophetic*. Here, again, the kingdom of God is the centre. Other nations are embraced because of their relations to this central object—Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, Sidon, Egypt, etc., in the Old Testament; the beast, false prophet, anti-Christ, for some reason in the New.

4. *Symbolic*. Same forms—square, cube, circle, sphere; the same colors—white, blue, green, yellow, scarlet, purple, etc.; the same numbers—1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 10, with their products, 12, 40, 144, 000, etc. All having significance only to be ascertained by careful study.

5. *Messianic*. The person of the Messiah is to be found in 333 distinct, direct predictions; in twice as many indirect prophetic hints; in ceremonies and rites, as in Lev. xvi., Ex. xii., etc.; in historic events having allegorical significance, and even in historic characters like Abraham, Moses, Joshua, etc.

6. *Didactic*. Moral and spiritual

teaching is a unit throughout. The fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man had a natural basis in creation which was lost by sin, and in man's fall forfeited; these are restored in the new creation in Christ, and regulate all relations of God and man, and all human duties.

7. *Scientific.* The position of the Word of God is consistent throughout. There are three principles obviously followed: (1) No scientific truths are pre-announced. (2) No contradiction of such truth finds its way into Scripture. (3) Elastic phrases are used, like firmament (expanse), in Gen. i., which are found in the light of subsequent science to have contained in themselves the germs of scientific discovery. (Comp. Job xxxviii.)

Such unity in such a book is impossible unless God supervised its production and guarded it from violations of unity.

The Stone of Stumbling.

1 Pet. ii. 8.

PAUL uses a strange expression in Gal. v. 11. The offence of the cross; the scandal, or stumbling-block of the cross. (Comp. Rom. ix. 31-33; 1 Cor. i. 23; Isa. viii. 14, etc.)

The cross of Christ, over which men stumble, is the very hope of salvation. It is a cause of offence where it should be of glory and of obedience. Why is this so?

I. It offends the unregenerate *mind*, for it appeals to faith, not philosophy. It has its mysteries, but they are open to the humblest believer, and can be unlocked only by the Holy Spirit. Both the lock and the key are of God (John iii.). Nicodemus asked, "How?" but got no explanation. (Acts xvii. 19, 20.) The philosophers at Athens were humbled, and sent Paul away because he preached the resurrection. Culture is offended because even a little child may learn these mysteries (Matt. xviii. 2, 3). Caste is offended, for the princes of this world are accounted nothing in God's sight.

II. It offends the unregenerate *heart*, for it makes no compromise with human merit. Legal obedience cannot earn salvation, for all have sinned, and one sin breaks the whole law. Morality cannot save, for even the righteousness of scribes and Pharisees is not enough (Matt. v. 20). Formalism will not do; in fact, nothing short of a new creation.

III. It offends the unregenerate *will*, for it begins by demanding absolute submission and surrender to God.

The Great Question of Profit and Loss.

What is a man advantaged if he gain the whole world and lose himself or be cast away?—Luke ix. 25.

No more awful question ever put to men.

It suggests four solemn thoughts.

1. The *nature* of the soul. It is the true *Self*. (Comp. Matt. xvi. 25.) The body was made, the soul inbreathed of God. The body is the frame to the picture, the setting to the gem. The body does not shape the soul, but the soul moulds and fashions the body.

2. The *peril* of the soul. The world and soul are here and everywhere contrasted as mutually hostile (James iv. 4; 1 John. ii. 15-17). Selfish indulgence is ruinous; self-denial alone is saving.

3. The *value* of the soul. God counts it worth more than the world. (Comp. Ps. viii.) Stars and suns are only dead matter. The astronomer weighs them as in scales, and shall outlive them.

4. The *barter* of the soul. How little men value it (Heb. xii. 16). Esau and birthright.

Consider, (a) How little of the world any one can get.

(b) How little a *time* any one can enjoy.

(c) How unsatisfying all such joy is.

(d) How much bitterness in such a cup.

Horace Walpole, "glass of fashion and mould of form," was a disgusted voluptuary. Madame de Pompadour, surrounded by every worldly charm, said: "I am dead before my time."

Consider the state of a soul lost in such a barter, and no possible way to buy back the lost chance! This is Matthew's meaning. What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?—that is, to *recover* it.

The Five Points of the New Theology.

THE modern type of preaching is largely a departure from the older type, as all will be ready to confess. If Calvinism has its five points, the new theology has also its five points:

1. The universal fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man, independent of redemption or regeneration.
2. Christ, the highest development of humanity, a martyr for truth and an example for universal imitation.
3. Sin, a misfortune and a disease, possibly a necessary condition of attaining perfection—in other words, a fall forward and upward.
4. Salvation attainable by character;

and the universal destiny a development or evolution toward perfection here and hereafter.

5. The Bible, the best of books, inspired but not infallible or inerrant, and dependent for authority upon the attestation of consciousness.

These five points are not designed as an extreme or unfair statement of the position of the new theology; and would probably be admitted by many of the modern progressive school as a fair representation of their position.

THERE have been other martyrs besides those who have been literally sacrificed on the altar. Men who, for the sake of human progress, have been put in the pillory of public ridicule, fettered in the prison of exile and poverty, burned at the stake of public hatred and withering scorn, torn to pieces in the arena of popular fury by those wild beasts the mob.

THE PRAYER-MEETING SERVICE.

BY WAYLAND HOYT, D.D.

OCT. 2-8.—WAYS OF DOING GOOD.—John iv. 7.

The chapter of which our Scripture is part discloses the Divine model for every one of us as to ways of doing good.

(A) Christ used *personal contact*. Here was the woman coming to draw water. Here was Christ sitting wearied and thirsty on the well. "Give me to drink," said the Master. At once Christ established a *personal relation* between that woman and Himself. It immediately became work face to face and heart to heart.

And this way of personal contact is the supreme and essential way of doing good. Any one of us, thinking back along his life, will find that he has been most controlled, energized, moulded by the close contact of separate persons

with himself. Character magnetizes character. Hearts compel to their own shape other hearts. It was the true personal teacher believed, and using the book who helped you more than any book you ever studied. There is no power in religious work mightier than this of personal contact. A great danger of our time is that we fall into the habit of seeking to do religious good by proxy. The church-member will do religious service through his pastor; the parent will leave the religious training of his child to the Sunday-school teacher; the Christian will pay a missionary visitor for work amid the slums, and so seek to discharge himself of personal responsibility in that direction, etc.

But not thus, simply by the careless way of proxy, can Christians win the world for their Lord and bring in the

glad millennial time. Christ sets before us the example of personal contact. Upon every Christian, from the lowliest to the loftiest, this duty presses. No Christian man is really doing Christian duty except as he forms this relation of personal contact with some un-Christian heart to win it to his Lord.

(B) Christ used *passing opportunities*. A momentary resting place in a wearying journey; a well's mouth; a woman coming to draw water; the thirst of the traveller—very slight matters in themselves. And yet, by our Lord, these slight matters apparently were grasped and fashioned into an occasion for such speech as would win that sinful woman from her waywardness. Our Lord did not listlessly wait for some opportunity of religious intercourse to drift by; our Lord compelled passing events into opportunities. What warrant here for the wayside word; the alert, sympathetic help; the tract of the right sort skillfully given; the grasp of welcome at the church door; the religious letter prayerfully sent; the neighborly invitation to the Lord's house, etc.

(C) Our Lord used *personal friendliness*. This woman was full of the bitter, Samaritan prejudice against a Jew; this woman was a woman tarnished, despoiled of the precious pearl of her purity. Yet Christ showed Himself at once her friend. Eating and drinking with one meant vastly more in that Oriental society than with us. To eat or drink with one was the seal and signal of friendship. Christ said to her, "Give me to drink." We may not look down from some fancied height on which we think ourselves to stand and lecture people. Our Lord did not. He was known as the *friend of publicans and sinners*.

(D) Our Lord did not *despair of the worst sinner*. Fearfully fallen—this poor woman. Yet precisely this woman our Lord set Himself to rescue. Ah, if we but believed it more and practised it more, that our Lord's Gospel is the *power of God!*

OCT. 9-15.—BLESSEDNESS.—Ps. xxxii. 1, 2.

Blessedness is higher than happiness. Happiness is that which comes to us by hap, which happens to us, which has to do with only the outside of us, which simply hangs upon us as our clothing does.

Blessedness is a consecrating inward word which has to do with the secret soul. It is a word of the inner sunshine which is not dependent on the external things which come by hap. This distinction reveals a mistake men are constantly making as to the ideal end for life. Too much men are on the hunt for happiness; but the real and satisfying end is blessedness.

First. Who the blessed are. Notice our Scripture. Concerning that which we broadly speak of as sin three words are used. *Transgression—i.e.*, a going beyond. To transgress is to go beyond God's law, to break with Him, to rebel against Him by passing beyond the bounds of the law God has appointed for us. Transgression we may call the sin of *commission*.

The second word is *sin*. Sin means literally to miss the mark, to fall short of the mark, or to go beside it, to *fail*. We may call this the sin of *omission*.

The third word is *iniquity*. This word means literally that which is bent, twisted. The same metaphor lies in our word *wrong—i.e.*, that which is wrung, warped out of the true. So iniquity means that which is unequal, that which does not match itself with, does not run alongside of the requirement of the right. The man who is iniquitous, wrong, is the man who has wilfully *wrung himself* out of the right. So the idea of iniquity passes over into that of guilt, as deserving penalty and punishment. For the man who has wilfully twisted himself from the right and become bent from it is a man who must be under the judicial sentence of the right, which must express itself toward him in penalty.

Now the soul of whom *transgression*,

sin, iniquity are true cannot know *blessedness*.

(a) Between such a soul and God there must be *moral* distance.

(b) Over such a soul there must be the shadow of *penalty*. The right cannot be complacent toward such a soul; it must be judicially displaced toward it; visiting it inwardly with remorse, outwardly with penal evil.

(c) Also such a soul must be the house of guile—of subterfuges and false excusings. It cannot know the blessedness of a guileless openness and confidence toward God.

But our Scripture also states the three things God will do toward such a soul.

(a) Its transgression He will "forgive"—literally, lighten from the burden of transgression. Let us not stay in the shadows with David as to method. Behold the Lamb of God, who *bear*eth away the sins of the world.

(b) The sin—the missing failure of this soul, God will "cover." Ye are complete in Him.

(c) The iniquity of the soul God will not "impute." Rather He will reckon to it the perfect, unbent, untwisted rightness of Christ.

Now such treatment by God of the soul's sin is the soul's *blessedness*. Blessed is that man who has received of God such treatment of his sin.

Second. Notice how we *cannot* enter into such blessedness. We cannot enter such blessedness by *keeping silence*; by refusing to confess our sin (verses 3, 4). Ah, this psalm is a most real record of a personal experience! David had been keeping silence. He had coveted Bathsheba, slain Uriah, taken Bathsheba to his palace, and had been refusing to confess his sin. But thus he could not enter into blessedness. "His bones waxed old," his vigorous frame became helpless as with age; "roaring all the day long"—the moaning of a man in the torments of remorse; "day and night Thy hand was heavy upon me." Augustine says, "that hand pressing down most heavy, lifting up most sweet and most powerful." Ah, that hand press-

ing down on David! "My moisture is turned into the drought of summer;" he had not been happy even; even his royalty had withered. No blessedness thus.

Third. The way into this blessedness—*repentant confession* (verse 5).

(a) Blessedness, because such repentant confession was the time of *finding* God (verse 6, first clause).

(b) Blessedness, because of conscious *safety*. "Surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him" (verse 6, last clause).

(c) Blessedness, because here was hiding not in his sin, *but in God*. "Thou art my hiding-place" (verse 7).

(d) Blessedness, because once more came *joy*. "Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance" (verse 7).

(e) Blessedness, because once more *under God's leading*. "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go. I will guide thee with mine eye" (verse 8).

And for the last word, take to heart the instruction and exhortation of this psalm. Do not be so brutally stupid as to expect to find blessedness in allowed and unconfessed sin (verse 9).

OCT. 16-22.—A WARNING—Matt. xiv. 9.

In a very noble address to young men, Dr. Mark Hopkins well said: "A man may become of no use in this universe except for a warning." Such a warning is this Herod Antipas, the king of whom our Scripture speaks.

First. A warning because he refused attention to righteous, *prudential considerations* (verse 5 of this chapter). "And when he would have put John the Baptist to death, he feared the multitude," etc. That was a perfectly right and reasonable fear. Every other consideration aside, it was a bad stroke of policy for Herod to slay John. The Baptist wielded influence, was the idol of the people; his death would cause a public indignation to burn fiercely against Herod's throne. But Herod

strode on unmindful of such prudential considerations.

A very pertinent and practical principle here—wrongdoing of any sort is an imprudence, an unwise wisdom. This is not the highest motive for a refusal of wrong, but it is a motive, and a right one. *There is such a thing as a wise self-love.* God did not put you into this world to do the worst thing for yourself, but the best thing. He is a fool who will not wisely look out for himself. A wise self-love is not selfishness. Selfishness is the love of self unduly. A wise self-love is the love of self duly, rightly, in proper measure. Here you are a separate, spiritual, sensitive soul. Out from the unknown you come. Into the unknown you pass. Your loss is *your own* loss more than it can be another's. Something is rightly due to this separate, immortal soul. Wreck that, and *you* are wrecked. It is never prudent to do wrong. The popular indignation beating against Herod Antipas because of this wrong deed was one of the causes of his loss of his kingdom subsequently.

Second. A warning, because *he plainly went against his conscience.*

For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and a holy, and observed him, and when he heard him he did many things—was much perplexed—*i. e.*, much questioning unto himself (Mark vi. 20). Consider, man is so constituted as necessarily to make moral distinctions. Conscience is a power in him. Conscience includes (a) the perception of right and wrong in choices; (b) a feeling that the right ought to be done and the wrong refused; (c) complacency because of the right choice; displacency, pain, remorse because of the wrong choice.

And the moral distinctions which conscience makes inevitably suggest and point toward the moral distinctions which God makes. So to affront conscience is, in most real way, to affront God. This Herod did. That man is surely fronting loss and wreck who plunges on against his conscience.

Third. A warning because he did conscious wrong *through fear of ridicule.* "And them that sat with him at meat," etc. Because he feared their gibes he wrought the wrong. Poor, pulpy mass of humanity—that man who is more afraid of sneers than sin! He is steering for sin's doom straight.

Fourth. A warning because *he dared not break a bad promise.* "For his oath's sake," etc. But he never had the right to make such a promise, and having made it, he had no right to keep it. The best thing one can do with a promise which involves sin is to break it, and the sooner the better.

Fifth. A warning, because he indulged in a *merely useless sorrow.* "And the king was sorry," etc. But such sorrow is mere regret, and mere regret is both helpless and useless. The only genuine sorrow is the sorrow of repentance, and the test for that sorrow always is that we *forsake* sin. Just to regret doing wrong and to keep on doing the wrong is unmanly and the height of folly.

In the light of this warning, learn, (a) refuse to do wrong, because it is imprudent; cherish a right self-love; (b) obey conscience; (c) stand against ridicule for the right; (d) dare to break a promise toward the wrong; (e) be not simply regretful, but repentant.

OCT. 23-29.—HOW TO WIN DELIGHT.
—Ps. xl. 8.

"O Thou Eternal One! whose presence bright
All space doth occupy, all motion guide;
Unchanged through time's all-devastating
flight,

Thou only God! there is no God beside.
Being above all beings, Mighty One,
Whom none can comprehend, and none ex-
plore;

Who fill'st existence with Thy self alone;
Embracing all; supporting, ruling o'er;
Being whom we call God—and know no more."

"Creator—yes! Thy wisdom and Thy word
Created me. Thou source of life and good,
Thou Spirit of my spirit and my Lord!
Thy light, Thy love, in their bright plen-
titude

Filled me with an immortal Soul, to spring
 O'er the abyss of death, and bade it wear
 The garment of eternal day, and wing
 Its heavenly flight beyond this little sphere
 Even to its source—to Thee, its Author there."

Sublime hymn—this of the Russian poet Kerjavin! Yes, that is the supreme and overshadowing fact for every human soul—that *God is*. And God is the living one, the infinitely intelligent one, the personal one, the holy one, the loving one; and therefore His will must be the best thing possible. And this God stands in particular relation to myself. "I delight to do Thy will, oh *my God*." God is *my God*. He has for me a particular will. It is my business and my duty to accomplish it. I am not sent into this world in aimless fashion. I am meant for something. One tells how "a person greatly interested in entomology secured at great pains a fine specimen of the emperor moth in the larva state. Day by day he watched the little creature as he wove about him his cocoon, which is very singular in shape, much resembling a flask. Presently the time drew near for it to emerge from its wrappings and spread its large wings of exceeding beauty. On reaching the narrow aperture of the neck of the flask the pity of the person watching it was so awakened to see the struggle necessary to get through that he cut the cords, thus making the passage easier. But alas! his false tenderness destroyed all the brilliant colors for which this species of moth is noted. The severe pressure was the very thing needed to cause the flow of fluids which create the marvellous hues. Its wings were small, dull in color, and the whole development was imperfect." And the God who has thought and purpose even about the way a poor insect may struggle out of its cocoon, so that its wings may array themselves with beauty and be strong to bear it through the air, has surely purpose in my existence, and a will for me to carry out.

But how may I discover what is the particular and special will of God for me?

(a) It never can be the will of God for me that I do anything against His character, which is *holy*.

(b) It is surely the will of God for me that I seek to adjust myself with the standard for living He has given in the Divine Exemplar, Jesus Christ.

(c) I may also discover the will of God for me by conscience.

(d) The study of the Scripture will enlighten conscience, and further disclose to me the will of God.

(e) I may also get clue to the will of God for me by the monitions of the Holy Spirit.

(f) I may also discover what may be the will of God for me through my circumstances, through the things set against my hand—*e.g.*, one tells how "Some years ago I was brought in contact with a colored man. He was nothing but a cobbler—he said himself he was not a decent shoemaker, and I can testify to that from some experience of his work. But if not elegantly done, it was thoroughly done, and that was the point. He told me that when he became too old and crippled to work in the field and house, he took to cobbling. I said to him, 'My friend, after this cobbling on earth has done, how about the other world? Have you any hope for a better world?' 'Ah, master,' said he, 'I am nothing, as I told you, but a poor cobbler, but I feel when I sit here and work at my stool, that the good Master is looking at me, and when I take a stitch it is a stitch, and when I put on a heel-tap it is not paper but good leather.'

"It is not the work we do upon earth that makes the whole of life, but the way we do that work—it is the motive. 'Thou, God, seeth me.'"

And now the way of winning delight is to accept this highest, holiest, best, most loving will for me.

And I must do this in two senses.

(a) Passively. I must surrender to that will as I discover it. I must not kick against the goads.

(b) Actively. I must veritably and intensely *do* God's will as I discover it.

Thus the purest, steadiest, deepest delight comes from self-adjustment unto the Divine will.

How can one expect eternal delight who goes into the other world at odds with the will of God ?

EXEGETICAL AND EXPOSITORY SECTION.

The Plan of the Sermon on the Mount.

BY REV. FRANKLIN JOHNSON, OTTAWA, KAN.

In the following pages I shall speak of the Sermon on the Mount as it is recorded in the Gospel by Matthew, because it is presented more fully there than in the Gospel by Luke, who omits several large sections.

To the ordinary reader the Sermon on the Mount appears to be a collection of precious but miscellaneous and disjointed sayings. He discovers no logical connection of its principal parts. He might call it a chaplet of pearls of great price, were it not that the pearls of the chaplet are strung upon a thread and arranged with reference to their relative values, while this sermon seems to have no thread and no special arrangement. He cannot give a reason, for example, why the beatitudes occupy the first position, the discussion of the Old Testament the second, and other matters the third; and he would not have thought the beatitudes misplaced had he found them in the middle of the discourse, or near the close.

It has fared but little better with scholars. Some of them have sought to discover a leading subject under which all the topics of the Sermon on the Mount may be summed up, like Lange, who says that its fundamental idea is "the righteousness of the kingdom of heaven in its relation to that of the Old Testament theocracy." He is not satisfied with this, however, and elsewhere states its fundamental idea as "the exaltation of the humble and the humiliation of the proud." In neither case does he give us any very good account of the distribution of its various sections. We gain no fuller light on

the plan of the sermon if we call it, with Chemnitz, "the address of installation of the apostles into their office," for our Lord does not once mention them. Nor are we aided if we conclude with Rosenmüller that the object of the great Preacher was "to crush the prevalent carnal expectations with reference to the Messiah;" or, with Tholuck, that it was "to exhibit Himself as the Fulfiller of the law, and to enunciate the Magna Charta of His new kingdom." The sermon contains much which cannot be placed under either of these headings. Ewald seeks to arrange it with reference to the sacred number seven; and tells us that there are seven beatitudes, though it is plain to every reader that there are eight; and that the true fulfilling of the law is set forth in seven duties, though it is plain to every reader that there are only six. Delitzsch resorts, with Ewald, to symbolic numbers, but he chooses ten and three, instead of seven, and effects an arrangement of certain parts of the sermon analogous to that of the Ten Commandments, discovering no less than ten beatitudes. It is no wonder that Tholuck calls these efforts of Ewald and Delitzsch "artistic operations of a dubious character." In any case, an arrangement founded on such mathematical considerations would be arbitrary and artificial rather than logical.

Tholuck himself, the ablest of the writers who have devoted a whole book to the Sermon on the Mount, while he condemns many of the connections advanced by others, has but little of his own to offer, but concludes that "the train of thought" in certain places "seems lost." "The blame of this," he adds, "in all probability attaches to the evangelist alone."

He raises the question whether the plan of the sermon in these places has been lost owing to the introduction by the apostle of foreign material, from other discourses of our Lord, in order to amplify this one, or to the dropping out of the connecting links, while the leading points are retained in their original consecutive order; and he inclines to the latter hypothesis. This is to forget one important difference between ancient oratory and the oratory of our own times. The ancient orator seldom used connecting links and formulas of transition from one thought to another. He knew little or nothing of our apparatus of "first," "secondly," and "thirdly," of our "once more," "again," and "still further." The practice of the Jewish orators may be seen in the sermons of the apostles Peter and Paul recorded in the New Testament, in none of which do we find the connections and transitions of thought indicated. The Greek and Roman orators were more indifferent to these conveniences than we are, and Broadus states the case but little too strongly when he says that "the Greek and Roman orators, greatly concerned to make the speech a finished work of art, and often anxious to hide the labor bestowed upon the preparation, made no clearly marked divisions." The early Christian fathers followed these examples; and, indeed, the formal division of the sermon does not appear till the Middle Ages; and many noted preachers at present are seeking to discard it and to return to the primitive custom.

How the ancient orator managed to mark the transitions of thought we do not know; but it may have been by some change of tone or of the speed of utterance, or by a gesture or a pause. The last is often used for the purpose by Bishop Phillips Brooks, and with great success.

Perhaps also the people of the ancient world were better listeners than we are. They did not read much, for books were scarce; but they heard much, and were quick to follow the speaker. If

they were Athenians, they listened to poems and essays in the porches and gardens, and appreciated the finer qualities of the style, which are lost to us unless we scan the page for ourselves; and other peoples possessed something of the same keenness. We cannot say, with Elihu, that "the ear trieth words;" it is the eye that renders this service for us; and the poet himself cannot well judge his own production till he sees it in print. It may be that phrases of transition and connection were not often necessary when the hearers were educated to a much greater quickness of apprehension than we possess, specially if they were aided by such changes of pitch and rapidity, and by such gestures and pauses as the orator could easily use for the purpose.

Thus the connecting links of the Sermon on the Mount have not been lost, for none ever existed, unless the Divine Preacher departed signally from the customs of His age.

It would be very wrong, however, to infer from this absence of connecting links from ancient oratory that it was destitute of method. The orations of Demosthenes and Cicero and the sermons of Peter and Paul are as logical in their arrangement as any treatise of Jonathan Edwards. An attempt has been made to establish a distinction between the oratory of the European and that of the Asiatic as to method. It has been said, in illustration of the Sermon on the Mount, that "a Western speaker's discourse is a systematic structure, or like a chain in which link is firmly knit to link; an Oriental's is like the sky at night, full of innumerable burning points shining forth from a dark background." I do not object to such statements, if it be borne in mind that the stars constitute a system more perfect than the chain. I object to them, however, if they are intended as apologies for any assumed defect of arrangement in the Sermon on the Mount, for its lack of connecting links constitutes no reason whatever to doubt that, though "full of innumerable

burning points," it had a distinct plan.

Nor has the evangelist forgotten any feature of the plan, or confused any of the various sections of which the sermon is composed. All writers on this sermon perceive that the logical connections within each section are preserved with admirable fidelity. Thus the eight beatitudes are not thrown together by chance; every scholar admires the appropriate order of their arrangement; like Meyer, who says that they "form an ingenious and profound harmonious whole."

The section on the Mosaic law and Jewish tradition pursues the order in which we always think of sins, beginning with murder, the greatest; then taking up adultery, the next in gravity; then perjury and profanity, then others which are usually regarded even to-day as bordering on innocency. The Mosaic law is treated in the first four divisions of this section, and afterward in the remaining two, Jewish tradition. Let any minister study the section on worldly care with reference to the preparation of a sermon; he will find that the reasons adduced by our Lord to dissuade us from anxiety and to lead us to trust in God are arranged in an order which he himself may follow in his discourse, to the delight and profit of his people. Tholuck calls attention to the sections from the twelfth verse of the seventh chapter to the close, and observes that "the thoughts are regular and progressive." In short, touch where we may, every section is perceived to be complete and logical within itself. Is it credible that the evangelist should be able to transmit to us with unflinching accuracy these small filaments and interlacings of thought, so minute as to be almost microscopic, and at the same time should forget the logical relations of the sections to one another? Yet Tholuck argues from the logical order of the details of which each section is composed that the sections themselves must once have been connected in a logical order by verbal linkings and

formulas of transition; while at the same time he holds the very apostle who preserved these minor connections "to blame" for letting some of the larger slip from his memory. It is psychologically impossible that the sacred writer should do both these things; the structure of the human mind forbids the supposition.

We shall fail to discover the plan of the Sermon on the Mount so long as we fail to define correctly the character of the production which we study and the purpose of the Speaker who uttered it. If we regard Him as a Monarch delivering a coronation address, or as the Founder of an empire announcing its constitution, or a Lawgiver issuing a second Decalogue from a second Sinai, or the Head of the apostolate giving their commission to the twelve, or a Jewish cabalist stringing together words and phrases according to some occult system of numbers, we shall search in vain, as others have done; and we may even think "the evangelist to blame" for the assumed loss of the connecting links of the discourse. Let us suppose the case of some scholar a thousand years hence reading the "Reply of Webster to Hayne," and believing it to be the Constitution of the United States or an oration arranged in thirteen parts in commemoration of the original thirteen colonies. It needs no argument to show that any such fundamental error would vitiate the whole interpretation and obscure the connections of thought and lead to severe censures of the speaker or of his editors or printers.

We need, therefore, first of all to consider that our Lord was acting on this occasion simply as a Preacher, and was doing what all true preachers do. He announced principles of eternal validity; He uttered truths which shall stand while the world endures, and be good for men of all ages; nor was He ignorant of the far reaching applicability and effect of His words. But chiefly He thought of the multitudes before Him, and engaged in a passionate effort to teach them what manner of persons

they ought to be, and to lead them to the holy and happy life which He portrayed. Thus the Sermon on the Mount is in the strictest sense a sermon, and nothing else, either more or less. If we shall look at it now in the light of this definition, we shall discover its plan without difficulty.

A sermon usually begins with an introductory explanation of a text. Then follow a certain number of propositions derived from the text, and hence closely related to one another with considerations in support of them, or perhaps there is but one proposition with its arguments. Then there is the application to the hearers of the truth thus made clear and cogent. Last of all, there is the appeal, designed to move them to instant action. This is the most common form of the sermon, and may be called typical, though every preacher resorts frequently to other methods. The Sermon on the Mount pursues this plan rigidly with but one exception. As our Lord used no text, He did not open His discourse with exegetical matter, but came at once to the propositions with which He intended to instruct the minds and move the consciences of those who hung upon His lips. Having established these, He plunged into an amazing array of heart-searching applications, and then closed with an appeal of awful power, which must have rolled out over the multitude from the mountain-top as when "seven thunders utter their voices."

Let us now look at this plan more closely.

The propositions with which the great Preacher begins His sermon are the beatitudes. The relation of the beatitudes to the rest of the sermon has always been found most difficult to establish, and Meyer intimates this when he says that the connection "is not to be artificially sought out," as if it could not be discovered in any other manner. To such writers the beatitudes are worthy the place they occupy at the beginning of the sermon for their extreme beauty, rather than for their logical re-

lation to that which follows, like a magnificent pearl laid above others in the casket only because it is fitted to crown them all by its size, its form, and its lustre. But the moment we regard the beatitudes as the fundamental propositions which are applied in the rest of the sermon, their relation to what follows becomes apparent.

I shall proceed now to show that this view of the beatitudes is correct.

The eighth beatitude stands out from the others by reason of certain peculiarities, so that many writers have excluded it from the beatitudes altogether, though it has the same introductory formula with them. The others give emphasis to the inner virtues of poverty of spirit, of mourning in view of sin, of meekness, of hunger and thirst after righteousness, of mercy, of purity of heart, and of the love of peace; while this one looks chiefly at an external condition; it is that of men persecuted on account of their adherence to the practice of such virtues as these. Again, while each of the preceding beatitudes, like the eighth, is supported by a reason, the eighth alone is followed at once by an application, and the applications of the others are reserved for a later moment. The application of the eighth beatitude extends through the sixteenth verse. The reason adduced in support of this beatitude is the fact that those who are its subjects possess a great reward in heaven, such as the ancient prophets have already inherited. In the application of this beatitude our Lord points out the danger that His disciples, intimidated by persecution, will abandon their religion without knowing that they are doing so, and become like salt whose savor is lost. They may accomplish this disaster in two ways: first, by abandoning the conflict with evil, by withdrawing from their fellows, by concealing themselves in the obscure valleys of the earth, instead of continuing to be like "a city set on a hill that cannot be hid;" and secondly, while remaining in active contact with the great world, by shutting within their own

bosoms the light of the Gospel instead of making it conspicuous, like a lamp on the stand, which "shineth unto all that are in the house." In either case they themselves would become corrupted beyond recovery, and would be "good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men." Our Lord afterward commanded His disciples to flee when they were persecuted; but to flee from one city "into another," and not into obscurity and indolence. Nor did He ever recommend silence as a remedy for persecution. His disciples understood Him in this sense: when they were "persecuted in one city, they fled into another;" and "they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word." Thus all His teaching concerning persecution is consonant with the cautions given in this place. If it be asked, now, why the Divine Preacher supplies the eighth beatitude with an immediate application, while He causes the applications of the others to wait a little, we must answer, first, conjecturally, that perhaps His more conspicuous followers already began to feel the stings of persecution, and needed the comfort and warning which such a connected treatment of the subject was adapted to produce. It is evident, in any case, however, that matter designed only for the limited circle of His more conspicuous followers ought to have been disposed of at once, so that the main emphasis of the discourse might fall on those larger portions which were designed for all. Thus the proper impression would be made both upon the limited circle of His more zealous followers, who were already suffering under the beginnings of persecution, and upon the mass of His hearers, whether they were truly His disciples, or were not yet of His kingdom.

There is a logical connection of the eighth beatitude with those which precede it. "If you pursue such virtues as these which I have just named," our Lord would say, "you will be persecuted; but be not dismayed; be of good

cheer, rather, in view of your eternal reward. Beware, also, of losing your real virtue and your ultimate crown of rejoicing by cowardly hiding or cowardly silence."

Having considered the eighth beatitude by itself, because its Divine Author has singled it out from the others, I now turn to them. Each one of them contains a proposition and a reason to support it. For example, the opening proposition is that "the poor in spirit are happy;" and the reason is that they are surpassingly rich, since they possess "the kingdom of heaven." Thus the beginning of this sermon is not unlike that of the typical Christian sermon, in which several closely related propositions are stated and each is sustained by an argument.

The seven beatitudes are so closely related to one another that, in a large sense, they constitute one whole, for the virtues which they commend overlap and blend. "The poor in spirit" are "they that mourn" their sins; they are "the meek;" they are "they that hunger and thirst after righteousness;" they are "the merciful;" they are "the pure in heart;" and they are "the peacemakers." If we shall examine any one of these propositions we shall find that it implies each and all of the others. They are the seven hues of the rainbow, which shade into one another so that the dividing lines cannot be accurately determined, and which, when thrown together, form a glory of pure white light. It would have been possible to find many others equally true, but not easily blended with these. Let us think, for example, of zeal, of courage, of self-control, of knowledge, of obedience to rulers, of love to the husband, the wife, the child, the parent, of care to appear honorable as well as to be honorable. Or let us think of the following beatitudes of Holy Scripture: "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts;" "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven;" "Blessed is he that watch-

eth and keepeth his garments ;" " Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me ;" " Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things which are written therein ;" " Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection ;" " Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest ;" " Blessed is the man that endureth temptation." All virtues, indeed, are related to those of the beatitudes, but not all are so closely related to them that they flow readily into their broad stream and lose themselves in it without producing a ripple of disturbance. It is evident, therefore, that the Preacher made a careful selection of these seven propositions.

Let us now pass onward.

The section which immediately succeeds the application of the eighth beatitude, in which our Lord declares that He came to fulfil the law and the prophets, and to establish on earth a lofty form of righteousness, is in the only position appropriate to it. He had already spoken in a tone of absolute authority. He was just about to add to

the letter of the Mosaic law of divorce a commentary which might seem hostile to it. He was going to set aside altogether several injunctions of the Jewish elders. He was going to speak with the regal voice of God to the end of His discourse, as He had spoken from the beginning. Some might infer, therefore, that He was an enemy of the law and the prophets, and of righteousness in general, a teacher falsely assuming the Messianic dignity, and desirous of commending his pretensions to the world by relaxing the claims of God upon the obedience of men and establishing a reign of license. It was the proper moment, therefore, for Him to explain His real attitude toward the Old Testament, toward Jewish legal tradition, and toward true righteousness. When the criticism was first observed to lift its hostile head in the minds of His hearers was the time to allay it by a clear and precise declaration. It is the rule of oratory to conciliate the audience early in the discourse ; and our Lord placed this irenic statement where all skilful orators would place it.

(To be concluded.)

SOCIOLOGICAL SECTION.

Is the School Problem Solvable ?

By REV. G. F. GREENE, CRANFORD,
N. J.

A WELL-KNOWN Protestant minister has designated our common school system as "the great American fetich." Whatever we may think of the expression, we must agree that the system is deeply rooted in public esteem. No civil institution is so loyally upheld by so many of our people ; none appeals more urgently to their "business and bosoms." A sufficient apology, therefore, for a fresh attempt to discuss any of the difficult questions relating to the adjustment of religion and the State in the public schools may appear in the general interest which attaches to every phase of the subject.

It may be well at the outset to classify parties and views. In so doing we shall listen to a chorus of discordant voices. (1) First, there are those Protestants who believe that the secular and religious instruction of youth should never be divorced ; and who therefore oppose the structure of our school system on the ground that the secular and religious must, according to the genius of our government, be divorced in such a system. They regard the system as essentially and necessarily atheistic, and hence objectionable. The Rev. C. F. Deems, D.D., the distinguished pastor of the Church of the Strangers, of New York, advocates this view. (2) Then there are the leaders of the Roman Catholic Church, who take the same view of the alleged godlessness of our

school system, and likewise prefer a system of denominational schools. Thus Archbishop Corrigan has said: "Denominational schools are, to our mind, the only solution of the question." (3) The next class consists of Protestant secularists who support the existing system, and would entirely exclude from the schools the Bible, and, presumably, all religious instruction, on the ground that the Bible is a sectarian book. The late Samuel T. Spear, D.D., may be taken as a representative of this class. (4) Atheists are the next class, who simply carry the view of Dr. Spear to its logical consequences, and who would expurgate from text-books all references to natural or revealed religion. Thus the School Board of Chicago is said to have rejected the geographies of Dr. Guyot, though they were admitted to be on the whole the best available, on the sole ground that they recognized the existence of God. (5) Another class is composed of Protestants who, while supporting the existing system, distinguish between moral instruction and religious instruction, and would admit the former and exclude the latter. Our national Commissioner of Education, Hon. William T. Harris, is one of this class. (6) Finally, there are Protestants who, while friends of the common school, demand that the Bible be retained in the schools for the twofold reason that it is not a sectarian book, except so far as Christianity is a sect, and that Christianity is interwoven with the innermost life of the American nation. Probably the vast majority of Evangelical Protestants regard this demand as just. Perhaps the ablest presentation of this view which has appeared, at least recently, is an article by the late Professor A. A. Hodge, in the *New Princeton Review* for January, 1887.

We are now prepared to look for light among the clouds which surround the subject. And our first assertion may appear to many a bold one. The public must face the alternative, and there is no other, between the entire with-

drawal of State aid from all schools—thus making their relation to the State the same as that of the churches—and a greater or less interference on the part of the State with sectarian interests. Careful thinking reveals an inconsistency between the existence of the common school system and the principle which is so deeply rooted in the American mind, that with a citizen's religion, or lack of religion, the State cannot justly have to do. The State can avoid the violation of the principle of the absolute separation of Church and State only by keeping its hands off the matter of education altogether. We do not argue for this alternative; and, indeed, we are not prepared to accept, because the multitude does, the dictum "no interference of the State with any man's religion." The rule is, broadly speaking, correct, but it has its limitations. But the difficulty lies at just this point. The majority of the friends and enemies of the common school who have written or spoken upon the subject have wasted their breath through the mistaken assumption that a relation between State and school is attainable which will satisfy the conscience of everybody. Since the days of Jefferson Americans have pretty generally assumed that our civil institutions must not conflict with sectarian concerns. What if it shall appear that this principle, like others, is not without limitations? What if it shall appear that Jeffersonianism, child of eighteenth-century French philosophy, is not justly to be regarded as infallible or final?

Let it be assumed that it is the just function of the State to control the education of the young, and let it also be assumed that the State is to remain absolutely indifferent to the religious or sectarian interests of every class of its citizens, and there is no solution of the school problem that is conceivable. No human ingenuity could invent a coat that would fit a hundred men of different sizes. No more can a system of public instruction be devised which will fit the conscience of a hundred religious

sects. In the nature of things, the education of our youth is bound to affect our moral as well as material interests. It cannot remain a solely secular matter, and wherever the State touches the strings of conscience (in a Jeffersonian commonwealth) there is bound to be discord. Shall the State sustain a common school in which Christian precepts are taught? That course would offend the conscience of Jew and Moslem. Shall it sustain a common school from which Christian precepts and doctrines are studiously excluded? That course would certainly offend the conscience of every true follower of Jesus Christ, who believes in such a thing as a sin of omission, and holds that the schools must be either for Christ or against Him. Shall it permit the Bible in the schools, and place its interpretation in the hands of teachers who are not responsible to any Church? The Roman Catholic conscience is offended by that. There is no road out of this labyrinth. "Non-sectarian" is a term which sounds well to American ears, but in the sense in which it is popularly understood, in any system of schools supported by the State, it is a squaring of the circle, or an "iridescent dream." It is an unattainable result.

I. SHALL THE COMMON SCHOOL BE OVERTHROWN? Shall the State be urged to cut the Gordian knot of the difficulty by the overthrow of State schools altogether? If so, there are two methods of procedure. Either the disestablished schools—if we may so term them—may be upheld wholly by voluntary support, by denominations or individuals, as the churches are; or the State may distribute school funds among the various private or denominational schools. The latter, everybody knows, is the course advocated by the Catholics. It is safe to believe that neither method will ever meet with favor by the mass of Americans. Our common school is apparently a fixture. Nothing else can quite take its place. It opens its doors in a generous, democratic way to all classes, and reflects light into every hid-

den corner and obscure alley of American life. No system of denominational schools could possibly contribute so generously to popular intelligence. It peculiarly befriends the poor, offering the fruits of intelligence freely to all classes. Furthermore, it exercises a particular function in Americanizing the youth of the land; a work of the utmost importance in view of the fact that one of our gravest national evils lies in the enormous annual influx into the land of un-American elements. As was remarked by Beecher, "The children of all nations of the earth go into our common schools and come out Americans." There could hardly be found elsewhere so good a training ground in patriotism for the children of the land as is afforded in the common school. It is probable that the superior fibre in the manhood of New England during the first two centuries of its history was due largely to its common schools. Whether or no these principles are correct, they are evidently believed by a vast majority of the people; and accordingly we may regard the abrogation of the principle of State schools as altogether out of the question. To launch the missiles of opposition against the principle of public instruction is probably destined to be as futile as the celebrated bull of the Pope against the comet.

II. IF THE COMMON SCHOOL BE UPHeld, SHALL IT STAND FOR ATHEISM OR RELIGION? If the common school has come to stay, then, as we have shown, it is impossible for the State to adjust the religious and secular elements in the instruction offered in its schools in such a way as to avoid offence to the conscience of certain classes. Here the State faces an unwelcome fact. At this point it finds itself in a morass, and too often it flounders in the mire. There are two diverging paths which lead out from this point, and one or the other must ultimately be chosen. Neither can lead us out of the territory of an unpleasant conflict with the conscience of good citizens, though one path is the

less of two evils. The two paths open to the State are two possible tendencies; the one is to secularize the schools, the other is to establish them upon an avowed religious basis. It is true that in following the latter course, the State would be likely to offend the atheists and free-thinkers; but it is no less true that in the former case it would offend all faithful Christians. We wonder that it is not more generally seen that there can be no stopping-point short of either a complete secularization of the common schools, or an avowal by the State of Christianity as the true basis of education. Commissioner Harris has repeatedly tried to show the possibility of the schools simply being indifferent to religion—like a grocery store, for example; but with indifferent success. No; the final issue of the matter must be to render the common school either Christ's enemy or Christ's friend.

1. *The Tendency to Secularize the Schools.* In a letter from Commissioner Harris he states that the tendency throughout the States is to distinguish more and more sharply between moral and religious instruction, and to exclude the latter. This tendency has been recently emphasized by the decision of the Supreme Court of Wisconsin, in the case of "Weiss *vs.* the School Board of Edgerton," overruling the decision by Judge Bennett of the Circuit Court, and therein declaring that the Bible is a sectarian book, and hence, under the constitutional provision forbidding sectarian instruction, ruling it out of the public institutions of the State. It is not impossible that this decision, with all that it involves, may become the rule in other States. If so, all references to the Christian religion in all classes of text-books and in oral instruction will, sooner or later, have to follow the Bible—out of the window, provided, of course, that it continue to be the general admission that the position of the State constitutions forbidding "sectarian" instruction is invulnerable. Already, as we have shown, school boards have pronounced against text-books on

the sole ground that they contain references to a Supreme Being. Rev. H. D. Jenkins, D.D., is authority for the statement that an able work on political economy by a college president was rejected by a State superintendent because its opening sentence read, "The source of all wealth is the beneficence of God." Professor Hodge, in the article we have mentioned, says, "For the first time in the world's history, a complete literature is being generated from which all tincture of religion, whether natural or revealed, is expurgated for the education of the youth of a whole nation." But these tendencies are the necessary conclusion of the syllogism of which the major premise is: Everything sectarian should be forbidden in the schools, and the minor premise is: The Bible is a sectarian book. But whatever the ground of the rejection of the Bible, and of all that is involved in such rejection, it is a plain truth that to formally forbid the Bible is to insult the Bible. If the Bible be sectarian, Christianity is a sect, and is put upon a level with Mormonism, Mohammedanism, or Buddhism. The outcome of that conclusion will be a silence in the common school with reference to revealed truth like that of death.

We cannot believe that the multitude of Christian citizens throughout the land will continue to keep silent while this process of dethroning God and religion in the public schools is being gradually accomplished. *Our Day*, in commenting upon the Wisconsin case, truly says: "Make our schools entirely *non-religious—i.e., irreligious*, and they become as unsatisfactory to Protestants as to Catholics. In that case, how long will the system as we now know it survive?" We boldly assert that to secularize the schools is to make them atheistic. *The contention is not about the small amount of time that might be devoted to the reading of the Bible or religious instruction in the schools, but about the reproach put upon Christianity by formally forbidding its sacred Book.* If during certain hours of the

day a child were forbidden to use the name of his mother on the ground that certain of his playmates were taught at home to regard her name as offensive, would he not be bound to regard the fact of such prohibition as an insult to his mother and so to himself? To exclude God from the schools is to deny God in the schools. And the claim that churches and Sunday-schools are the proper sphere for religious instruction is idle when we reflect that thousands of the pupils of the day-schools never enter the Sunday-school, and that if they did they would get but one hour of religious instruction a week as against twenty-five hours a week in the day schools. In short, to refuse religious teaching a place in the public schools is not a compromise between Christians and atheists, but a complete surrender, as has been said a hundred times, of the former to the latter. It is to plunge into the worst form of sectarianism, as the atheists form the narrowest of sects. A wiser teacher than we has declared a compromise between God and Mammon an impossibility. Better a thousand times to have the American common school destroyed root and branch than to have it become the throne of atheism!

There is another line of attack against the secularization of the common school. We deny that a lofty and pure morality can be enforced without the sanctions of religion, and that secular instruction can fit a man for good citizenship unless supplemented by instruction in the primary principles of the Christian faith. A man is not necessarily nor presumptively more useful to the State for knowing the "three R's." Mere intelligence is as apt to fit a man for a bank robber as a college president. Ignorance is not so much to be feared by society as badness. The country's most dangerous foes have been educated but unprincipled men—for example, Arnold and Burr. Says the *Churchman*, "It is noteworthy, though it is perfectly natural, that absconding clerks and other defaulters are mostly men who have received such learning as they

possess from the public schools. That the public schools do turn out a large number of smart men is indisputable, but their neglect of moral teaching and training, which is confessed by their best friends, makes them quite as likely to turn out smart rogues as competent citizens." On the other hand, let us listen to the testimony of E. Sartorius, a German resident of Mexico, about the morals of an illiterate people. He says: "The people in general are good, acute, dexterous, laborious, ingenious, and disposed to any improvement. When it is considered how little has been done or is doing to give them an adequate moral and intellectual education, we cannot avoid being surprised at the good fund of probity that prevails among all classes." Nor is it true that crime is less common in those portions of the Union in which the common school flourishes best. We have been at the pains to obtain some suggestive figures from the tenth census. Comparing, for example the States of Massachusetts and New York with South Carolina and New Mexico, we find that the percentage of the population of those who cannot read is in Massachusetts, 5.3; in New York, 4.2; while in South Carolina it is 48.2; and in New Mexico, 60.2. It is evident that the common school is more flourishing in the two Northern States than in the two Southern ones. But notice: in Massachusetts the criminals are returned as about 2 to the thousand, in New York 1.2 to the thousand; while in South Carolina they are only $\frac{6}{10}$ of 1 to the thousand, and in New Mexico $\frac{3}{10}$ of 1 to the thousand. Certainly, if these facts prove anything, they show that crime does not necessarily prevail in direct proportion to illiteracy.

In view of all this, how shall we characterize the cant of those who describe our common schools as the "palladium of our liberties," while, at the same time, they urge the removal from them of precisely those elements which can alone render them a safe training place for character? Surely "the right path

of a virtuous and noble education," of which Milton speaks, is not in the direction of State schools where the Bible and God have no dwelling-place.

2. We consider, finally, the proposition to have Christian instruction in the common schools, and of such a form as will suit the majority in the State, whether it be regarded as sectarian instruction or not. But the State constitutions forbid sectarian instruction. Well, then, amend those constitutions, if the majority so will. If we are adherents of State education, and oppose the secularization of the schools, the rule of the majority is the only course open to us. And why should not the majority of each State, or, perhaps, of each school district, rule in this matter as well as any other? The majority wants the common school; very well, let us have it. The majority, presumably, want the Bible left in the schools, whether it be sectarian or not; why should the soul of the majority at this point be disquieted and their will weakened by the spectre named "No sectarianism in the schools"?

Either the moral convictions of the weaker party must give way to the stronger, or those of the stronger to the weaker. If the much-abused phrase "liberty of conscience" stand in the way of the moral convictions of the majority, then let it be frankly admitted that, under certain circumstances, the phrase is a snare and delusion. Admit with Wendell Phillips, that "One on God's side makes a majority;" that a human majority is often wrong; and that majority rule, as Dr. Bushnell claimed, is at best a clumsy expedient for securing good government. The fact remains that majority rule is the only expedient for securing good government Americans have; and if we deny its authority in government with respect to any question of public interest, we are necessarily at sea concerning the disposal of that question. With the individual's thinking and private morals the State has nothing to do; but the question of the religious quality of our

school system, involving the question of the Bible in the schools, is a matter of public concern, affecting the material as well as moral interests of the commonwealth, as truly as is the question of the tariff or the Louisiana lottery, and is as justly within the sphere of popular franchise. We do not forget that this argument cuts both ways. It is conceivable that a majority of a State might decide against the recognition of God and His Word in the schools. Very well; in that case, though the verdict rendered would be false, we should have appealed to the right tribunal. Hitherto it seems to have been generally assumed that the question before us is not to be settled by the popular will at all, but by reference to this vague principle of "religious liberty" or "non-sectarianism."

This entire question, in other words, lies within the province of the State for practical settlement. State and Church will interfere no more by the former legislating in favor of religious instruction in the schools than by legislating against it. The majority has the same moral right to declare for the Bible in the schools as to forbid it. In the United States all strictly political questions are, without question, decided by the State. Questions like the Tariff, the Free Coinage of Silver, and Civil Service Reform are, as a matter of course, decided by the State. It is understood that where questions affecting religion are not involved in civil relations, they are not to be tried before the bar of the State or nation, but are to be left to the judgment of individuals or parties who are particularly interested in them. Thus, for example, in no sense is the State, as a State, interested in the revision of a creed or in the theology of a sect; and there is no reason why an attempt should be made to determine either by civil legislation. When, however, religious or moral questions become involved in civil relations, they must, according to the genius of our government, be settled by civil processes. Thus slavery was primarily a

moral issue; but when it became a symptom of the social and political health of the nation, it justly became an issue for the majority of the people, irrespective of section or class, to pass judgment upon. As another illustration, whatever affects taxation may be legitimately determined by the State; consequently the taxation of church property may properly be decided by the State, though the acquirement and use of such property may be strictly a religious and private matter. Questions of this class, in which civil and religious issues are vitally united, are continually presenting themselves for settlement by the State. Mormonism is a religion; but it is generally understood that it is the province of the State to pass judgment upon that phase of the system which affects the material and moral welfare of society at large. Moreover, in the settlement of these semi-religious, semi-civil issues, the State bears a responsibility which it cannot avoid. In dealing with these issues it is not only its right, but also its duty, to serve the highest interests of the people with whatever consequences to the minority. The State may not say, "Apart from religion there is nothing to show that a lottery is wrong *per se*; therefore the Christians of the land must settle the lottery question for themselves. And as Mormonism is a religion, polygamy must be left to the churches and ministers." The State is morally bound to give its verdict upon such issues. Now apply the foregoing principles to the question of religious instruction in the common schools. As the schools are a civil institution, any question whatever relating to their character may be properly determined by the State or the majority of the people. Certainly the State will no more, in principle, interfere with the religious convictions of any class by permitting instruction in the leading doctrines and precepts of Christianity in the schools than it does in providing that the oath be ordinarily taken upon the Bible in courts of justice. Again, it is hard to see in what

respect the State has any more the moral right to compel its citizens, *volens volens*, by compulsory school laws, to send their children to school, than to compel those children to learn such fundamental truths as the existence of God, the authority of Divine law, the law of conscience, and the immortality of the soul.

Upon this basis, then, and this only, can the school problem be solved. No abstract principle relating to the philosophy of government ought to interfere with the expression of the popular mind upon the question. Let the issue be squarely met. If it appear that the majority of Americans are avowed atheists or their friends, let it be decided that God and His Word shall be kept out of the schools. But if it appear that the majority of Americans are Christians, let the schools rest upon a nominal and real Christian foundation. Let the world know by our decision whether we consider ourselves a pagan or a Christian people. Let the question turn upon that of the friendliness or enmity of the nation to the Christian faith.

We shall conclude this paper with a few observations upon the question whether the Bible be a sectarian book. The constitution of Wisconsin (Art. 10, Sec. 3) provides that "The Legislature shall provide by law for the establishment of district schools . . . and no sectarian instruction shall be allowed therein." We presume that the constitutions of all of the States contain similar provisions. The line of argument we have just concluded is to the effect that even if the decision of the Supreme Court of Wisconsin be accepted as conclusive, the majority of the people have a moral right to amend the sections of the State constitutions forbidding sectarian instruction. If the Bible be sectarian, then the State constitutions forbidding sectarian instruction ought promptly to become the object of attack of Christian citizenship. But is the decision of the Supreme Court of Wisconsin just? In the five other States

where the issue has been raised, the courts have decided that the Bible does not fall within the scope of the term sectarian. If Christianity is to be regarded as a sect, then, of course, the Bible is sectarian. But we hardly need to argue that Christianity is not to be regarded by Americans as a sect. It is our national religion and the basis of the common law of the land. It is enough to support this claim to state that it was the view of Webster, and of Chief Justice Story. These are Story's words: "There has never been a period in which the common law did not recognize Christianity as lying at its foundation." Professor Dwight, recently, and for many years professor in the Columbia Law School, has advanced the same view: "It is well settled by the decisions of the courts of the leading States of the Union that Christianity is a part of the common law of the State." If Christianity be our national religion, and not a sect, how about the sectarianism of that Divine revelation which is its soul and life? The written opinion of Judge Lyon, in the decision of the Supreme Court of Wisconsin, to which we have alluded, sets forth the admission that the most of the contents of the Bible is unsectarian matter; while it claims that because certain portions of it are, in the opinion of the court, sectarian, it must be considered as sectarian on the whole. W. A. McAtee, D.D., in his pamphlet "Must the Bible Go?" demolishes this reasoning by applying similar logic to Shakespeare. "Major premise: All immoral teaching is forbidden by law in the public schools. Minor premise: Some parts of Shakespeare's plays are immoral. Therefore the use of Shakespeare's plays as a whole is forbidden in the public schools." Those of us who believe that the Bible was inspired of God will hardly be disposed even to admit that any parts of it are sectarian. Because certain parts of it are the subjects of controversy, it does not follow that those parts are sectarian. God's Word is not to blame for the con-

troversies of men concerning its interpretation.

But there remains the question concerning the sectarianism of the versions of the Bible. Admitting that the Bible is accepted by all Christians, is not the King James version or the Douay version a sectarian book? A few words will suffice to answer this query. The King James version, based as it is on the Wycliffe version, which is of a date prior to the Reformation, can hardly be called, by Christians, a sectarian version. The spirit in which it was conceived and created was broadly Catholic. Dr. Cheever quotes Dr. Alexander Geddes, an ecclesiastic of the Romish Church, as saying of this version that it is "of all versions the most excellent for accuracy, fidelity, and the strictest attention to the letter of the text." But we shall not quarrel with the friends of any version. We personally should be content to have the Douay version used in the schools, if that would satisfy our Catholic friends. Only it is to be remembered that *some* version must be used. We should advocate saying to all classes of Christians, "Come, let us reach a friendly agreement as to what version of the Bible shall be used in the schools." If the Catholics refuse to consider the matter with us, the State would doubtless be warranted in continuing to authorize the use of the King James Version until some other is agreed upon. We cannot, however, see the wisdom of the State giving encouragement to the dog-in-the-manger policy of the Catholic Church, which now says in effect, "We do not wish the Douay Version used in the common school, neither shall we permit the community, if we can help it, to use any other." Stripped of all confusing verbiage, the vital question, the answer to which must determine whether or no the Bible be sectarian, is simply this: Is the Bible, as it came from God, a book for a sect, or is it the Divine law for the race? Only on the assumption that we are not a Christian nation can

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the sectarianism of God's Word be demonstrated.

We are not without hope that all classes of Americans who honor the name *Christian*, whatever their denominations or creeds, may come to some definite agreement looking to religious instruction in the schools, as against those who are the enemies of the Christian faith and who would have the public schools of the land godless and irreligious. Christian citizens, in relation to this question, may hardly hope to attain, under human conditions, to the ideal Waller sang about :

"Could we forbear dispute and practise love,
We should agree as angels do above."

But possibly, when all who honor Christ—Catholics and Protestants—become convinced that the common school must, in some form, be accepted, they will get together, and, in a spirit of Christian concession and compromise, decide upon some common ground of attack against the secularizing or atheistic tendencies in public education, which are now so painfully evident. " 'Tis a consummation devoutly to be wished."

MISCELLANEOUS SECTION.

Long Pastorates.

By JOHN D. WELLS, D.D., BROOKLYN,
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WITH the lapse of time there has been a change as to the length of pastorates. In the M. E. Church alone have they become longer, extending, in rare cases, to five years. Perhaps the average in other portions of the Church is not greater. It has been seriously questioned whether this or some other limit would not be better than the present liberty of pastors and churches to please themselves. Certainly the restlessness of ministers and people, resulting so largely in the loose relation of stated supply, is to be regretted, and, if possible, corrected. In many cases, it is true, lasting relations are impossible; and the installation of ministers, to be followed by the action of Presbytery or other ecclesiastical bodies, in loosing the bonds formed but a little while before, would be unwise. On the other hand, however, there are brethren serving as stated supplies who decline installation,

or are not allowed by the people to ask for it, though all the circumstances and interests of both parties demand the closer relation.

As to our present subject, it is in place to say at once that long pastorates are exceptional. The conditions making them possible and desirable do not often exist, and when they do they cannot be immediately recognized. No one can forecast the future so surely as to certify the people that their young pastor's health will bear the strain of long service, or that the Master may not make it perfectly clear to him and to them that He calls His servant to work, for which he has exceptional qualifications, in some other field. Nor can he be sure in regard to his people that he shall not find some barrier of discontent or difficulty beyond which he cannot pass.

So, too, I think that long pastorates are, of necessity, a surprise to ministers and people. Even when the early months or years of their union have passed, and all has gone well, there may be some unlooked-for trouble in Church or State regarding which pastor and people, or some of the people, have different views, and there is at least a ripple of discontent.

Happy the minister and people who,

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having tried each other in the intimacy of their sacred relation, and found how much they are to each other, agree to differ so long as opinions held, and in proper places announced, do not violate the covenant to which they have severally set their hand and seal. Having passed such a crisis without the loss of mutual respect and love, they are bound to each other with a triple cord that cannot be easily broken.

Supposing the conditions favorable, and the right men in the right places, I believe that long pastorates are best for ministers. They furnish the stimulus of necessity for continuous study of the Word. The solemn charge to every pastor is "Preach the Word," "Be instant in season and out of season." This we cannot do with fidelity to the Master and those whom He intrusts to our care without constantly searching the Scriptures. We must rightly divide the Word of truth, that we may give to every one his portion in due season. Many of our people are teachers of others. We must help them in their work. Christ is an endless study. The truths that centre in His Person, and offices, and redemptive work, and the application of redemption to individual sinners by the Holy Spirit, with the love of God that gave His Son to the world, gather about themselves all other truths of revelation; and the life of no man is long enough to search them all out, and proclaim them to his fellows.

If there is a temptation in the frequent, or even occasional, change of pastoral relations to make use of old preparation for the pulpit, and to rest from the earnest and comprehensive study of the Word, then is it better for a minister to be kept in one place, and hold fast to the work of searching the Scriptures for his own sanctification and joy, as well as for the edifying of the body of Christ and the saving of souls.

So, too, in long pastorates we become acquainted with individuals and families. We gain the same advantage in relation to their spiritual growth and health that physicians, who grow old

in the places that knew them in early life, have in relation to successive generations of their patients. For there are family traits and tendencies in reference to God and the salvation that is in Christ Jesus as truly as there are constitutional and inherited tendencies of body with reference to disease. Heredity must be recognized in both cases. The pastor who has married those that he baptized in infancy, and baptized their offspring too, has great advantages in caring for the souls of all these generations. And if blessed in receiving few or many to the communion of saints on confession of Christ, he is better qualified to watch over them in the Lord than a stranger can be.

It may be said, further, that influence for good within and beyond the limits of one's own congregation is cumulative. It is like the growth of God's trees. They can be transplanted when young; but fruitage is hindered and even destroyed by frequent uprooting. Not as pastor and preacher only does a minister of Christ act with power upon those with whom he has to do. As the head of the household; as the father of children that associate familiarly with other children; as a citizen; as a man among men—in all the relations and intimacies of life, he may and should incarnate the Word of God in his own person, and exemplify in his character and life the truths that he proclaims from the pulpit. So in society, in country, village, or city, as well as in parish and the widest of his ecclesiastical relations, he is the stronger man for abiding in his place even to old age.

The limits of this paper forbid my dwelling on the comforts of long pastorates to ministers and their families.

I pass at once to the benefits of long pastorates to congregations.

They are saved from the perils of frequent changes. Even in the M. E. Church, where pastors are assigned by the bishops, there is a recognition of danger to the peace and prosperity of churches. How much greater the danger when all the excitement of having

candidates and making choice of one, it may be, out of many, by a popular vote, cannot be avoided. If the intervals between the dissolution of old relations and the forming of new ones grow to months and even years, as sometimes they do, the people are apt to become like sheep without a shepherd. They wander from their places, and may be scattered abroad, not to be gathered again. The sick and sorrowful are left without the care and consolation which they so much need, and strangers are called in to bury the dead. It is a great advantage and joy to any people to have the instructive and pastoral service of every kind of the same minister many years in succession. He is gladly their servant for Christ's sake. If true to his Master, he cannot be untrue to them. His influence for good grows as the years of his ministry are multiplied. It reaches them as individuals, families, and an organized body. It is inseparable from his teaching and his life. It is personal and official. He marries their young men and maidens, baptizes their infants or adults, or both, and buries their dead. One generation goes and another comes, and he is a living link between them. Through his personal ministry children are kept mindful of what their parents were and did before they were old enough to know how much God gave them in their birth and nurture of godly mothers and fathers.

In a wider view, churches are in some sense represented by their pastors, and come to larger influence in their own denominations and in the world of men because the ministers that serve them decades and scores of years are all the while, and even unconsciously to themselves, adding to their influence. And to this statement should be added another equally true—to wit, that people who hold fast to their pastors for many years do, in that way, give powerful testimony that they were assigned to them by the Shepherd and Bishop of Souls, and that they hold them dear for the Master's sake. Hence there result

ideal pastoral relations, and the world is compelled to recognize the revealed and momentous truth that our Ascended Lord gives pastors, evangelists, and teachers to His Church now as surely as in earlier days He gave apostles and prophets. I can add only this, that churches with long pastorates are most likely to get a strong hold upon the large work of their own denominations for the saving of souls at home and abroad, and acting intelligently and earnestly under the great commission to make disciples of all the nations, they have a blessed fulfilment of the Saviour's promise: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Falsehoods About Convent Life—The Truth.

BY M. F. CUSACK (THE NUN OF KENMARE).

THE subject of convent life has all the attraction which human nature ever finds in any investigation of the hidden and mysterious. However Rome may require that the affairs of convents should be concealed from the public, for reasons which will be explained later, it may be doubted if she has acted wisely, even for her own interests. It is naturally supposed that there must be crime where there is secrecy, and probably the supposition is not altogether ill founded. It has been very much to the advantage of Rome, and very much to the injury of the cause of truth, that lectures on convent life have been given and books on convent life have been written by persons who were simply impostors. I know myself of several such cases, and of one which has been notorious. Such persons, not having any personal knowledge of what goes on in a convent, had to draw on their imagination, and as they found that the more sensational their narratives were the better they paid, the agony was piled up without the least regard for truth. The result has been disastrous in more ways than one.

I have found persons, from whom better things would have been expected, who actually supported these impostors after they had been proved to be such, and, instead of repudiating the wild romances which they had imposed on the public, they seemed to consider it a personal insult if one attempted to tell the simple truth. Others again, finding that they had been imposed upon, declared that they would have nothing more to do with exposures of evil, and so the cause of truth has been seriously injured. It is difficult to tell which were the most unreasonable, those who disbelieved everything because they had once been deceived, or those who believed what was false because it fitted in with their preconceived ideas of convent life.

That very great evils do exist at the present day in convents I know; that some evils do not exist which were in existence in past ages I know also—I write for those who desire truth, and only truth.

I must admit that I have often felt indignant when persons who have had absolutely no means of knowing what convent life is, except from the lurid narratives of impostors, have disbelieved my statements. It was evident to me that they wished the evils of which they had heard to be true, instead of rejoicing that they were not true. From this state of mind serious evil must result. Those who insist on believing what is false are utterly indifferent to the most serious evils, presumably because they are not of a sensational character. Yet I know these evils to exist, and the consequences of them must eventually be disastrous to this country.

The evil which these adventuresses denounce is one which does not exist now except in their own imaginations. There is no immorality in convents. Of course there may be from time to time—and I know there are—cases in which a sister may be tempted by a priest, but such cases are rare indeed. I do not, however, put this to the credit of Rome; I put it to the credit of the Gospel light

which protects this country, even where it is not allowed to shine in all its brightness. I doubt if even the most devout Protestants fully realize the power of an open Bible; if they did, they would be more earnest in protecting this country from the danger of having it under the control of a Church which forbids the reading of the Bible.

And here we have the first evil of convent education. The whole subject of convent life, if treated as I would wish to treat it, would require far more space than can be given in a magazine. But there are two points which should be noted. In considering the evils of convent life, we have first to consider the evils which exist in convents as far as the sisters are concerned; and next the evils which result from the education given in convents. I ask, what can be expected from a system which is founded on the word of man, and not on the Word of God?

I ask, what can be expected from a system which holds up a woman as a Saviour? It is true that Rome denies this, but unfortunately the truthfulness of Rome is far from being the truthfulness of Christianity. To the inquiring Protestant the answer is always the same when a question is asked about Roman Catholic devotion to Mary. It is said, "We do not worship her; we only ask her prayers." And yet every child taught in a Roman Catholic convent or in any Roman Catholic institution is taught this prayer as one to be used daily: "Sweet heart of Mary, be my salvation." No words could be plainer. And, furthermore, this worship of Mary and this praying to her for a salvation is endorsed by the Church in the strongest way possible, for an "indulgence" is attached to the saying of this prayer. I might quote many such prayers, and I might show that the devotion of the scapular, authorized by many popes, is simply putting Mary in the very plainest language in the place of Christ.

But while I can say that there is no immorality in convents in the present

day, at least in those countries with which I am familiar, I know from the historical records of the Church of Rome herself that immorality was rife in convents in the Middle Ages, and so rife that Rome had to legislate to prevent it. Nor, I believe, did it cease until after the Reformation, when Gospel light shed its happy influence even into the dark places of Romanism. But there are other evils than immorality which are but too common in convents. The sisters are, as a rule, most unhappy. It is true that you will sometimes see a young sister, who is not yet, inured to the trials of her life, who appears to you to be happy; but look at those who have been years in convents. They are silent, for speech would be useless. It is true that the sister who complains in this nineteenth century cannot be cast into the dungeons of the Inquisition to repent her folly, but there are sufferings which can be inflicted of which the world knows very little. Her friends would not interfere, for they dare not. It is supposed that if a sister has any fault to find with her so-called "holy state," that the blame is hers and hers alone. Her family would consider it the greatest disgrace which could be inflicted on them if she left the life which she has chosen, whatever may be their private opinion as to her troubles. She is quite as much the victim of Rome as if she lived in an age when Rome could punish her publicly.

Then, I have found again and again that the sisters were utterly neglectful of the children in their charge. Their education is neglected; and even within the last few years a few of the bishops, alarmed at the demands made by Catholic parents for better education, have made some efforts to have the sisters themselves better taught before they attempted to teach others. But if there were no public schools, it is a matter of certainty that Rome would trouble herself very little about the education of the young. The state of education, or,

rather, the absence of it in all countries where Rome has had control should be sufficient proof of her aversion to the education of her people.

Rome has had unlimited funds and unlimited power placed in her hands in Ireland during the last few years, and yet the recent elections have proved that education has been miserably neglected. It has also proved that this is to the advantage of Rome, for an educated population would never have permitted what has been done there to-day, when the priests (who never interfere in politics) have driven the voters like sheep to the polls and made them vote as they pleased.

Nor is the physical education of children in convent school of any higher character than the mental culture. Of course the sisters who have in charge the education of the higher classes of society are obliged to do better in this respect than those who care for the poor. But surely it needs only to study the morals and the daily life of the middle and lower classes in this very city to see what is the fruit of the education of sisters and priests. Rome has had the education of the middle classes and of the poor of this city for years, and what is their condition to-day?

The truth about convent life is that it does not promote either the temporal or spiritual well-being of those who are concerned in it. And the cause is, that the life is unscriptural and the teaching is not the teaching of Christ.

EVEN the exercise of charity is often a snare to us. It calls us to certain occupations that dissipate the mind, and that may degenerate into mere amusement. It is for this reason that St. Chrysostom says that nothing is so important as to keep an exact proportion between the interior source of virtue and the external practice of it; else, like the foolish virgins, we shall find that the oil in our lamps is exhausted when the Bridegroom comes.—*Fénelon.*

PREACHERS EXCHANGING VIEWS.

Conference, Not Criticism—Not a Review Section—Not Discussions, but Experiences and Suggestions.

The Sphere of the Pulpit.

In a recent number of the REVIEW a writer on "The Pulpit and Politics" advances the idea that the sphere of the pulpit is far larger than that which it usually occupies. He says that it does not exist for the sole purpose of saving men, but that it must also interfere in political affairs, if I understood the brother aright, whenever it may be necessary in the interest of morals and the Church to influence national affairs. And he sustains his position by a reference to the Old Testament prophet and his mission.

But we are too apt to forget the state of things when the stern old prophet thus guided the ship of state. For the only government then was the theocracy, and every Jew in the nation was also a member of the Church. And over the Church all of the prophetic authority was exerted. The only way in which God made His government known was by a national government. If it were the same now we should have a union of Church and State, that they who govern the Church might govern the State also. But I do not think that even the most zealous for reform would be ready for that.

Let us now see, if we can, what the mission of the Church really is.

"Go ye . . . and preach the Gospel" is the command. And I do not find it anywhere enlarged. Even Christ Himself refused to interfere in a case where there was without doubt a moral question involved—viz., that of property rights (Luke xii. 13, 14). The kingdom to which we belong is not of this world. And what right has the Church to interfere with matters outside her own bounds? What right has she to control in any degree those who are not her members?

The Master commands submission to

Himself before He requires submission to His Church.

But when a minister stands in his pulpit and urges a political measure, is he not using the sacred desk as a means and his members as instruments to force his views on those outside the Church?

Now, doubtless, it is interesting to him as a citizen that such reforms should be made. Then let him go *as a citizen* to his fellow-citizens and urge them on an equal footing, and not prostitute the sacred desk to such a use. What right has he to use his vantage ground as a minister of Christ for his purposes as a citizen of an earthly country?

It might be well for the State if she adopted many reforms that might be urged by the pulpit. But has the ministry time to turn aside, or the commission either, from the preaching of the Gospel when souls are crying for it and dying for lack of it? Is not its truest influence and power in converting sinners instead of passing laws to make them stop sinning?

But some one will say, "Has not the Church the right to forbid crime?" If you mean in her members, yes. In the world she may condemn sin, for she is the echo of God's voice of condemnation. She may threaten God's judgment against all sin, but not inflict her own. God does not force men to abstain from sin. Why should His Church? Is she wiser or stronger than He?

Compulsion is a thing unknown in the spiritual world. Christ does not use it, nor does He give His Church the right. She may plead that she has the right to instruct her own voters in their individual duty, and to a certain extent she may. She may teach them to use all their privileges in the fear of God. She may tell them that they have no right by their votes to force any one to

sin. But does it always follow that she may tell them for her sake to force men not to commit crime?

No doubt the ministers of this country are well educated and intelligent. But are they authorities on "social questions, sanitary matters, temperance, labor, the condition of women, slavery, the nature of government, responsibility to law, the right of the majority, how far the minority may yield to the majority, health, the entire list"? This list is taken verbatim from a quotation from Wendell Phillips as giving the sphere of the pulpit. Of course any man may have an opinion on some or all of these subjects; but any other man, claiming to be an authority, a teacher of all, would be called, in medicine, a quack.

But, forsooth, the modern minister must train the community in all, for it is his business to teach everything relating to morals or that has a moral side. And where will it stop? For there are few if any political questions that have not. It seems to me that he is in danger of occupying the ridiculous position in which a Western church court recently placed itself by recommending a certain remedy for a certain so-called disease—viz., the Keeley cure for drunkenness. They knew as much about it as ordinary men, perhaps, but not a whit more. Still their action was doubtless very useful to Dr. Keeley. But if the cure should prove comparatively worthless, as many reputable physicians think, all their good intentions and paper would be worse than wasted.

We would not have the Church shirk any duty or prove faithless to any trust. Better obloquy and persecution than that. But better right than obloquy. If any one desires obloquy for its own sake, or for fighting for great reforms, he may have it; for he is a citizen, even though a minister. But let him be careful how he drags the Church of God where God never meant it to go. Paul was indeed called "mad;" but it was not for preaching politics, but for be-

lieving the heavenly vision. It sometimes takes as great courage to stop as it does to go on. We may well be willing to be reproached for the cause of Christ, but not for tearing His Church asunder on minor questions, or for dragging her pure garments into the mire of a political, even though semi-moral strife.

W. M. L.

DEER PARK, MO.

"None."

MR. DE SPELDER thinks that it is quite correct to use this word as a plural (see "The Little Rift," in the June HOMILETIC REVIEW). In support of his opinion he quotes passages from Blair, Milton, Byron, and Young, in which it is so used.

In opposition to these great names, I maintain that it is the very height of absurdity to use "none" as a plural when it is the subject of a verb. "None" is merely a contraction of "no one" and "not one." Well, let us make the following changes on the passages quoted by Mr. De Spelder, and hear how they sound: "Not one of their productions *are* extant." "In at this gate no one *pass*." "No one *are* so desolate," etc. "No one *think*," etc.

Our Authorized Version of the Bible is a specimen of good English. Well, in it "none," when it is the subject of a verb, is, without one exception, a singular. Of course, when such a verb as "can" or "ought" follows, this use of it is not seen, for it cannot be, but it is in every other case. Here are a few examples: "There *is* none besides Me." "None *hindereth*." "None shall want *her* mate." "None *is* good." "None of them *is* lost." "None of us *liveth* to *himself*." In Ps. xiv. 3, liii. 3, and Rom. iii. 12, we read: "There *is* none that *doeth* good, no, not one." This proves that, as I have already stated, "none" is a contraction of "no one" and "not one." It is the word by which the Greek ones *medeis* and *oudeis*, "not even one," are always translated in the Authorized Version.

Sometimes "none" is used to qualify "other." In that case, it is both singular and plural. For example: "There is none other name." "None other things than those." This expression is now out of date. We say merely, "no other."

We often use the word "one" in the sense of "a man," or "a person," as, for example, "One ought always to speak the truth." In broad Scotch, such an expression as this is used: "Gin a body meet a body." But the word "body" is not so used in elegant English. It is, however, used there in connection with the word "no." We say, "No one," "no man," "no person," or "nobody," "likes to be slandered." Here, each of these words is a singular as the verb shows. It would be bad grammar to say "like." If, then, instead of either of them we use the word "none," we must make it, also, a singular.

In Ps. xlix. 7 we read: "None . . . can by any means redeem *his* brother." The Hebrew is *ish lo*, "a man not, no man." In Isaiah xxxiv. 16—already quoted—we read, "None shall want *her* mate." The Hebrew is *ishshah lo*, "a woman not, no woman."

T. FENWICK.

WOODBIDGE, ONT.

"The Septuagint and Old Testament Quotations."

In the July HOMILETIC, Dr. Ludlow discusses "Inspiration," basing his argument against the verbalists on the prevailing use of the Septuagint in New Testament writers and the early Church. It does not seem to me that it affects the discussion.

He asks: "Is not a method of dealing with the Scriptures which was satisfactory to the founders of the Church in teaching religious doctrine good enough for us?" No verbalist will hesitate to admit that it is. But what was that method? So far as illustrated by the learned doctor's paper it was the method now and always in vogue with

all Christian teachers—namely, that of using, in popular discourse, the popular version, the accuracy of which is not at the moment in question. That a writer uses a common version, even one so inexact as the Douay, is no evidence that he is not a verbalist. But were the Church to admit versions and paraphrases as "good enough" where exact and scientific expressions of doctrine are demanded in the critical discussions now forced upon her, the confusion of tongues would be worse confounded.

Before these quotations can be arrayed against the theory of verbal inspiration it must be shown that in critical discussion the Lord and His inspired apostles would not have fallen back on the *ipsissima verba* of a Divine original. Meanwhile the "common mind" will continue to think that Christ and His penmen would have stood with Athanasius against the world for "homoousios" as against "homoiousios," and have settled the question by an appeal to the only infallible rule of faith, a verbally inspired Scripture.

J. H. SAMMIS.

RED WING, MINN.

How Shall We Judge?

In the July number of the REVIEW the question of amusements is discussed on the basis of absolute right and wrong. It is not my purpose to refute this admirable article, but to suggest that such a question of ethics cannot fairly be judged from the basis of right and wrong *per se*. A higher criterion than that of mere objective right and wrong is needed.

That the question is one of individual judgment no one will deny; but in making the decision, if one would be absolutely certain of the right, he must view it both subjectively and objectively. What will be the effect of indulgence on myself? What will be its effect on others?

The doubtful amusements are few in

number, while there are many sources of amusement and recreation toward which the attitude of all Christian people is unequivocally favorable. What, then, can be the motive that would lead a true Christian to cast behind his back all those forms of amusement universally acknowledged to be innocent in themselves and to clamor for what is of doubtful sanction? Certainly not the need of recreation. Is it not, then, much the same as that of the child who cries for the flower that grows beyond his reach, though a hundred are blooming at his feet?

In individual conduct one position—that of abstinence—is unquestionably no violation of any rule of right, while we cannot deny that the position of indulgence is questioned. Can one indulge in uncertainties in ethics without weakening his force of character, blunting his conscience, and warping his moral judgment, thus unfitting him for the highest usefulness in the cause of Christ? Can the Church or the indi-

viduals that compose it afford to lower the standard from a position of absolute certainty to one of doubt for fear of being termed "narrow"?

Moreover, we have not yet an ideal society. The "weak brother" of whom Paul speaks still lives, and needs the condescending charity of those who are strong. The question is that of "conscience . . . not thine own, but of the other" (1 Cor. x. 29). By knowingly trampling under feet the weak conscience of a brother, or by thus giving occasion of stumbling to an inquirer, even though he be narrow-minded, we forsake the law of love and break Christ's great commandment. This is the criterion of judgment that Christ has established, and we cannot make another without lowering the standard that He has given us. What, then, shall be our attitude toward a useless thing that hinders spiritual growth and violates the law of Christ?

W. L. NICKERSON.

DOVER, ME.

EDITORIAL SECTION.

LIVING ISSUES FOR PULPIT TREATMENT.

Reform and Revival.

Make ye ready the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.—Luke iii. 4-6.

THIS the message of the voice crying in the wilderness. For centuries that message had stood in the book of the prophet Isaiah, but not till now had he come to whom it was assigned to sound it forth. So wonderful are the Divine arrangements and adjustments looking to the far off events that constitute opportunities. Now was arrived the fullness of times for which the preparation had been made ages before. The voice

was ready for the sounding out of the message; the world ready for the hearing of it. That world readiness was the readiness of despair consequent upon unprecedented degradation. Never had immorality been so universally regnant; never had darkness so gross enveloped the people.

"On the ladder of God which upward leads,

The steps of progress are human needs.

For His judgments still are a mighty deep,

And the eyes of His providence never sleep;

When the night is darkest He gives the morn;

When the famine is sorest, the wine and corn."

Such has ever been God's way of working. When the earth is without form and void, and darkness covers the face of the deep, He sounds out His creative fiat, "Light be," and light is. When hopelessness settles down on Eden, He breathes His promise of a

world's Hope. When a cloud-covered sky shadows a recently deluged earth, He arches it with a bow of beauty as a seal of future peace. When Israel's life is bitter with hard bondage, He raises up a deliverer in a far-away wilderness. When Baal's triumph seems complete, His own glory is nearest its unveiling. When the harps are hung despairingly on Babylon's willows, He is inditing the song of the home-coming. Man's extremity and perplexity are His opportunity. The time of the world's uttermost emptiness was to Him the fulness of times. Then it was "the people that sat in darkness saw a great light; and to them that sat in the region and shadow of death did light spring up."

The work of John was absolutely essential to that of Christ. No John, no Christ. The King had never deigned to come to His kingdom by an unprepared way. And to John was assigned the duty of such preparation, of preparing by summoning others to the work of preparation: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." They to whom this summons came were not they who had been waiting with longing hearts for the consolation of Israel, like the aged Simeon, or like John's own father, Zacharias, or like his mother, Elizabeth; but the multitudes at large—they who had been self-seekers; the publicans who had been extortioners; the soldiers who had done violence to their fellows, exacting wrongfully more than their just dues, unsatisfied with their wages and laying thieving hands on property not theirs. To these and such as these came the injunction, "Make ye ready the way of the Lord; make His paths straight." How? John knew of but one way. "Repent! repent!" a word in which he read but one meaning, "Turn around!" Pursue a course directly opposite to that which you have hitherto pursued. Renounce the old way of wrong and follow the way of right. Let the estranged hearts of fathers and children be turned to one another. Let the owner of two coats impart to him who has none. Let exactions stop. Let violence come to

an end. Let public immorality cease, and "all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

What was the meaning of all this? Were men then to be their own saviours by thus working out their own righteousness? Not at all. But only that a Saviour would not come until there had been an expression of desire for Him in the voluntary turning away from recognized wrong. In other words, there is here a distinct statement of this truth, that the Lord Christ will not come, whether to world, or nation, or community, or individual, so long as there is a wilful choice of sin. He will not come to a society that cherishes iniquity. In order words, social reform must precede spiritual quickening. The desire and determination to abandon known sin must precede the incoming of life. The Divine Sower's rule for Himself is one and the same with His rule for His servants: "Break up your fallow grounds, and sow not among thorns." Rooting out the thorns, casting out the stones on the part of the owner of the field is the necessary antecedent of the seed-sowing.

Over and over again was this truth illustrated in the history of God's people of old. Every great spiritual revival known by that people was preceded by a reform movement, a putting away of the evil which had come to characterize them. The condition of the Divine return was that of the people. "Return unto Me, and I will return unto you." Had Ephraim been joined to her idols; had whoredom and wine and new wine taken away her heart; had she sacrificed upon the tops of the mountains, and burned incense upon the hills under oaks and poplars and elms; had she dealt treacherously against the Lord; and had she been plunged into desolation by her backslidings; then let her give up the gods of her idolatry, let her learn righteousness, and Jehovah would be as the dew to her, and she would grow as the lily, and her beauty would be as the olive; she would revive as the corn and blossom as the vine. Had

Jerusalem turned back from the Lord and come to worship the host of heaven on the housetops ; were employés filling the houses of their employers with violence and deceit ; were they building up Zion with blood ; were the heads thereof judging for reward, and the priests teaching for hire, and the prophets divining for money ; were there treasure of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the scant measure that is abominable, and wicked balances, and bags of deceitful weights ? Let all turn from the evil of their ways and wait on Jehovah, and He would speedily save ; He would rejoice over them with joy ; He would rest in His love ; He would joy over them with singing ; He would make them a name and a praise among all the people of the earth. It is the same story ever. The forsaking of known sin is the condition of spiritual blessing.

That our land stands in need of a great spiritual quickening is a truth that hardly needs statement. The antagonism of large classes among our citizens to the house and service of God is notorious. President Hyde, of Bowdoin, in a recent article in the *Forum*, declared that New England, once the representative of our highest religious life, is more and more disclosing a tendency to absolute paganism. In the August number of the same publication the Rev. John P. Coyle gives the estimates as to the proportion of workingmen who are alienated from the churches as averaging 48 per cent. That there is need of a revival cannot be gainsaid. What hinders ?

Above all things else, we believe, is that indifference to great moral evils that have come to make their home among us, evils more or less clearly seen, yet permitted to remain ; evils that have taken hold even upon professing Christians themselves without any adequate resistance on their part, rather—shall we not say ?—with their acquiescence and encouragement.

First and foremost of all is the great drink evil. Here is a traffic directly responsible for the death of from 70,000

to 80,000 of our fellow-citizens yearly ; a traffic to which are to be traced, according to the statistics of those who have to deal with the detection and punishment of crime, fully 73 per cent of all the crimes committed in our land ; a traffic that requires for its policing \$52,260,000 annually ; a traffic to which, according to the varying statements of Superintendents of the Poor in different parts of the land, are due from 75 to 90 per cent of the pauperism that has its home with us ; a traffic that last year represented a cost to the nation directly of \$1,200,000,000, and indirectly of \$740,000,000 more, in the loss of productive power, in pauperism, in crime, in insanity, and in sickness. And what have we done to control it or to abate the evils that attend it ? We have thrown around it the guardianship of our municipal, State, and national authority. For a comparative pittance of \$157,485,990 we have garrisoned it with protective laws and given it God-speed. Yet the number of professing Christian voters cannot fall short of 4,000,000.

There is yet another evil that may be called national, both because in its extent it is such, and also because it characterizes and disgraces our own nation beyond other nations of the earth. It is that of lax marriage and easy divorce. The prophet Malachi answered the inquiry of his people as to why the anger of Jehovah burned so fiercely against them with the words : " Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously ; yet is she thy companion and the wife of thy covenant. . . . For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that He hateth putting away." And yet it is a question whether Israel at the very worst point in her history touched such a depth of infamy as have we in this matter. The very laws upon our statute books are a woeful tribute to our degradation. These laws are as vicious as are the States that enact them. In an article that appeared recently in *Blackwood's Magazine* the grounds for

divorce are thus summarized: "Adultery; wilful desertion, habitual drunkenness; imprisonment for felony; cruel and abusive treatment; inhuman treatment; failure to provide for; great neglect of duty; absence without being heard from; absence without reasonable cause; separation; voluntary separation; ungovernable temper; such indignities as make life burdensome; husband notoriously immoral before marriage, unknown to wife; fugitive from justice; gross misbehavior or wickedness; attempt on life; refusal of wife to move into the State; joining any religious society that believes marriage unlawful; cannot live in peace and union." And on grounds such as these, the only scriptural one of which in all the number is the first, the year 1890, it is calculated, saw more than 60,000 persons divorced; the last twenty years, according to the statement of Joseph Cook, having seen 300,000 divorces. So that it may well be said that "a vast horde of men and women" in our land are living in what Milton called "civilized adultery."

There is still another evil of which we can write only in hints, an evil which, like the last, touches very closely upon the home-life of the people of our land. We have recently received from the author, a Boston pastor, a little brochure entitled "The Crowning Sin of the Age." We need not be required to name it by any other name than it is entitled to bear, murder, prenatal murder, murder before birth, as truly a violation of the sixth command of the Decalogue as though a mother were to draw the knife across the throat of the infant lying in her arms. A

crime so common, according to the testimony of physicians, that were the truth to be published and the crime punished wherever committed, a gallows must needs be erected on every street corner of our cities, and in every town, village, and hamlet of our land. The statement is appalling. And yet there is good ground for it. Out of the total number of 424,415 families in the State of Massachusetts, where health statistics are more accurately secured than in any other State of the Union, perhaps 70,398 were without children, and 82,760 consisted of father, mother, and one child. To the shame of native Americans be it said that the crime to which we refer is one of which they are conspicuously guilty; and to the double shame of Protestant Christians be it said this crime attaches especially to them. We profess alarm at the increasing political power which Rome is securing among us, but be it said to her credit that she has not so heavy a burden of guilt resting upon her in this matter as have we. No assault upon our liberties can equal in its danger to our national life an attack upon the purity of the family.

We emphasize these three evils as among those which demand the earnest consideration of Christian ministers and Christian churches who profess to be desirous of the revival of our national religious life. By the example of consecrated action and by the unceasing effort to secure righteous laws, and by the concentration of energy on the enforcement of righteous law, let the way of the Lord be prepared, His day be hastened on, when all flesh shall see His salvation.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

Maclaren's Sermons.

OUR readers who improve their opportunities from month to month of familiarizing themselves with the style

of this great preacher will appreciate this from the *Christian Leader*:

"Have you Maclaren's sermons?" says a professor of great sagacity to his students when they are leaving their

college halls for the field. "No, sir."
 "Have you a bed?" "Yes, sir."
 "Then sell your bed, sleep on the
 floor, and buy Maclaren's sermons!"

Compensation for Preaching.

THE statement is going the rounds of the religious papers that Mr. Spurgeon always refused to accept any compensation of a pecuniary character for preaching or lecturing outside of his own pulpit. That such, if true, was the case is no warrant for the assertion that there is anything to be condemned in an opposite course. In the event of the illness of a brother pastor, or in that of the financial weakness of a church to which one is asked to minister, it seems that any other than Mr. Spurgeon would do as he is said to have done. But under other circumstances no reason exists for refusing to accept a substantial return for services rendered. Such action tends to encourage a spirit of meanness which is too apt to get possession of many of our churches abundantly able to afford that "hire" of which the workman is always worthy.

Old Sermons.

WE are acquainted with not a few ministers of the Gospel who absolutely refuse to repeat an old sermon, even in a strange pulpit. They hold that a sermon once preached has accomplished its mission forever. Others, believing that occasions, like historic facts, repeat themselves, take advantage of that fact to repeat their sermons which they deem adapted to such occasions. Perhaps the best rule for all concerned never found better expression than in the words of Professor Park, who, when asked whether an old sermon might be preached a second time, replied, "Only on condition that it be born again." No sermon ought to be preached even once, much less a second time, unless the Spirit of the Divine Winsomeness

be in it; and that Spirit abides not in the words of a manuscript, but in the heart of a man. Only as the truth which the speaker utters comes from him under the inspiration of that indwelling Spirit, burning with His passion for souls, eloquent with the experience of His begetting, may it be expected to accomplish its mission of saving. One sermon might be preached a thousand times over under this condition, and yet be powerful throughout its repetitions. A thousand sermons might be preached without a single repetition of any, and without the Spirit's presence they would all be miserable failures.

Columbus Day.

PRESIDENT HARRISON, in recognition of the movement advocated by us in the August number—a movement inaugurated by the National Educational Association—and in conformity with the Act of Congress, passed June 29th, has proclaimed Friday, the 21st inst., as a general holiday for the people of our land. As a part of the proclamation touches the action of our churches and their pastors, we give the text of it so far as it relates to them:

"Columbus stood in his age as the pioneer of progress and enlightenment. The system of universal education is in our age the most prominent and salutary feature of the spirit of enlightenment, and it is peculiarly appropriate that the schools be made by the people the centre of the day's demonstration. Let the national flag float over every schoolhouse in the country, and the exercises be such as shall impress upon our youth the patriotic duties of American citizenship.

"In the churches and in the other places of assembly of the people let there be expressions of gratitude to Divine Providence for the devout faith of the discoverer and for the Divine care and guidance which has directed our history and so abundantly blessed our people."

BLUE MONDAY.

Oddities of Speech.

ORIGINAL PRONUNCIATIONS.

IN our first pastorate (in England) we had for a neighbor a Congregational minister who was a man of considerable natural gifts, but who had never had a thorough education in early years, and had never succeeded in mastering the mysteries of cultured pronunciation. Accordingly his outbursts of eloquence were often rendered almost as amusing as edifying by the strange utterance of certain words. He would persist in speaking of himself as an "ambassanger of Christ," which led some of his irreverent hearers to designate him "the old ambassanger." On many occasions he nearly rivalled the celebrated Mrs. Partington. His most remarkable feat of pronunciation was at a social gathering. In the course of his remarks he said: "Dear friends, we have had a very *convival* meeting to-night." That was his unique way of pronouncing the word *convivial*. This was too much for the comfort of the more scholarly part of his auditors, who could not quietly connive at such a barbarism. It was well, however, for the good man that the majority of his congregation were not sufficiently informed to detect his orthoëpical blunders. His orthodoxy was above suspicion, and therefore his orthoëpy was allowed to pass unquestioned.

A Mixed Metaphor.

It was a country church, and the pulpit was occupied by a young lay preacher. He was evidently anxious to produce a powerful impression, and to that end he exerted himself with great vehemence. In the white heat of prayer occurred the following: "O Lord, we beseech thee to water us with the bread of life."

Another Strange Petition.

A YOUTHFUL member was praying for his pastor, who at that time was weak from the effects of a recent sickness. "O Father," cried he, "be graciously pleased to *enervate* thy dear servant." He evidently did not mean quite what he said. It is well for us all that God takes more notice of the desire than of the words in which it is couched.

It was well Meant.

IN our college days we were a little startled by the interjection of a fellow-student during the prayer of one of the tutors. The honored teacher was leading our devotions with much fervor, and we were all strongly moved by his earnest supplication. One of our brethren was so carried away that he shouted out, "Hear, hear!" It certainly sounded rather incongruous at such a time, but it was a testimony to the power and freshness of the prayer which elicited it.

Was He the Ringleader?

SOMETIMES ministers have the most strangely worded notices given them to read out. We were somewhat amused as we glanced at the following announcement:

YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETY,

Tuesday next, at 7.30.

The Way of Transgressors.

Leader—Mr. W———.

We were at once reminded of the oft-told circumstance of the very tall teacher marching at the head of the infant class as they sang:

"See the mighty host advancing,
Satan leading on."

A Slight Difference.

IN one of my parishes there were a considerable number of Icelanders settled. One day on my rounds, pointing to a small house, I asked a little girl if an Icelander lived there. "No," answered she, "but a *bachelor* does." Was there in her mind any affinity between the two names except that of the similarity of sound? Why the one should suggest the other is a (n)ice subject for thought. We commend it to our single brethren.

A Literary Query.

A THEOLOGICAL student whose acquaintance with historic and fictitious literature was somewhat limited, was the guest of an intelligent family. Looking at the bookcase, he espied Bulwer-Lytton's famous work, "The Last Days of Pompeii." Turning to a member of the household, he innocently asked, "Who was Pompeii?" It was the same promising youth who, in talking with a devout old lady concerning helpful books, seriously inquired if she had ever read "Robinson Crusoe."

A Boy's Idea of Spurgeon.

THE following incident we heard related by Mr. Spurgeon himself. The great preacher was one day leisurely walking over Clapham Common, in London, when he overheard the following personal references. Said one small boy, "There goes old Spurgeon." "No, that ain't old Spurgeon," replied the other; "his head ain't big enough!" And we can appreciate the boy's reason for doubting the identity of that wonderful man. We ourselves cannot understand how even Mr. Spurgeon's massive head could have been large enough to think out all the grand sermons he preached and all the useful books he wrote, and to originate so many great and noble schemes for the benefit of his fellows. The secret, we believe, is that it was, after all, more a matter of his heart than his head. And his heart we know was immeasurable.

C. W. TOWNSEND.

SHERBURKE, QUEBEC.