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SERMONIC.

THE BIBLE A BOOK FOR ALL NATIONS.

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The law of the Lord is perfect.—Ps. xix: 7.

A VERY interesting meeting of the Bench and Bar of the American Association closed its sessions in this city last Friday morning. Among the proceedings of that association, I noticed that resolutions were adopted in memory of a distinguished jurist, one of whose distinctions was his loyalty to the Word of God, his hearty belief in its inspiration and its efficiency, and whose last hours on earth were cheered and tranquilized by the blessed hope which the Gospel of Jesus Christ alone can inspire. Thinking of this, I am reminded of a meeting which I attended a few months ago in the city of Richmond—a meeting of the Bench and Bar to commemorate the virtues of the late lamented Judge Moncure, who, for thirty years, was the President of the Virginia Court of Appeals. One of the speakers on that day, in paying a tribute to his memory, said that a young man about to commence the study of the law, once asked the venerable judge

what book he had better take up first. The answer was, "You had better begin with the Bible." Well did he say that; for well he knew that the Bible was the foundation, not only of all true morality, but of all just jurisprudence; and it was by its divine teaching that that venerable man walked throughout his long career, wearing his judicial robes spotless, until he went up to put on bright robes in heaven.

And, my friends, I may ask, Of what is not the Bible the foundation and the inspiration? What department of public, social, or domestic life may it not penetrate and purify? Of what science is it not a friend? Of what art is it not a patron? What literature is not made more noble by its influence, and more healthful? What form of government is not made more symmetrical and more enduring by its power? To what interest in human life does it not give its great benediction? Thus it has been from the time when this Book came in its perfected beauty from the hand of its divine author, and thus it will continue to be until the great drama of this world's history is completed.

My subject this morning is, **THE BIBLE: A BOOK FOR ALL THE RACES OF**

[The first several sermons are reported in full; the remainder are given in condensed form. Every care is taken to make these reports correct; yet our readers must not forget that it would be unfair to hold a speaker responsible for what may appear in a condensation, made by another, of his discourse.]

THE WORLD, AND FOR ALL THE GENERATIONS OF THE WORLD, TO THE END OF TIME; that the system of doctrine and duty which it contains is a fixed and final system, not a progressive one and one introductory to a higher; that the Bible will never become obsolete, and will never be supplemented by any other revelation.

Of course, I do not overlook the fact that this proposition has been most flatly contradicted. You have not forgotten the stir that was made in theological circles a few months ago, when a distinguished divine delivered a sermon upon the Bible, the first sentence of which was this: "The old view of the Bible is fading away from the vision of the age;" and then he went on to argue that the prophecies of the Bible had never been fulfilled; that its miracles were incredible; that the characters it portrayed were forced and unnatural; that many of its narratives were indelicate; and that even the Christ that it revealed was, as he called it, "humanity's evolution of the divine ideal." Well, my friends, if that be so, then I would echo the voice of the preacher, and say: Let the Bible fade. If that be true—if the Bible is nothing more than a collection of cloudy myths, and of unfulfilled prophecies, and of narratives that need censorship and an expurgated edition—if this be true, then, I say, let it fade.

But is it true? Three or four years ago I was making a tour with a dear friend of mine in the Highlands of Scotland, and I was very much surprised, inasmuch as he was a dear lover of natural scenery, to find how indifferent he was to everything that was most attractive in that land of mountain and of field, until one day he said to me, "I am disappointed in this scenery; the colors are not as bright, and the outlines are dim, and, on the whole, I am disappointed." This was astonishing; for there were the fabled Grampians, and the little lakes nestled among the hills, with harmonies in every ripple of their waves. But the explanation of the indifference of my friend was some-

thing very pathetic; he was unconsciously becoming blind. And so, oftentimes, it may be with revelation. There are Sinai, and Calvary, and Tabor, and Hermon, and Carmel, with its flowery top; there is the Lake of Gennesaret, and the river Jordan, not faint and dim, but all bright in the clear light of the serene sun; and yet, even this vision may fade from the spiritual eye that is insensibly becoming blind. The fault may not be, after all, in the scenery of revelation so much as in the vision of the beholder.

I might fill up the limited time allotted to a discourse by quotations from eminent modern writers, who tell us that the Bible has accomplished a very good purpose in the world, and is still accomplishing a good purpose, but that it cannot long satisfy the world's need, because it does not keep pace with the world's progress; that, being filled for the most part with a history of institutions and economies that have passed away, it has not kept pace with the world's progress; and therefore, in the nature of the case, by-and-by the time will come when we shall need a broader basis upon which to construct what these writers and preachers are so fond of calling the religion of the future. The line of argument by which they sustain their position is a very plausible and ingenious one. They call our attention to the fact that the first revelations of God made to men were so exceedingly simple as evidently to be designed for the infancy of the race; but, as the world grew, and as men became more capable of comprehending, God made other revelations according to the expanding capacity of mankind, until the time came when the last book in the canonical Scriptures was written. But they say the world's progress did not end with that event. All the sciences—physical, mental, and moral—have been making advances; new literatures, new phases of political economy, new social problems, new forms of civilization—all these have risen; and inasmuch as the old legal dispensation is not suitable now, nor the old patriarchal

institutions, the time must come when the theological also will become too narrow in its range for the demands of the race, and too dogmatic in its tone for that more liberal, general, comprehensive religion of the future.

We are invited also to mark the universality of this beautiful law of progressive development in nature, in literature, in the fine and in the useful arts, in human laws and institutions. In nature, for example, they tell us that the great trunk and spreading limbs of the oak were once wrapped up in the little heart of the acorn. In the fine arts, take music as an illustration. The musical scale is exceedingly limited, and yet out of those few, simple primary notes what marvelous progress has been made as the ages have run on! What a development from the time when Hudal struck his corded shell, to all the marvels of the modern oratorio and opera; from the first song sung by old Arcadian shepherds down to the symphonies of Beethoven and the superb compositions of Wagner! So, too, in the sciences. Take mathematics, for example: the foundations were very small out of which the whole science of mathematics is developed. A better illustration, perhaps, is law. The old principles were exceedingly few and simple, and in many nations they were unformulated, though they existed at a time to which "the memory of man runneth not back to the contrary," and yet what marvelous developments have sprung out of these general principles of law! From them have sprung all the codes, and institutes, and pandects of the earliest civilizations, as well as the law of England itself, adapted to the common exigencies of life, and the great equity law, mitigating the rigors of the sterner common law; together with admiralty, criminal, ecclesiastical, commercial and international law, and all the codes and all the institutions by which society seeks to protect itself. What a growth, and what a development!

Now, when, by a grand natural transition, we pass from human to divine law, another question is asked: Why should

not this be progressive also? Why should the canon of Scripture, as we now have it, be the completion of God's revelation to the world, and why should revelation be the exception to that law which regulates and prompts all other growths? All this is plausible enough, and yet, my friends, how easy it is to detect the sophism that underlies the whole argument!

Those who reason thus overlook, in the first place, one great distinction—a distinction which ought always to be sharply made between the apparent and the real progress of man. Perhaps some of you recollect that Canon Liddon, in one of his University lectures, has said that the true progress of man is the progress of man's self, apart from all organization, apart from all the outward appliances and embellishments of life, apart from everything that is external to him. But he goes on to say that those who eulogize modern progress confine their attention to what man does to promote his convenience and comfort. Vast political reforms, vast national enterprises, great accumulations of capital, sanitary law, the inventions that economize labor—these are progress; and yet, my friends, how plain it is that all this progress may go on while man himself is utterly debased and selfish! How absurd it is to mark the progress of a man by that which a man manipulates and moulds and makes subservient to his use! There is no progress to the individual except as he is impelled upward and onward by divine force until he succeeds in expressing within himself and developing everything that is pure and noble. But, my friends, the fact is, however gratifying it may be, that every man comes in this world with a debased nature; therefore every man needs regeneration; and, therefore again, if the Bible establishes the principles by which the individual soul may be regenerated, if it can regenerate one soul, all souls of that generation may also receive this life-giving power; and the book that establishes the principles that regenerate one age of the world

and put it on a new plane, and give it a new, higher and nobler development, is the book that will suit the next generation as well, and all generations that come after it. The Bible is the book for the soul, and God put into it exactly those truths that He knew were calculated to regenerate the soul; and, unless the human heart receives new powers and faculties in future ages, what can regenerate one mind and heart in this age will answer for all coming ages. Unless the soul needs to be made over and given new faculties, you do not want a new Bible, or any annex to the old one. And, therefore, the invitation, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world," will be as full of celestial beauty a thousand years hence as it is to the inquirer after the way of life in this house to-day. And I hope that in this great congregation there is some one to whom the question, "What must I do to be saved?" is the most important of all questions; and as long as this is so, the twenty-third Psalm—that singing angel in the choir of psalms—will be just as sweet in the ears of the last child of God that dies on this earth as it was in the ears of your own dear mother, when, soothed by its strains, she passed from her life of painfulness to her death of peace, into her immortality of joy.

2. I remark, in the second place, that those who reason thus reason sophistically, because they overlook another great distinction. When we say that the canon of Scripture is closed—that not another line will ever be added to the written record—we do not mean that the principles contained in the Bible, as we now have it, do not admit of endless expansion and endless revolution; and, while the Bible is fixed and will never be supplemented, the principles contained in it are admissible of universal and of endless application, and for that reason the Bible will never need to be supplemented. You remember, in one of the books that charm infancy, and that charm old age as well oftentimes, we have a story of Prince Ahmed and the fairy Paribanou. The

fairy one day gave to Prince Ahmed a walnut. He opened the walnut, and in it there was a tent made of materials so elastic that it could be folded up and contained in a walnut-shell, but when opened it could be expanded so as to extend over the palace yard, and, when opened out still further, it covered the king's palace, the courtyard and the whole of the king's army. Precisely so it is with the principles contained in this book. It is a little volume—you may put it in your pocket; and yet the principles can be so expanded as to embrace the world, mankind, and everything in human life. It is with this Bible as it is with nature. No new laws have been given to nature from the beginning. Is not that a very plain proposition, my friends—that in this vast material universe, so complicated and wonderful, not a new law has been made since God produced it out of nothing to what it is? No law has been added, and yet how constantly are men discovering laws that for long ages were hidden from human eyes; and men of science will tell you that there are now many latent forces in nature awaiting the genius of the occasion when they shall be discovered and applied to the use of man. And who can tell how many latent forces there are in revelation awaiting the occasion when, in the providence of God, they shall be discovered and receive their legitimate application? What the world wants is, not a new Bible, or new principles, or new truths, but an appreciation of the old, the recognition of the old, and the legitimate application of the old to the purposes for which they were intended.

To illustrate my meaning exactly: That a force can be generated by the expansion of vapors is a truth that is as old as Christianity; but the application of steam as a motive power is a modern recognition and a modern use of the old power. Gravitation has existed from the beginning; but Newton discovered it and builds on it a splendid science. Now, as Newton's discovery in science, so the discovery of these latent laws in the Bible, and their ap-

plication, are the things that mark the progress of the Church. We admit that the Scriptures are capable of development, but they are not capable of a supplement.

What a glorious illustration of this we have in the history of missions! I suppose there is no theory that the Church now understands better than the theory of missions; and there is no duty that the Church recognizes as a more onerous duty than that of sustaining them; and yet the theory and the practice of missions was lost sight of for long centuries. Why? Because they were not in Bible? Oh, no; they were there all the while. The Bible is full of both the theory and the practice; and, my friends, no missionary hymn was ever sung sweeter and higher than those of David and Isaiah, when, with the light of morning in their eyes and the glories of Messiah's reign in their ears, they hailed the advent of the day when His name would be known on earth, and His saving health among all nations. And yet the missionary development in modern times is not a hundred years old. What the world wanted was not a new revelation of missions; it only required some one to look into that book and tell us of the missionary principles which are there taught.

Take another illustration: Would not you think I was spending time in a very remarkable manner, if I should argue this morning that every man has a right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience? "Why, my friend," you say, "that is a self-evident truth." It is not any such thing; that is a truth that very few people recognize. Why, there are men in this house who can recollect the time when that long-protracted and bitter discussion took place in the Virginia Legislature, that ended in the bill for religious freedom, which was afterward incorporated in the laws of the United States; and Mr. Jefferson, the author of that bill, was so proud of it that he directed this inscription to be placed on his tombstone: "Thomas Jefferson, author

of the Declaration of Independence, the founder of the University of Virginia, and the author of the bill for religious freedom." "But," you say, "is not religion free all over civilized Europe? Do they not, all over Europe, tolerate every form of religious faith?" I beg your pardon; toleration is not religious liberty; and the government that arrogates to itself the right to tolerate any particular form of faith, by an arbitrary exercise of the same power may suppress any form of faith. I do not wish to accept toleration of what God has given me as a free heritage of my birth. How many governments are there in the world under which religion is free? Cannot you count them? How many are there? What Christendom wants is, not a new revelation, but a recognition that God has given us an inalienable right to worship our God according to the dictates of His Word, interpreted by our enlightened consciences.

So, too, when new forms of old errors arise, we do not want a new Bible to find new truths with which to antagonize these old errors. And, when I talk about old errors, do not misunderstand me. The fact is, there are no new forms of skepticism. Those forms of skepticism that now go masquerading over the boards are nothing but the ghosts of the old heresies, slain a thousand years ago; they are only the old heresies dressed up in new forms. But if there are new attacks of skepticism in the armory of the divine Word, there hang the swords of the mighty, and those weapons of celestial temper that can smite and pierce any foe, and all we have to do is to go and open the armory and take down from the walls the neglected weapons that have long been rusting there, and put on the panoply of God and go forth to meet any foe-man.

What an illustration we had of this, when the gigantic error arose in the Church, that salvation could be purchased by self-inflicted penalties, or by meritorious sacrifices! And what a memorable day that was in the Church, when Luther (whose anniversary we

are to celebrate in a few months all over the world), studying the epistles in his cell, suddenly recognized there the great doctrine of justification by faith! But Luther did not invent that doctrine; he only discovered it. Augustine had preached it long before Luther; Paul preached it before Augustine; and Habbakkuk had preached it long before Paul; and it was a doctrine that had been practically illustrated in the life of Abraham centuries before Habbakkuk was born. It was the very corruption of the times that gave that vindictive roll to Luther's thunder, as he rebuked that dangerous error and vindicated the ways of God to man.

II. Thus far I have argued the subject, as you see, rather negatively; but I now proceed most positively to assert that we do not need any other Bible, nor a supplement to the old, because the Bible is a book that has a friendly voice and a helping hand to every race. Now, I recognize the distinction that God has made in race. It is as clear and plain as the distinction He makes in trees. There are radical distinctions in the characteristics of races; and yet, my friends, I say the glory of this book is that it has a voice for every race, and a helping hand for every man. If there is a doctrine that I detest, it is the doctrine of the survival of the fittest—the doctrine of men who say, "Let the weaker race perish; let the strong survive, because it is the fittest." That is not a Christian doctrine. The Christian doctrine is: Let the gentle and strong hand of the Church be reached down to the weaker races, and let them come into the light and glory of the great salvation. If there was a race in this world for which the Bible would not bring salvation, and if it could be proved to me, I never would preach another sermon. A few years ago I attended a meeting in the city of Glasgow, where, in discussing the superiority of races, it was argued that there were some races so debased and so depraved as to be beyond the reach of civilization; and among others, it was said that the Bushmen of Africa—that stunt-

ed, ape-like, jabbering race—were degraded beyond redemption. There was a stranger present, and he arose and said: "Mr. President, might I be allowed to make some observations?" "Oh, yes," the president said; "this meeting is open to every one." "Well," said he, "I don't pretend to be able to dispute with these learned gentlemen; but I can tell you what I have seen, for I used to live there at the Cape. There was a Bushman—one of these same little fellows that you speak of as incapable of either intellectual or moral development—that had been educated by a missionary. He lived in a forest. One night an English cavalry officer, while traveling in that neighborhood, became absolutely lost, and was almost filled with despair, until at last he saw the twinkle of a taper in a window at some distance, and the Bushman, hearing the clatter of the horse's hoofs, stood in his open door, and when the officer approached made a very low and profound obeisance, and humbly invited him to enter his house. He took care of the stranger's horse, provided him with a frugal supper, and after the supper was over, he said: 'My friend, it has been our custom in this house, before retiring to rest, always to read a chapter in the Bible and to have a little prayer; but I would not presume to take that liberty in your presence, and therefore I will be obliged to you if you will conduct our family worship.' The English officer looked very much confused. Said he: 'My friend, I am ashamed to confess I have never learned to pray for myself.' 'Would you have any objection,' asked the Bushman, 'to my conducting the services?' 'No; I will be delighted to follow you.' So the Bushman knelt down and, among other things, prayed that God would bless the stranger whom Providence had thrown under their roof. When the prayer was over, the family rose from their knees, but the officer remained upon his. The Bushman thought perhaps he had fallen asleep. After a little time he went and gently touched him on the shoulder;

but, to his surprise, he found the man was weeping, and as he knelt there he was convulsed all over with irrepressible emotion. When he arose, he said, 'My friend, I came from a Christian land, a pagan, to this pagan land, and here I find Christianity; and on my knees to-night I have vowed to God that when I return to my own country I will return a Christian.' Well," said the stranger, "that is all my story. I think that even the Bushman is capable of being brought to civilization."

Here is a book equally adapted to the Oriental and the Occidental mind; adapted alike to the Mongolian and the Caucassian mind; a book that can address itself to the reason of man and to the heart of woman, a book that has a voice and a message for all the different stages of life—from old age to middle age, youth, and childhood. Here is a book that is adapted to all the different divisions into which society is divided, by rank, and birth, and wealth, and fashion; a book that can permeate all the trades of men—the merchant, the mechanic, and the professional man; a book that suits the sailor that is tossing upon the sea just as well as it suits the scholar in the university; that suits the stunted man that works in a manufactory as well as the man of pleasure and wealth, that roams where he pleases and rifles all the sweets of life that he can gather; that fills the heart with happiness amid the sanctities of our Christian homes, and comforts the wanderer in a strange land; that gives its benediction to fast and festivity, to baptism and marriage; that ennobles life and tranquilizes death, and gives to man the hope of glory, which no human genius can bring.

Suppose you were permitted to select from the writings of the best authors of the world whatever was sweetest in song, whatever was wisest in proverb, most instructive in biography, most suggestive in parable, most profound in philosophy—would the result of the whole be a book comparable to the Bible? Could you select from Homer and Plato and Thucydides, from Newton and Ba-

con and Locke, from Baxter and Bunyan and Butler, and from all this world's greatest authors, and produce a volume that would so speak to the world's reason, and so sing to the world's sadness? No; we could not frame another book that has this universal adaptation.

I remark again, in my positive argument, that the Bible is sufficient for the world's need, and always will be, because it goes down to the very foundation of man's mental and moral structure, and takes hold of that which is sinful in his soul's life. And so, when it tells us how sin came into the world, and the connection between sin and sorrow, if it stopped there we would not care much for the information; but it goes on to tell us how our sins may be forgiven, and how our very sorrows may be sanctified and made serviceable to our everlasting joy. And, therefore, as long as sin and sorrow are in the world, as long as unrest has its home in the human bosom, as long as the desire to peer into futurity stirs the soul of man, as long as hope overleaps the boundaries of the seen and visible—so long will this book take hold of that which is deepest and truest and profoundest in the soul's immortal life. Here is the book that gives us the most perfect ideal that human power can conceive, the most perfect standard that the human mind can form—a standard beyond which there is nothing higher, and an ideal beyond which there is nothing more perfect.

It will not be denied that the Bible gives us a perfect ideal in the character of our blessed Savior. We know how the disciples in the early Church regarded Christ. You recollect that Canon Farrar says, in one of his books, that Jesus Christ, in the middle ages, was to the knights the pattern of chivalry; to the monks, the pattern of asceticism; and to the scholar he was the founder of all philosophy. A man like Murat has said that the character of Christ leaves nothing to be desired. A man like Goethe has said, that the New Testament shows the exemplar, the pattern of all virtue. A man like John

Stuart Mill says, "The character of Jesus Christ is the divine picture for the human soul to copy." And even Mr. Lecky says that Jesus has given us not only the model, but the incentive to the practice of virtue. And, therefore, we have in this Book a divine portraiture, than which nothing can be more beautiful; and as long as the world stands, whatever progress it makes, it can never pass beyond the inspired portraiture of Jesus of Nazareth, any more than the mariner, who sails upon the sea, can out sail the great rim of the horizon. It matters not what islands he may sail by, or what new constellations may appear above him; that perfect ring still shines down upon him, the blue heavens, the hollow of God's hand, still overarch him. So it will be with Jesus of Nazareth, as long as the world stands.

So, too, we do not need a new Bible, because we do not want any new motives to the practice of the greatest virtue. I cannot with proper patience, perhaps, listen to the cant of men who call themselves "Humanitarians," and who reject the Bible as too narrow to live by. What is more, they reject the Scriptures and steal into the divine Word and steal the weapons that would never have existed if it had not been for the Bible. Why, if these men's fathers had not believed in the Scriptures, their degenerate sons would be still in the barbarism from which the Bible took their ancestors. When a certain battle was over, and when the gallant commander leaned upon his sword, wiping the blood from his brow, a ringleted fop came up and claimed the honor that the soldier of valor had won. And so we feel when these men undertake to regenerate the world without the Scriptures, by certain discoveries; they have to steal from religion the truths that are intended to supplement the truths of the Bible.

These writers are always scoffing at Paul. They say he formulated cold, hard doctrines. Did you ever hear of a humanitarian that wore out his life trying to rescue men from the barbar-

ism of heathenism? Well, Paul, who formulated these cold, hard doctrines, girdled this world with a zone of life and light as a missionary. The great apostle of humanitarianism in modern times has told us that "God is something without us that makes for righteousness;" that is his definition of God; and he says that the great incentive to virtue in man springs out of what he calls "sweetness and light." Did you ever hear of a humanitarian that could say, "For the space of three years I have warned every man to fear God, and they would not believe in the power without us that works for righteousness?" Did you ever hear of a man who drew his inspiration out of his own sweetness and light who could say, "Thrice have I suffered shipwreck; a night and a day have I been in the deep," in trying to bring mer to God?

The grandest sufferings that man has ever endured for humanity's sake have been endured by men who drew their inspiration out of the Bible, and who were filled with the constraining love of Christ.

Let the world make progress, and may God bless and speed its progress! but the world will never get beyond the Bible. The Bible will always march in advance of the race. I know not to what sublime heights human speculations may ascend; but I know that human thought will never conceive of anything grander in the religion of the future than the definition the Bible gives us of God, as a spirit, invisible, eternal, unchangeable. I know not what success may be attained in the researches of the coming years; but I know that in men's passion for research they will find no ideal higher than Christ which this Book presents to us. I know not what form of beauty the heaven of heavens may contain; but I know that the heaven of heavens contains nothing sweeter and diviner than the crucified Jesus. I know not what pictures the heart touched by sorrow may draw; but I know there is no spectacle more calculated to fill and thrill the heart of man than the spectacle of

the dear, dying Lamb of God upon the cross. I know not what conceptions bereaved affection, untought by revelation, may form of the future life of recognition and communion in the glory everlasting; but in the deep sorrow and anguish which come when the tender ties of love are severed, and when the heart in its anguish cries out, "What and where are now my beloved ones?" I know of no answer that falls on the listening ear of the heart, so full of celestial beauty as this: "They are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His Temple; and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

That is the final vision; that is the inevitable, fadeless vision of perfected, long-separated humanity—a new Eden at the end, as Eden was at the beginning of human history.

THE DEEP THINGS OF GOD.

BY NEWMAN SMYTHE, D.D. [CONGREGATIONAL], OF NEW HAVEN, CONN., IN THE OLD SOUTH CHURCH, BOSTON.

The deep things of God—1 Cor. ii: 10.

WE walk in a daily wonder, ourselves the strangest of mysteries. Our lives are as the bubbles upon the waves of the great deep. Our knowledge is only the glimmer of light upon the surface of the ocean of existence. Beneath are the deep things of God. If any one here present is attending to the plan of his life as though yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow were the whole of it, and there is nothing to be thought of beyond; if any are satisfied with what they are doing in this little market-place, thoughtless of eternity which lies around time, our text this morning is a word for them. And it may be profitable for us all, in this Sabbath stillness, to pause from our pleasures and our cares and ponder the deep things of God.

To a thoughtful man the most familiar things are among the greatest marvels of our existence. We need not go far to stand on the shore of the deep things of God. You have but to look up and to glance out of your windows to see a world which passes knowledge. Every familiar thing around our homes is still an unexplained mystery to us. What do you know about the nature and constitution of a single thing mirrored in your eye as you glance out of your window? What do you know about that strange process which changes those things, having apparently form and color and motion, into a picture of your mind, or a state of your consciousness? The moment you begin to question appearances, your thoughts are out fluttering over the deep things of God. Our science has not gone to the root yet of a single blade of grass; how it grows is still one of the unrevealed secrets of God. It is my purpose now to consider, for a few moments, a little more closely these mysteries of which I am speaking.

To begin with the first and lowest, what do we know about the nature of matter? You can tell me as easily what the angels' wings are as tell me the ultimate constitution of a single particle of matter. Common oxygen and hydrogen, and all elemental principles, belong by nature to the unrevealed deep things of God. We have been learning, indeed, not to trust our first impressions of things. We have come to recognize the fact that beneath the familiar face of nature there may lie a diviner secret than we have eyes to see, and in its commonest speech there may be a diviner meaning than we have ears to hear. This common, every-day matter, which we handle and shape, and call by many names, and speculate about, the very dust of the earth upon which we tread, is in its real principle as unknown to us as the nature of God Himself. It belongs to the deep things of God. But if the common earth is thus the wonder of science, much more is that dust a mystery when, by unknown forces, it is taken up and woven dex-

terously after a predetermined pattern and organized into a thing a life. Nobody pretends to have caught a glimpse of the machinery by which living tissue is woven. Sometimes investigators, pressing hard after the molecules of matter, have thought they had almost won the secret of life; but just as our science seems about to put its finger upon that fugitive thing, life, it flies from its hand and we are no wiser than before. Life is one of the deep things of God, whose origin no man can discover, and of whose future what we call death is only our ignorance. To see the inner spring of this universal phenomenon, life, is as impossible for us as it is to see God. Perhaps to see the spring of life would be to see the living God Himself.

But if the life which colors the petal of the flower, and finds wings in the bird, and culminates in the form of man, is an unrevealed mystery of the creation, what shall we say of that life when it has become conscious and is a thinking, willing mind? The human soul is one of the deepest things of the deep things of God. All the ways of God up to it are reflected in it, and then it opens out toward worlds unknown and unrealized as yet. The human brain, with its six hundred millions of gray nerve cells, and their numberless connected fibres, is a wonder to be compared only with the mystery of the sky, with its countless stars and their infinite network of attractions. We have opened more of these mysteries above us than the ancients knew, but with our increasing knowledge has only grown the wonder. Every summer repeats before our eyes a fresh miracle of creation, but in nature's robe of beauty we touch only the hem of the garment of the Creator as He passes by. The face of God is turned from us.

If, then, common matter, as I have been saying, is an unknown x to us, standing for something which does not as yet appear in the equation of things; if matter organized into a living body is a redoubled wonder to us; if conscious life and mind connected with body, a

soul dreaming of spiritual things and cherishing unearthly affections, is a marvel of marvels to us; what shall we say, then, of all those further problems of life of which these things—matter, body and soul—are, as it were, but the terms or elements? If the simple terms of life's problem are unknown quantities, what are all the complicated equations of them? What shall be the final solution of the whole problem? Our thoughts flutter over these deep things of God as the seabirds dip their wings in the ocean's waves. They only shake from their feathers the spray of the surface. Yet out over these deep problems our thoughts must fly. We cannot help thinking of the deep things of our soul's past, of the deeper things of its future. Whence came the evil that gives the good a bitter taste? How did death ever gain dominion over us? How did this hard, poisonous core of sin ever grow in the midst of this fair, luscious life? Who shall lift the shadow from the mighty past? What was there in the darkness before ever our members were fashioned in the secret parts of the earth? In this maze of questionings our reason flickers as the blaze of birchbark held out by the lost hunter in the woods: it only brings out the surrounding gloom. It is enough, perhaps, to enable him to see the stones just before his feet upon which he is about to stumble; but it makes the surrounding darkness visible. And who thus shall lift the veil for us from the future? Certain great currents of things seem to be sweeping us on in directions which we can only partially measure. We can see the good growing and the bad decaying, virtue ripening and vice rotting, in the same sunshine of God. We can see signs all around us of a great system of retribution. There is no doubt but that what a man sows that shall he also reap; and physical death seems to be a significant sign of something worse prepared in the very nature of things, and to be feared, for all those who shall not be delivered from it by a mightier grace. The present retributive tendencies of things no sane man can deny. And

they extend into the future; they work on and on. We can follow them out until they disappear in the unknown depths of futurity. We cannot follow them until they come anywhere to an end. That this life is a great process of character siftings, every one can see; that, if there is a God, He has an eye which is not color-blind to moral distinctions, and that He can see and will distinguish between a white soul and a black heart; that there must be a judgment day, a great final process of moral discrimination and rewards—all this seems to be the prophecy of the future which every man may hear who listens to his own conscience as it repeats to him the laws of the Eternal.

But if the blessedness of the redeemed passes knowledge, still more is the final condition of the incorrigible hidden in the deep counsels of God. The Bible shuts from our view the final condition of the impenitent.* As in Eastern countries they used to place a veil over the face of the doomed as they carried him out to execution, so, it has well been said, does the Bible draw a veil over the face of him who is impenitent still. And thus, after all our reasonings, we must leave the whole problem of evil and its final consequences before the judgment throne of the Omniscient. It is certain that we are abundantly warned ourselves to flee from the wrath to come; it is certain that now is our opportunity; it is certain that the Lord of all the earth, at the end of this probationary world-age, shall give to every man his due; and it seems to me as certain as the law of moral growth that the dying thief who went to Paradise could not possibly have started there from the same vantage-ground as the apostle who had kept a good conscience before men and who died a martyr to the truth.

* Does not this statement conflict with Matt. xxv. 41; Mark ix. 43-48; Rom. vi. 23; 2 Thess. i. 8, 9, and parallel passages in God's Word? It is difficult to conceive how "the final condition of the incorrigible" in the future world could find expression in human language in more positive terms, or in words of more appalling significance.—EDITOR.

But sure as are these moral facts and tendencies of things, clear and imperative as is revelation, within the limits of our practical duties and needs, it is also true that the Bible neither compels nor permits us to explore the shadows of its own dark background. We know not that the disciples ever dared ask Jesus to explain his own words concerning the last judgment; they seemed to have listened in silence. Perhaps there may have been something in the tender solemnity and awe of his manner, as he spoke of the consequences of sin in the future, which silenced their questionings. They believed Him, though they understood not always what he said. And shall our theologians be wiser or better than the apostles? This, too, is one of the deep things of God. The light of revelation gathers around the Redeemer, who stands out the central and radiant figure in its foreground; the burden of apostolic preaching is the gospel of the forgiveness of sin; and it is the office of the Church to lead men into the light of revelation, not to dogmatize about the unrevealed background of God's counsels.

If enough, then, has been already said to help us realize over what depths our common daily lives are floating—we mere travelers between two shores, hanging between a measureless sky above and a bottomless profound below—we are ready now to draw from such reflections some very useful and, I think, pertinent conclusions.

First, we may infer that there are some people in this world—some, perhaps, in Boston—who know altogether more than their Creator ever intended that they should know. There are some, for example, who know that the Bible is false, and religion a superstition, because, in this cast-iron world, as they conceive of it, a miracle seems impossible, prayer folly, and there can be no access of God's free spirit to human lives. Before they can be sure of that, however, they should know vastly more of the structure of this material universe than any mortal eye has as yet ever seen. Possibly this may not be a

"cast-iron" universe; possibly it may be something more than a mere museum-world of biological specimens; possibly this material system of things may keep all its threads unbroken and yet wave to every breath of the Spirit of God. For all we know to the contrary, this material system may be as permeable to divine influences as this earth, which seems a globe so solid, is supposed to be open as wicker-work to all movements of the ethereal waves. "There," said the famous priest, Lacordaire, as he overheard in a Paris restaurant St. Beuve saying, "I cannot believe in God, because I believe only in what I understand,"—"There is St. Beuve, who does not believe in God because he does not understand Him; nor does he understand why the same fire melts butter and hardens eggs, and yet he eats an omelet."

Again, there are people who know there can be no such place in this universe as hell, because God is good. I could trust better their comfortable assurance if only they could make me believe that there never could be, and never was, on this earth such a place as Sodom, because God is good. Surely it is the part of a wise man not to dogmatize, but so to live as not to pitch his tent toward any Sodom, either in this world or in the world to come.

Then, there are persons so wondrous wise as to know that God cannot exist as a trinity, because three are not one. We, too, wish to have it understood, that ever since we learned, as very little children, to count our fingers, we have probably known that three are more than one; but there is a puzzle of mental arithmetic which we at least have not solved yet, and that is, how I can be at one and the same time the subject and the object of my own thinking—these three in one; and I could credit more easily the man who says God cannot exist as a trinity were it not for this strange unity of distinctions in my own personal consciousness. When I cannot as yet hardly comprehend my own imperfection, I will, at least, allow God to exist in a perfection

which passes my knowledge; and if revelation leads me to worship Him as a unity, complete in Himself, and not as a mere lonely, loveless unit, that needs something else to make it blessed, surely it is a better wisdom to believe in, though we can but dimly comprehend, the unity of three eternal distinctions in the ineffable society of one blessed person.

But it would take too long to mention the people both out of the Church and also in it, who are so satisfied with their knowledge of the profound problems of theology, simply because they have never come to the surface exhausted after trying to sound a single one of the deep things of God. Only let me add that popular infidelity, especially, knows a marvelous amount concerning the unknowable. I speak not now of the unwilling skeptics, who have lost faith as they have sought to fathom creation's mysterious deep; but it is pitiful, sometimes, to see young men assume the air of superior knowledge who have never so much as learned how to take soundings in a single deep passage of thought. Popular skepticism merely flits over the surface and the shallows of things. So, I dare say, the sea-gull dips its beak in the crest of a breaking wave, and thinks it knows all about salt water.

But I have in mind a more serious purpose than this of characterizing those who already know so much about religion that they have lost the teachable spirit and heart. My object rather is to remind you, by these questionings, of what our errand in this life really is. It is very evident that the deep things of God are intended for finite minds to search. God has given us great problems for our mental exercise; God means us to think, and to think hard—to turn over facts and to look at them, to pry behind appearances and find out what we can of His thoughts—and we have found out a vast deal. The centuries have made solid acquisitions in knowledge, and the study of God's ways grows every year more fascinating. We are always trembling on the verge of

some great discovery. Truth opens new vistas to us at every turn. Knowledge is glorious, and he who nowadays will not read and think is like a man deaf and blind in the midst of all the beauty and glory of the opening summer. Science is romance, and there is no novel so exhilarating as is the story of truth. But having said all this, I say more: that it is just as clear that to gain knowledge is not our chief errand here. We have a higher calling; we have a more urgent duty. This mortal stage, in all its lights and shadows, seems arranged for scenes of probation; it is fitted out for the formation of character. Our errand here is to go and bring character out of this earthly life. It is to bring—even though we learn it through our losses and sufferings—the capacity of loving out of this earthly trial and sorrow. Our object is salvation; to work out in this large, grand way our salvation is the end for which all things here are fitted up and adapted. And so God follows through all man's history this supreme moral purpose: the salvation of our souls, the redemption of the race; and to this end everything else in His providence seems to have been subordinated. That our moral redemption is our main errand here appears clearly enough from the reflections which we have just been pursuing concerning the deep things of God; for God gratifies our love for knowledge only in so far as it seems to be for our moral good. How easy it would have been for Him to have granted us revelations of some of these mysteries! A single sentence in the Bible might have settled centuries of theological dispute. It may be better, however, for the Church to be taught, by ages of controversy, the sweet lesson of charity, than to have all knowledge. The silence of the Scriptures and God's secrets in nature show that our lives here are for probation. The day of the revelation of all things must, of necessity, be the day of judgment. Too much as well as too little light might preclude the trial of character. Probation seems possible only in a twilight world; and

God, therefore, seems to have drawn the curtains over the windows of our earthly habitation and not to have granted us the open vision of the great realities which lie in the sunlight of truth without, darkening His revelations to us as a wise friend would draw the shade of the sick chamber and attenuate the light to the sufferer's eye, in order that brightness of the whole day might not excite the diseased brain to a delirium, and too great a flood of air and sunshine sweep away the very hope of his recovery. Let us remember, then, this fact of revelation: that while the shadows lie over many a field of knowledge, the light does fall directly and straight from the face of God over the narrow path of *duty*; and though we may not see far into the shadows of the forest on either side, yet, if we will, we can keep with resolute feet the narrow path of duty, and that is the path which leads up into the open day.

Let us remember, then, in conclusion, that the great duties of life are the illuminated texts of Scripture: "Repent," "Believe," "Be converted," "Strive," "Pray," "Have the spirit of Christ," "Set your affections on things above." These commandments of the Lord are "plain, enlightening the eyes" of whosoever wishes to see. There are many things which Jesus said to the disciples we shall know hereafter; and it is enough, is it not, to make death a welcome thought to us to reflect what wondrous knowledge it may bring to our opening eyes in heaven?—a welcome thought, if only we are doing that work here and now which is the condition of all happiness hereafter.

Our business here, then, in one word, is with conscience. Conscience is our schoolmaster here; conscience is the teacher sent from God to every one of us—conscience which hears the voice of Jehovah and sends us in penitence to the great Teacher for the secret of the new heart. Oh, brethren, it is of minor consequence, after all, what acquisitions of knowledge we may make in this world; it is of minor consequence how far we may be able to peer into the

deep things of God; but it is of supreme urgency that we should gain, every one of us, Jesus' secret of the new heart. May He give us that; may He teach us that blessed, that divine secret. If you have not already sought upon your knees for that, if you have not begun to find the hope and the joy of it, is it not time for you to begin to live now, really to live? Do not be content with mere existence: the trees exist through all the winter's cold; in the spring they begin to live. So let us seek after life—the life of beauty, songfulness and joy, whose secret is the secret of the Lord. He only can teach us how to live, how to cease from dying and to begin to live—to live the true, the real, the eternal life, that pure, loving, blessed life which is hid with Christ in God.

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS MORNING.

BY REV. DAVIS W. LUSK, IN UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, NEWARK, N. J.

And the angel said unto them, Be not afraid; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.
—Luke ii: 10.

THE birth of Christ is the gladdest event of history. The advent of princes, born to a crown, amid luxurious surroundings, has often been the occasion of great rejoicing all over a kingdom. But when Mary gave birth to the infant Jesus in a stable at Bethlehem, the very heavens rejoiced. The shepherds at midnight on the Judean hills saw the glory of God, and from that effulgent light the angels sang, "Be not afraid," etc.; and down from the heavens came the grand chorus, in which a great multitude of angel voices joined: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men" (v. 14).

That was the first Christmas morning that dawned on earth, and it was a morning of joy; joy among the stars, joy among the angels, joy in the heart of God, joy that thrilled all heaven and will yet fill the earth, and be caught up and embalmed in the everlasting song before the throne.

I wish to-day to illustrate the truth

of this angel message to the watching shepherds. I can, of course, in a single sermon touch only on a few points of the grand and joyful theme.

I The advent of Christ was good tidings to the slave. When He came, a large part of the race were held in abject servitude. Slavery prevailed extensively in cultivated Greece, in imperial Rome, and even in Palestine—in the very shadow of the temple of the Most High. Some Roman masters held from ten to twenty thousand slaves, and the condition of the slave was hard in the extreme. He was treated and held simply as a "thing"; bought and sold as men deal in sheep and horses, he was absolutely the property of his master; he had no rights as a man—no place under the law; could be beaten, scourged, and put to death at the will of the master. Such was the condition of half the world when the angel choir sang their *Gloria in Excelsis*. But that song was the death-knell to human bondage. The Infant that lay in the manger hard by was to be the great Deliverer. From His lips was to sound out the emancipation proclamation that was to give deliverance to captives everywhere, and set at liberty those that were bound. And this has been the blessed effects of Christ's mission and teaching wheresoever the Gospel has prevailed. Slavery cannot exist under the clear light and benign influence of Christianity. Its cardinal principles—the unity of the race, the common Fatherhood in God, the Golden Rule, the new commandment, the doctrine of oneness in Christ and absolute equality in all things spiritual—are fatal to the system and the principle of servitude. And history traces, in characters of light and glory, the career of the Cross as it has made the round of the nations, until there is scarcely a foot of soil redeemed by the blood of Jesus trodden to-day by the foot of a slave. Glorious emancipation! Glorious harbinger of that spiritual liberty which Christ is yet to achieve!

II. The advent of Christ was good tidings to the laborer. The mass of men belong to the laboring class—arc

forced to earn their bread in the sweat of their brows. The honor, the dignity, of labor was not at all understood before Christ's advent. Labor was looked upon as a disgrace. Men were despised who had to work as a means of livelihood. Philosophers taught that all forms of manual labor were degrading. In Rome only three kinds of occupation were considered respectable, viz.: medicine, commerce, and architecture. Free men had to work side by side with slaves.

But Christ taught a new doctrine. He consecrated and made honorable all honest labor, both by the precepts He taught and by His own example. He was a carpenter, the son of a carpenter, and wrought at His humble trade until He began His public ministry. He chose His disciples from the humblest occupations. And just as the spirit and teachings of the great Master prevail, the laboring classes will be elevated and prosperous, and human society will approximate the heavenly world.

III. The advent of Christ revealed to earth the true idea of humanity. The ancients had no just conception of man as man. At best, he was considered of no account, except as related to the State or the crown. The infinite value of the human soul, the amazing dignity of manhood—of man, made in the image of God, a creature of God, and an heir of immortality—had not dawned on the conception of the world at the time of Christ's advent. He, the Divine-Man, the Son of the Highest, conferred an infinite boon on the race when He revealed and taught the true idea of humanity—the real grandeur and nobility of *man as man*, both in his intrinsic nature and in his relations to God and to immortality. The incarnation and the death of Christ to save individual man is a stupendous testimony that has not been lost on the world, and never will be; and its final effect will be to lift man to an equality with angels. Skeptics and others babble about "the religion of humanity." But their humanity is a humanity utterly desti-

tute of one element or principle of divine life; it is "of the earth earthy." The only genuine religion of humanity—a religion that regenerates the soul and lifts man up to fellowship with God and companionship with angels—is the religion taught by Jesus of Nazareth in wonderful words, in His still more wonderful life, and in His death on the cross.

IV. The advent of Christ was good tidings to the family. The ancients had very imperfect ideas about it. Marriage was simply the means the State had to produce citizens. The sanctity of marriage, the sweetness of the domestic affections, the power of family influence in training, both for the state and the Church, had no place in the world's estimate. But, oh, the power, the blessedness, of the religion of Jesus on the family! It relays, cements, and sanctifies this old foundation. It gives to woman her true sphere and her golden sceptre. It makes the family the type of heaven, the type of Christ's Church, and invests it with a power for good that is well-nigh irresistible.

V. The advent of Christ was glad tidings because it gave the world a new hope. The old religions offered none. Philosophies shed no light on the grave and the great beyond. Skepticism, infidelity, false science, agnosticism, materialism, all end in despair. The best they offer man is the motto of the Stoics: "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."

The song of the angels on that eventful Christmas morning was the song of hope to a despairing world. It shot light and sunshine into the sad and desolate heart of guilty, lost man, and down into the grave, and athwart the sky of the unknown future. On the gloom and despair of the ages, without God and without hope, the Sun of Righteousness arose in noontide splendor, and illumined the world. Before it the night vanished in the sinner's soul, and joy and peace and blessedness were experienced.

Oh! gladdest day of all the year—the day when angels came down to earth

instance, of the Church as being "the family of God." We know what are the constituent parts of a family. Now, God has made in Zion a blessed counterpart of all that is in His family. Two conclusions inevitably follow from this truth.

I. This Church presents to us the way, under God's hand, to true personal goodness. Men devise many recipes to correct evils and excite to virtue. But Zion accomplishes all these results by one simple method. To be in the Church of God is to be in the way of all goodness. Well may the inhabitants of Zion rejoice, for all spiritual blessings of God's kingdom are given to it.

II. Another logical conclusion follows, viz.: that all of us ought to be in that Zion. We are to be in it, not because the Church itself demands it; not because the minister calls for it; not because the influences around us have inculcated it *not for any or all of these reasons. We are to belong to the Church because God, who founded the Church and created us, has laid this obligation upon us. That is the one solid and sufficient reason by which we are to be influenced. We are to be in Zion, because God has been pleased to enjoin it. We have no option here, because we are but creatures, and bound to obey the Creator. We may use our human wisdom with reference to the institutions that man has founded. But this unique, matchless, unparalleled institution that God has founded, and founded for us, we are bound to be in, if we would be obedient to Him. And we are not to be simply visitors to His Church, or occasional attendants, and especially not to be patrons. We are to be inhabitants, dwelling in it; being in it with our whole souls, and complying with the obligations that are incumbent upon its inhabitants, if we would be pure men. And this is no unreasonable command. 1. The way in which the Word came is both significant and instructive. 2. Another consideration is that, "Great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of her." That is the culminating and crowning glory of God's Zion.

It is the Zion of the ordinary human being, and it is the Zion of the Lord. You may take the great political parties of the day—the Republican and the Democratic—and you will find varieties of intelligence, varieties of motives, and greater or less degrees of intensity. But the party retains its unity, notwithstanding these individual varieties. The same thing is in the Church of the living God; it is composed of human beings of different degrees of energy, of capacity. There are times of coldness and times of ardor; times of weakness and times of strength; there are men of the meanest motives and men of pure motives. There is a great deal given for organization and instruction, and I want to make the thing clear to you as a spiritual truth. God is with Zion by His very nature. He is omnipresent and omniscient, and this being so, there are certain natural and necessary results that follow. When you are on the street, you must see things that are going on around you. You know that they are not the same that you would see in your own home. So it is with God. He is with His Church, not only because He has these natural attributes, but because it is His Church that He has founded in Christ, and over which He exercises watchful care. The Church is made Christ's because he is the Son of God. Not a mere man could be capable of filling that high place. He is God also. But it is not simply as God that he is King and head of His Church. He says Himself, "This is the kingdom given to Me," but that would not be true if given to Him as God. It was, therefore, as the God-man that the Church was given to him. As a mere man He could not have the kingdom. He is, therefore, in it in His mediatorial capacity. No mere man could fill that conspicuous place, and it is because of the God-man that we see so great human sympathy with divine power in the head of the Church. It is the especial glory of the New Testament that explains and expounds this.

So much for the second teaching of the text with reference to the transcend-

ent glory and dignity of Him who is in Zion. Now, as to some practical reflections growing out of the lesson.

1. We must see that this Zion is a home of great dignity. We speak of it as the home of the family; but it is more than that, it is His kingdom. It must be respected as His kingdom. The question is not what would men have? what would society have? but what would God have? and in the degree that the Church is true to God, does she feel herself to be in His kingdom.

2. If this be God's Zion, then what have we to do to be in His Zion and to feel the pleasures incumbent upon members of His Zion? We are to obey Him, because He who has founded this community makes it incumbent upon us to do His will, and if we would be wholly subservient we should conform to His way. We are not only to come to His Zion, but we are to come in the right spirit, and to carry that into our occupation of Zion. We speak of this Church as being holy, as a place of sanctity. Where is the sanctity? Is it in the walls and pews? No. Is it in the worshipers? No. Is it in the minister? No. Where is it? The cry is that "the Holy One of Israel is in the midst of thee." It is His presence, His power, His relation to us, that give sanctity to God's house and God's service. Everything we do is because we are God's creatures. It is that alone which gives dignity and glory to the service.

3. Now, let me speak a word to any that may hear me, who are still without God and without hope of eternal life. If I can I would address an earnest word to such. This King summons you from rebellion; He summons you to peace and good-will to Him. I bring His message to you. I do not say to you, "Be reconciled to the Church;" I say to you, "Be reconciled to God." That is His claim upon you. Reconciled! Then there has been alienation, there has been a quarrel. Why will you not be reconciled to Him? "Come unto Me." Trust Jesus Christ. Rest

upon Christ, and when that reconciliation is effected, and the spirit of adoption takes possession of you, and you learn to love God, because He loves you, and you see that He will help you, you will feel that Christless souls can be reconciled to God, and have the blessings of this spiritual unity.

A ROYAL RULE OF LIFE.

By R. S. STORES, D.D. [CONGREGATIONAL], IN THE CHURCH OF THE PILGRIMS, BROOKLYN.

Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.—ROM. xii: 11.

ONE of the most common and clamorous criticisms of Christianity, urged by those who are unwilling to submit their lives to its control, is this: that it is a system of speculative doctrine only, a matter of ingenious analysis and logical discussion, but it does not relate to practical life. It is mainly concerned with the future life, and does not concern itself, they say, with every-day affairs. Now, it is enough to point to a text like this, by way of refutation. This is a royal rule of life, and if heartily adopted it would consecrate all our work. It is not, however, alone, and isolated from other parts of Scripture, but in harmony with all other details of Christian duty. "In diligence not slothful; in spirit, enthusiastic; serving the Lord." This is the way to make life divine; to enter into its mystery and learn its value and beauty.

Our daily business is largely secular, and many of our cares trivial, and prompted by self-interest alone. We have domestic and social relations as well. Much of our work is routine toil, and it may seem that the moral element cannot be readily superimposed. This is looked upon as a rule in the air, and not a practical one. But it must be kept in mind that it was first addressed to men who led lives even more obscure than ours. The text was not spoken to the Roman Senator, charged with the affairs of State; to the philosopher, involved in profound investigation, or to the poet, who, in breathing lofty musi-

cal numbers, was making for himself a name to endure through all the centuries; but to the Roman Jew and the Roman slave; to those dwelling in the Ghetto across the Tiber, men and women in humble life. So, now, this royal rule is for the sailor at sea, the mechanic bending over his bench, and the merchant in his counting room; and it involves, as a condition for its obedient observance, an intrepid, intelligent and far-sighted soul. Such a reverent regard for this commanding principle will insure a life truly sublime. Let us, then, look at some particulars, and see how we can accomplish the end.

I. Character comes out of work. It is what we do that educates us, rather than what we read or speculate about. The work of life, with the temper and spirit we put into it, trains and molds. It not only illustrates but cultivates virtue. High, honorable integrity of act cultivates integrity of heart; enthusiasm in effort resupplies the founts of enthusiasm in the will, and sympathetic activities nourish the emotion itself out of which they flow. Christ was a workman. We cannot say that his work developed holiness in him, because he was ever holy; but it continually illustrated the holiness of his soul. And this, too, in the minor affairs of life. The Gospel gives great space to small particulars concerning Him. He ate and slept and talked. The glory of the divine shone out in the smallest as well as in the greatest acts. He taught the supernal and eternal significance of little acts, like the giving of a cup of cold water for His sake. He taught that he who was faithful in the least would be faithful in that which is greatest. As the roots of the oak reach down and out in the soil to the slenderest end, so the strength of character is found in those small and unseen acts of life that run through the hours and moments of each day. It is not by one stroke that the sculptor chisels the marble into artistic beauty, or by one touch that the painter puts upon the canvas the glowing conceptions of his fancy; so

"Heaven is not reached by a single bound,
But we build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And we mount to its summit round by round."

2. Daily work assists us to larger and clearer views of divine truth. We may not see how the minor and distracting duties of daily life—those of the home, the school, the shop—can be made tributary to advancement in piety. There is, however, a proverb older than Christ, that says, "In all labor there is profit." While the Word of God puts discredit on labor that is dishonorable or useless, it extols the labor of the wise. Fidelity in work and a fervent, enthusiastic temper—"boiling or bubbling, like a fountain," is the figure hinted at in the text—will assuredly freshen our faculties and give tone and balance to the mind. The crazy fancies that have shattered or darkened communities came not from artisan, miner or sailor, but rather from some secluded recluse, deluded by his morbid fantasies. Healthful, honorable work gives strength to the mind and brings it to that point to which the Gospel makes its appeal. Then leisure has a charm, and inquiry has a zest after toil, provided it be not protracted, exhausting toil. The best scholars have been trained in cities. There is something in the stir and whirl of these great centers that keeps our faculties alive, that trains us to sharp attention, and develops a masterful resolve. In the country there is something of languor and indolence, but in the emulous activities of metropolitan life we make our faculties more acute and our inquisition of truth is more successful.

3. By work we enable ourselves to influence others for good. We are confederated in continual alliances in society—youth and age, want and wealth, culture and ignorance. Dissolve society into repellant unities, and you arrest work, but under a law of life like that indicated in the text you secure harmony in combination. Every one affects all. There is indeed peril in this fact. An unfaithful workman may by neglect introduce into your dwelling disease and death. A negligent pilot

may cause disaster to a ship and plunge hundreds into sorrow by the sacrifice of human lives. A bludgeon is not needed to destroy the eye, or a hammer to ruin a watch. A grain of sand or dirt is sufficient in either case; and so it is with secret and subtle influences at work for good or ill in society. Noble work will bless those we may never see and give progress to what is best in human life. We can by the temper of Christ in us impress others and become preachers of righteousness in our day, even more effectively, perhaps, than the occupant of a pulpit or professor's chair.

It is not wealth inherited that is the mightiest lever, but that which is gained by work. He who lays aside for Christ a portion of his daily wage of work, preaches to the world and thereby advances the cause of the Redeemer.

Lastly, if we are obedient to this rule of life we shall gain the clearest impression of immortality. It is not in day dreams or in night visions that we come under the full power of the world to come; but often it is in obscure and even servile toil that we feel the dignity of manhood within us that is not yet revealed. It is in diligence and fidelity and patience of toil, that we come to realize something of the force and splendor of expression that is a sensibility not yet developed, but which will be in the life immortal. The philosopher in his cell, rapt in speculation, may doubt, and the enthusiast may feel that he has not grasped it; but the mother, immersed in her petty cares, and busied with her humble service, does feel that a time is coming when her work will be recognized and rewarded. The devout and obedient disciple of Christ sees that, not over the Lord's Day alone, but over every one of the six days of toil, there hang the bending, brooding heavens, bright with immortal light. Of course we may be so ardent in earthly pursuits as to forget everything else; but to the thoughtful worker this truth comes as an inspiring impulse. So the Lord's Day comes, not as the Sabbath to the Jew at the end of

the week, a memorial, but at the beginning, to exalt, direct and quicken.

"Diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." This is the rule for us, now and here, in the midst of our eager, earnest industries. We gaze on the loveliness and quiet of the country, and fancy that there is the place to lead an unworldly life. Nay, there is worldliness there as truly as in Wall Street. Men fight about fences as we do about contracts. Here, indeed, in wealth and fashion and sensuality, worldliness takes root with Satanic force; but here, also, are the finest specimens of Christian character illustrated. Here holiness may be written on the bells of the horses; arts and inventions become allies of the Gospel and aid in its accelerated advancement. Thus, under the beneficent influence of this divine rule of life, the light of this world's history will finally mingle into the spiritual beauty of Christ's immortal reign! Write, then, over the archway of your hearts, over the portals of your office, and your home, "Diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," and in the joyousness of this earthly service for Christ you shall find a bright prophecy of the opportunity and the work that shall be yours in the immortal realm above!

THE GRADUALNESS OF DIVINE INSTRUCTION.

BY CANON LIDDON, IN ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, LONDON.

I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.—John xvi: 12.

WHEN our Lord tells His apostles that He had many things to say to them which they could not bear as yet to hear, He may well have taken them by surprise. They may have thought that a discourse like that in the supper-room, on that eve of what they felt to be an approaching crisis, would contain the final instructions, the final exhortations, the last consolations which they were to receive from their Master. He warns them that there is much still to be told them in a coming time. It would be

told them partly during the forty days after the resurrection; much more after the descent of the Holy Spirit, who was to guide them into all truth.

What our Lord did speak of with the apostles during the forty days between His resurrection and His ascension is told us in general terms by Luke at the beginning of the Acts. He was "speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." What His kingdom was to be, what laws were to govern it, how it was to be organized, what were to be the sources of its life, and, above all, how it was to assist, and expand, and perfect the spiritual life of single souls that found a home within it—such-like topics, we may dare to infer, were handled by our divine Lord during those solemn days. And the result may be seen in the apostolic epistles, especially in those of Paul, who would have learned what had passed at some later time after his conversion. When, in the epistle to the Corinthians, he compares the Church of Christ to the human body, we learn that its members were to be many, but that its life was to be one. When, in the epistle to the Ephesians, he calls it "the Body of Christ, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all," we see that it was to be no mere voluntary and human association. When he instructs Timothy and Titus how it was to be governed, how ministered to, how provided for, we learn how great a place the Church was to have in the practical life, as well as in the thought of Christians. But it was especially after the descent of the Holy Ghost, and through Him, that our Lord was to say many things to His apostles. "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth; for He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear that shall He speak; and He shall show you things to come. He shall glorify Me; for He shall receive of Mine and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are Mine; therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine and shall show it unto you." This was to be the illuminating work of God the Holy Ghost after the day of Pente-

cost. He was to enable the apostles to understand the real meaning of what they had heard from, and had observed in, their now ascended Master. "He shall glorify Me; He shall receive of Mine and shall show it unto you."

I. THE INSTRUCTION OF THE APOSTLES.

Why did not Christ teach everything Himself? Why leave so much to be proclaimed by those who came after Him? He gives the answer: The apostles could not bear these added burdens of truth in those earlier days. The reception and assimilation of religious truth is, from the nature of the case, a very gradual process. In the New Testament it is compared to the erection of a building. The apostles were not in a state of mind to receive the whole truth; besides, the Holy Spirit had not been sent down to reveal and to help in the way of understanding and receiving it.

II. THE INSTRUCTION OF THE CHURCH.

Our Lord's words apply to the Christian Church. To this Church He had many things to say, which she could not bear to receive in those days of her infancy. This does not mean that in all the coming centuries He would go on adding to the truths of the Christian creed by a process of continuous revelation. The faith for which Christians were to contend was, Jude says, "once for all delivered to the saints" in the age of the apostles. Later ages might explain and unfold and bear witness to, but not add to, the sum of inspired teaching. The Church is a society; and the life of a society, like the life of a man, is a history of experiences. And in this field God is continually saying new things to the Church with the lapse of time. This language of God is uttered in the sequence of events which are ordered by His providence. What manifold lessons has God been teaching our own country during its fifteen centuries! Look, too, at the history of Israel. Will there not be teachers hereafter for whom we of to-day are unprepared? Can we suppose that the Eternal Word has, as yet, said His last word to Christendom?

III. THE INSTRUCTION OF THE INDIVIDUAL.

The human mind has its distinct stages of growth. So, the purely spiritual life of the soul has its stages of experience, and truths are welcome at a later stage, which are unintelligible at an earlier one. Then there comes the stage of spiritual illumination, when the horizons of revealed truth are opened out to the delighted gaze. And then a higher stage still—union with God in and through union with Christ—when the soul in rapture exclaims: "My Beloved is mine and I am His." Now, the truths appropriate to the higher stages would be unintelligible to the stages below.

IV. SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. We have the true method of educating children in religious truth.

2. How does this line of thought add to the solemn interest of life! Oh, the possibilities of the future! The day may come when Christ will say many things to us under the discipline of sorrow, and losses, and sufferings, which we could not bear now. There is a picture of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette on their wedding day, which suggests this thought. All, as yet, looks as bright as a great position, and the smiles of friends, and human care, and human prospects could make it. The young couple are scarcely more than children. It is the unclouded morning of a summer day. "I have many things to say unto you," might well have been the motto of those young lives. As yet, the long anxiety, the indecision, the struggle, the flight, the enforced return, the trial, the imprisonment, the scaffold—these are hidden. Each stage of suffering was bearable when it came; each brought with it lessons in moral and spiritual truth, which else might never have been learned. It could not have been borne if it had been prematurely disclosed.

3. Finally, these words suggest the duties of hope and patience in respect of the, as yet, veiled future, in respect of the many questions which haunt every active and thoughtful mind when it

looks out on the eternal world. Of that world the poet says:

"Thither we send our thoughts to dwell,
But still the wall impassable
Bars us around with sensual bond.
In vain we dive for that beyond—
Yea, traverse o'er and o'er the bound—
Walking in the unseen profound,
Like flies, which on the window-pane
Pace up and down again, again;
And though they fain would break away
Into the expanse of open day,
They know not why, are traveling still
On the glass fence invisible.
So dwell our thoughts with the unseen,
Yet cannot pass the bourne between."

Aye, if He were to gratify us—if He were to withdraw the veil while we still live in the life of sense—could we bear it? Is it not better as He in His great mercy wills it to be? The day will come to each one of us when He will have many things to say to us. We could not bear them now.

A CHRISTOLOGICAL VIEW OF HEAVEN.

BY REV. A. C. GEARY, IN REFORMED EPISCOPAL CHURCH, REEDYSVILLE, MD.

At thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore.—Psa. xvi: 11.

THAT view of heaven which makes due account both of the real and the ideal, holds closely and consistently to the person of Christ, as the one of whom it is said, "All things have been created through Him and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist." His presence centrally and essentially characterizes the "right hand" of God. So much is implied in the faith of Christendom as expressed in the Apostles' Creed, "He ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty," and such is also the teaching of God's Word throughout. While the Psalmist himself may not have conceived of it in this form, the fact itself is yet undoubtedly comprehended in the full import of his inspiration.

The glorified humanity of Christ, exalted to the right hand of God, furnishes a human and earthly basis or anchor upon which the mind and heart

of man may lay hold. But it is only when His divine nature is contemplated, in union with the human, that the door of heaven is fully opened; for then redemption is brought into view in its entirety. The glorification of the Redeemer at the right hand of God, therefore, involves infinitely more than the mere elevation of a righteous man. The halo of glory that shines forth from His person reflects the very brightness and effulgence of the entire Godhead. This divine human constitution of Christ's person forms the true basis for the real and the ideal, upon which every conception of heaven beyond itself, that is not crudely naturalistic, on the one hand, or abstractly spiritualistic on the other, must rest.

As the Redeemer sustains a central relation to the other persons of the Godhead, and thus pre-eminently represents the glory of God, so does He sustain a similar central relation to the saints in glory, out of which also grow the "pleasures forevermore" referred to in the text. In virtue of this mystical union with Christ the redeemed are made to share largely in the glory that essentially belongs to God's own being, as also in that which grows out of the creation, redemption and glorification of the world.

The bond of unity, furthermore, that obtains among the saints themselves, likewise has its origin and foundation here; and the "communion of saints," involving the recognition and the glorification of earthly ties and relations, is a fountain whence flow rivers of delight.

The same is true of the relationship in which the redeemed stand to the other heavenly beings. On account of their possessing a common nature with that of the Redeemer, the saints stand above the angels. These "ministering spirits" are their delightful attendants and companions.

The activity and employment of the saints in glory are also determined and inspired by their peculiarly exalted position at God's right hand, and are another abundant source of joy to them.

This substantially consists in worshiping and glorifying God. In this they are greatly aided, if not entirely led, by their fellow worshipers, the angelic hosts, whose special mission it is to engage in acts of adoration and ascriptions of praise to Almighty God. Such was their office already when the Savior was born, according to the record: "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God." In the Apocalypse these beings are spoken of as crying out continually, "Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come;" also as being "harpers, harping with their harps." The hosannahs and hallelujahs, the melodies and harmonies, uttered and produced by this heavenly choir, added to the sounds of their own voices, must fill the saints with rapture unspeakably great.

But what will doubtless be a source of still greater bliss to them, and which is likewise inseparably connected with their fellowship of Christ, is to be found in the beatific visions with which they are everywhere confronted. This inspiring element in the celestial worship addresses the eye, as the other spoken of does the ear, and thus the two highest senses are made to be the channels of receiving the greatest "pleasures," involving, however, the presence and activity of all the faculties and powers of the soul.

Of the triune God who will be the "all in all" of heaven, as revealed in Jesus Christ, and of the ransomed, it is said, "They shall be like Him, for they shall see Him as He is." The throng of the redeemed, arrayed in "white robes," with "palms in their hands," and "crowns of gold on their heads," and the other "innumerable hosts," will also present a glorious sight. Along with the beings are the "buildings," the "place," the "city that has foundations, whose builder and maker is God," with its "golden streets" and "pearly gates," its "sea of glass like unto crystal," its "emerald and sardine stones," the "Father's House," the Savior's "mansions," and our own "build-

ing of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Of the appearance of the world of glory to us now, however, it must be said, in the language of Holy Writ: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." Our only safety, as regards a true apprehension of those blissful realms, lies in cleaving firmly to Him who is the "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."

THE PEACE WHICH PASSETH UNDERSTANDING.

BY REV. STOPFORD A. BROOKE [INDEPENDENT], IN BEDFORD CHAPEL, LONDON.

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you.—John xiv: 27.

THESE are musical words; but the music is not of earth alone. They touch a strain above the world. In their consciousness of vast spiritual power, in their earnestness of the strife and trouble of men, they are of that true supernatural which abides in the secret of God. But in their tenderness, in the thoughtful care for those who loved Him that He who spoke them had, in the sweetness of expression, which brought together in them human sadness and the divine power which could so boldly promise peace, and give it; they are of that exquisite quality which forever moves the heart of man. Sorrow, power, and beauty meet and mingle in them.

Yet it was a strange legacy. He gave them peace, He said—but had they peace? Was their life a life of peace, were their hearts at peace? Did trouble never touch them, or the storms of life; did sorrow, and fear, and passion never make a tempest within them? If His gift of peace was given as the world did not give, it was also not the peace that the world calls peace. What was it? That is our first question. It is answered by the words—*My peace.*

It could not be peace from the outward pains that beset life. For Christ says that it was His own peace He left to them, and when He spoke the words there gathered round His head all the storms that can befall a man.

Nor were His followers any better off.

"In the world ye shall have tribulation." And they had it.

Let no one dream, then, who follows Christ, that he will be saved from outward battle. Not peace, but war, and storm, and the cross, belong to those who receive the legacy of the peace of Christ. Nor let them dream that they will have peace from the sorrows of mankind; that loss will be less bitter, ingratitude's tooth less keen, treachery less a fire in the heart, broken love less unbearable, a shattered home less lonely.

It was not, then, the peace of the human heart that Christ had, or that He left to us. What was it, then? It was a spiritual peace; peace in that inner life which, striking its roots into eternity, is linked unbrokenly to God; nay, which is a part of God. It was spiritual peace that was His peace—it was that which He left us. Can we define it? It escapes analysis. Though we cannot define its deepest emotions we may reach some definition of it. Its quality is to exalt the whole nature into a quick life in which all things act in harmony. It is the living and uplifted harmony of the whole being under a divinely good will, which will is felt by us as an unspeakable and personal love. This is the unutterable which Paul felt when he was caught up into the third heaven. This is the joy that Christ possessed in His peace.

But we *can* say something of the actual things in which this peace consists, though we cannot of the feeling it creates.

1. It was the peace which comes of fulfillment of duty. "I have glorified Thee upon the earth; I have finished the work Thou gavest Me to do." All was completed, and completed perfectly. And He knew its results on mankind. Can you conceive a higher peace than

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that which must have filled His heart? And not only in this last hour, but all through His life, there had been this peace of duty done. And this peace may be ours—may be Christ's legacy to every true disciple—all along the way of life and in the final hour.

2. The peace of Christ was the peace which comes from the triumph of love.

He endured a world of evil. But over all love rose triumphant, as the sun above the clouds of night; and rising into the region of perfect calm in which the love of God abides, the triumph of love made peace. Think what that spiritual calm must have been which looked from the Cross in the hour of death upon the mocking crowd, and cried, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And this victory and reward of perfect love may be ours.

3. The peace of Christ consisted in conscious union with God. "I and My Father are one." Take one example—*peace from union with perfect truth.*

This is something of Christ's peace, and because it was not of this world, it was given not as the world gave. It was given for eternity. It is everlasting life without sin. All the storms that arise from the battle of the lower nature with the higher will be hushed to rest by the lower nature being lifted into goodness. The peace of God is righteousness, and it will rule the heart. The peace of God is loss of self, the loss of bitter craving, of restless vanity, of the hideous activity of decay. And it is the gain of love, and through love of that beautiful and musical life that lives in the life of all that lives, in utter joy.

And to that, some of you prefer annihilation! Very well, take your nothingness. Take the death of thought, the ruin of love. Take the vanishing of joy, the corpse of beauty, for your eternal bride. Take the corruption you desire. But let us prefer the life, and peace, and joy, and beauty, and love, and thought that lie hid for us in Christ's promise—"Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be

afraid. In My Father's house are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you."

FREEDOM OF CHOICE IN RELIGION.

BY REV. WILLIAM FAWCETT, IN THE GRACE
M. E. CHURCH, CHICAGO.

And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.—Heb. xi: 15.

THE chapter from which the text is taken is a record of the faithful. Abraham was called of God to enter upon a special work. He went into the country pointed out to him never to return. The evidence of his consecration rested upon his perseverance. It was so with Isaac and Jacob. They went out never to return; not because of an interdict forbidding them; not because of natural obstacles, lofty mountains, swollen streams, or impenetrable woodlands; but because they desired to remain where they were sent. They were there in obedience to the command of God, and they were content to remain. They were in the way of duty. So it is with all true Christians. They are not Christians merely because they are obliged or foreordained to be. On the contrary, they are what they are from personal choice, being made willing in the day of God's power. Christianity draws much of its life from the natural desire of man to better his condition and prospects. We are at liberty to go back to the country from which we went out—to return to our state by nature. We started out at the call of the Spirit, and from a conviction of duty to God and to our own highest interests; but we are not compelled to go forward—to work out our salvation.

1. Almost hourly we feel an impulse to return. Nature lusts after the fleshpots of Egypt. Ten thousand influences draw us back. They are potent, and ever active, and draw with the strength of a leviathan. Retrogression, backsliding, apostacy, are not caused simply by opportunities or temptations, but by mighty forces, material, social,

spiritual, without and within, against which we have to fight constantly and earnestly.

2. Opportunities to return arise out of many things. In his business relations man may be surrounded by ungodly men. There is nothing to stimulate religious fervor. There is no opposition to a return in the life around him. Trials and afflictions beset us, and in the closet we almost feel like cursing a God seemingly unjust. Adversity quickens our pace. Rich and poor alike have opportunities; but it is a mistake for the destitute to suppose that cushioned seats and carpeted floors are not willingly shared with them by the well-to-do. The plea of poverty is merely an opportunity to fall away from holy living. We must all think how great harm slight causes may work. A word or a sneer may be the loss of a life to God. The Alpine traveler by the crack of his rifle or by the slightest misstep may precipitate an avalanche upon his head. Just as finely poised is the balance between righteousness and unrighteousness.

THE PRECIOUSNESS OF CHRIST.

By REV. BENJ. F. WHITTEMORE, IN CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ARROYO GRANDE, CAL.

Unto you therefore which believe He is precious.—1 Pet. ii: 7.

WHILE Christ is as a spot out of dry ground to the great mass of mankind, yet to the sincere Christian, who has received the baptism of His love

and Holy Spirit, He is inexpressibly near and dear.

I. Christ is precious to the genuine believer.

1. As Preserver. "By Him all things consist."

2. As Redeemer. "Sold." Bought back.

3. As Advocate and Intercessor.

4. As Friend. Earth's friends. "Loveth alway."

5. As Elder Brother. "Ye are my brethren."

6. As "Our Righteousness." "Filthy rags."

7. As "The End of the Law." "No condemnation."

8. As the *Only Savior*. "No other name."

II. Times when He is especially precious:

1. At conversion. "End of strength."

2. In times of trouble. "In six troubles," etc.

3. In times of affliction and distress. "He is afflicted," "He will deliver," etc.

4. In times of spiritual darkness. "I will guide thee with Mine eye."

5. In sickness and death. "Maketh bed." "Thy rod and staff," etc. Christ is precious!

III. To whom He is thus precious:

1. He is thus precious *only to believers*. What is it to believe?

2. The sin of unbelief. It makes God a liar. It brings condemnation.

3. The folly of unbelief. If the infidel is safe, the Christian is.

4. Would you find Him thus precious? *Only believe*. Love and serve Him.

PRAYER-MEETING SERVICE.

By REV. LEWIS O. THOMPSON.

DECEMBER 12.—DANIEL.* (Dan. xii.)

This royal youth was carried into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar in 588

* In addition to his great prosperity three prominent features in his life are to be noticed: 1. His devotion to principle. 2. His distinguished wisdom, skilled in interpreting visions and in statecraft. 3. His fearlessness. He does not hesitate to tell Nebuchadnezzar of his fall, and Belshazzar of his doom.—*Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia*, Vol. I.

B.C. His name, "God is my judge," explains the Shakespearean line, "A Daniel come to judgment."

I. He was steadfast in adhering to his convictions of right and duty under all circumstances and temptations.

1. He had adopted principles of temperance in meat and drink, and could not give them up, even to please the king.

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2. His religious duties were due to his God, and not to the king, and therefore not subject to the unjust and capricious decrees of earthly kings.

3. He knew that God could protect him amid all the dangers to which his fidelity would subject him; at all events, "an immortal soul can receive no harm from a mortal accident."

II. His hopes and zeal for the restoration of Israel.

1. These were inspired by the divine promise.

2. He set himself diligently to search out God's will and favored time, by fasting, penitence and prayer.

3. The answer thereto.

III. Conclusions.

1. Have good principles, and live up to them under all circumstances.*

2. Maintain them with sweetness, love and a spirit of reasonableness.

3. Duties are ours, consequences rest with God.

4. In matters of conscience the path of duty, though seemingly the path of danger, is, after all, the path of safety.

5. A firm trust in God will give us courage for every emergency in life, and fill our last hour with the hope of a glorious resurrection: "But go thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."

DECEMBER 19.—THE LORD IS A SUN AND SHIELD. (Ps. lxxxiv: 11.)

In this Psalm the writer expresses the benefit of public worship and the delight of a devout soul in the public ordinances of God's temple. It is as if the Psalmist, by reason of sickness, or otherwise, had been deprived of these delightful privileges for a season.

I. Consider the Lord as our sun. Dr.

* The character of Daniel. Let me—I. Open to you the constituent parts of his character. Here we behold, in combined and unintermittent exercise—1. Piety; 2. Wisdom; 3. Consistency; 4. Firmness. II. Urge you all to the attainment of it. Let me invite you to consider—1. How it honors God; 2. How it disarms prejudice; 3. How it tends to the welfare of your own soul.—REV. C. SIMEON.

Morris, in *The Celestial Symbol*, gives a number of remarkable parallelisms:

1. As the sun is our primary globe, so in the Scriptures Christ is presented as the central and supreme orb, the Sun of Righteousness, who infinitely transcends all created beings in wisdom, power and glory.

2. As the sun is the source of light, so Christ, as the Sun of Righteousness, is the unfailing fountain of truth and wisdom upon all around Him. In Thy light shall we see light.

3. As the sun is the source of all our heat, so Christ, as the Sun of Righteousness, is the fountain from whence the whole system of revealed truth derives its spiritual vitality.

4. As the sun is the source of chemical power, or actinism, so the beams of the Sun of Righteousness not only enlighten and warm, but regenerate every soul into which they enter.

5. As our earth is ever in magnetic sympathy with the globe of the sun, so the Church, or body of believers, is ever in loving sympathy with Christ, the Sun of Righteousness.

6. As the sun's gravitation is the ruling force of our planetary system, so the love of Christ, as the Sun of Righteousness, is the efficient power that perpetuates the activity and guarantees the safety of the Church.

II. Consider the Lord as our Shield. The shield is a piece of defensive armor that was much used in ancient warfare. We have a conflict to wage with sin, Satan and the world, in which the Lord, as our Shield, protects us from dangers and defends us from the darts and assaults of our spiritual foes. Rev. T. T. Munger, in *The Freedom of Faith*, presents us with four instructive particulars:

1. The Lord is our shield against the forces of nature.

2. The Lord is our shield against the inevitable evils of existence, such as weakness and decay.

3. The Lord is our shield against the calamities of life, such as poverty, disappointment and despair.

4. The Lord is our shield against our-

selves, such as self-love, self-care, and self-exaltation, not less than against inordinate desires, appetites and passions.

III. Reflections.

1. We need not walk in darkness, for the Lord is our light and our salvation.

2. The Lord, as our sun, will dispel the darkness of sin and sorrow.

3. In the light of the Sun of Righteousness we may grow in grace, spiritual beauty, strength and fruitfulness.

4. We need not fear dangers, nor our spiritual foes, for the Lord is not only our sun, but also our shield, and at last our exceeding great reward.

DECEMBER 26.—THE SPIRIT IN WHICH TO CLOSE THE YEAR. (Phil. iv: 20-23.)

With these stirring words the apostle closes this epistle. A similar spirit ought to fill us as we draw near the end of the year.

I. The Doxology. The apostle's thought overflows the channel of adequate expression, and all that he desires to say as a last word is summed in this grand ascription of praise.

1. We are to give glory to God as to our heavenly Father. We are not to regard Him as a tyrant, nor as a governor merely, but as a kind and loving Father.

2. We are to give Him the glory, that is, the honor and praise, of all His mercies to us. Not unto us, but to God, be the glory, for what He enables us to do, and for the recompense we receive in doing life's work.

II. Salutation. This is the token of brotherhood, for God is our Father; and it is the expression of personal interest and living fellowship.

1. The salutation of Paul alone to the brethren at Philippi without naming them individually.

2. That of those brethren then at Rome who were most intimately connected with him as his co-laborers.

3. That of the whole Christian brotherhood, of whom he designates chiefly they that are of Caesar's household.

III. Benediction. Grace is the love

of God as displayed in Christ, whereby we receive all those unmerited favors which are included in the Gospel plan of salvation.

1. The beginning of religion is grace.

2. Its progress in the soul depends upon grace.

What better could Paul desire for them, each and all, than that God's rich grace, so free and transforming, might abound toward them and be in them?

IV. Lessons.

1. We ought to praise God for all that He has bestowed upon us during this year; for all the gifts that have come to us through nature, for the opportunities His providence has sent us, and for the rich mercies of His grace.

2. Do we realize that God is our Father, and that all men are our brethren, toward whom we ought to exercise a lively interest, good-will, pity and help?

3. We have been surrounded all this year by the grace of God. Do we realize the importance of having that grace within us, and giving it free course to bring forth its heavenly fruit?

NOTE.—With the present number I lay aside my pen as editor of this department—a position I have held for six years. And in so doing I quote the words of Paul, "Now unto God and our Father be glory forever and ever... The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

Prayer-Meeting Topics for 1884.*

- Jan. 2. The duty of sending the Gospel to the heathen.—Luke vii: 22. (Missionary service.)
- " 9. How old art thou?—Gen. xlvii: 8. Ps. xc: 12. Ps. xxxix: 4.
- " 16. The day of Pentecost.—Acts xi: 1-4.
- " 23. The test of true religion.—Matt. vii: 18-20.
- " 30. The great promise.—Matt. xxviii: 20. (Promise meeting.)
- Feb. 6. Hindrances to the conversion of all nations.—Isa. xlii: 1, 2. (Missionary service.)
- " 13. The prayer of faith.—Jas. v: 15.
- " 20. Ask and it shall be given you.—Matt. vii: 7. Luke xi: 9. John xi: 22.

* These "Prayer-Meeting Topics for 1884," neatly printed, we shall be happy to send to clergymen for distribution among their people at *ten cents* per one hundred copies (barely the price of postage).—PUB. OF HOM. MONTHLY.

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- Feb. 27. God's method of dealing with His people.—Zach. xiii: 9.
- March 5. Christianity adapted to the needs of the world.—Ps. lxxii: 17. (Missionary service.)
- “ 12. The inward witness of the Spirit.—1 John v: 19.
- “ 19. Crucifixion to the world.—Gal. vi: 14.
- “ 26. A call to men to praise God.—Ps. cxvii: 8-9. (Praise meeting.)
- April 2. Human instrumentalities in the salvation of the world.—Acts viii: 30-31. (Missionary service.)
- “ 9. The contrite heart.—Isa. lxvi: 2. Ps. xxiv: 18; li: 17.
- “ 16. Weary in well-doing.—2 Thess. iii: 13.
- “ 23. Lovest thou Me?—John xxi: 16.
- “ 30. Suffering and reigning with Christ.—2 Tim. ii: 2.
- May 7. Home evangelization an imperative duty.—Deut. i: 21. (Missionary service.)
- “ 14. Noah's faith.—Heb. xi: 7.
- “ 21. Lead us not into temptation.—Matt. vi: 13.
- “ 28. Great and precious promises.—2 Peter i: 4. (Promise meeting.)
- June 4. The moral discipline of giving.—Luke xi: 41. (Missionary service.)
- “ 11. When God will be found.—Ps. cxix: 2; lvi: 18.
- “ 18. Peter's fall and repentance.—Matt. xxvi: 69-75.
- “ 25. Burdens cast upon the Lord.—Ps. iv: 22.
- July 2. Thy kingdom come.—Matt. vi: 10.
- “ 9. Hindrances to prayer.—Ps. lxxvi: 18.
- “ 16. The early conversion of children.—Mark x: 4. 1 Sam. iii: 19. Prov. viii: 17.
- “ 23. The sacrifice of praise.—Heb. xiii: 15. (Service of praise.)
- “ 30. Why the revival spirit has declined.—Hosea vi: 4.
- Aug. 6. The baptism of the Holy Ghost the great need of the Church. (Missionary service.)
- “ 13. How to have a revival.—Amos vii: 2.
- “ 20. An evil heart of unbelief.—Heb. iii: 12.
- “ 27. The tears of Jesus.—Luke xix: 41.
- Sept. 3. Watchman, what of the night?—Is. xxi: 11. (Missionary service.)
- “ 10. Little sins destroy much good.—Ecc. x: 1.
- “ 17. Critical periods in a sinner's life.—Luke xix: 42-44; xiii: 6-9.
- “ 24. Zeal in religion.—Gal. iv: 18.
- Oct. 1. Christ the desire of all nations. Hag. ii: 7. (Missionary service.)
- “ 7. Humiliation before exaltation.—James iv: 19.
- “ 14. Perdition dreadful.—Ps. xxvi: 9. Matt. xxv: 46.
- “ 21. The new song before the throne.—Rev. xiv: 1-3. (Praise meeting.)
- “ 28. Difficulties in religion.—1 Cor. xiii: 9.
- Nov. 4. The final triumph of Christianity.—John xii: 32. (Missionary service.)
- Nov. 11. Confessing Christ before men. Mark viii: 38.
- “ 18. Jacob at Bethel.—Gen. xxviii: 10-22.
- “ 25. Sowing and reaping.—Ps. cxxvi: 6.
- Dec. 2. Watching for Christ's appearing.—Luke xii: 37. (Missionary service.)
- “ 9. Living to God in small things.—Luke xvi: 10.
- “ 16. Enoch's walk with God. Gen. v: 22.
- “ 23. The glad tidings.—Luke ii: 19-14.
- “ 30. The Marys at the sepulchre.—Matt. xxvii: 61.

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**THE OLDEST CHRISTIAN SERMON,
PRAYER, AND HYMN.**

No. II.

BY PHILIP SCHAFF, D.D.

—♦—

THE FIRST CHRISTIAN PRAYER.

THE same discovery of Archbishop Bryennios, in a Greek convent of Constantinople, which brought to light the first recorded written sermon, after the apostolic age, in the year 1875, put us in possession also of the first written prayer of the post-apostolic Church. It is contained in the concluding chapter (formerly unknown) of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, and is, therefore, an authentic product of that distinguished bishop and disciple of Peter and Paul; for the genuineness of the First Epistle is generally conceded, and is above all reasonable doubt. It was probably the public prayer used in the congregation of Rome, and thus contains the germ of the liturgy, which was long known under the name of Clement.

The prayer derives additional interest from the condition of the Church at that time. The epistle was written in full view of the terrible persecution of Nero and Domitian, to which allusion is made without naming those tyrants. Most critics put it between A.D. 90 and 100—some rather earlier; yet this prayer contains a petition for the welfare of those very rulers who were bent upon the destruction of the Church. This is the true Christian spirit of charity and love, even for enemies, according to the example of Him who prayed for His murderers: "Forgive them; for they know not what they do!" If the

Roman Church had ever retained that spirit which breathes in this prayer, instead of grasping at worldly power, and persecuting heretics and schismatics, she would not have lost control over the most vital and progressive part of the Christian world.

The following is a faithful translation of the prayer of the Roman Church, from the newly-recovered portion of St. Clement's Epistle to the Corinthians (chapters 59-61):

"Grant unto us, Lord, that we may set our hope on Thy name, which is the primal source of all creation, and open the eyes of our hearts, that we may know Thee, who alone *abidest Highest in the highest, Holy in the holy; who layest low the insolence of the proud; who scatterest the imaginings of nations; who settest the lofty on high, and bringest the lofty low; who makest rich and makest poor; who killest and makest alive; who alone art the Benefactor of spirits and the God of all flesh; who lookest into the abysses, who scanneest the works of man; the Succor of them that are in peril, the Saviour of them that are in despair; the Creator and Overseer of every spirit; who multipliest the nations upon earth, and hast chosen out from all men those that love Thee through Jesus Christ, Thy beloved Son, through whom Thou didst instruct us, didst sanctify us, didst honor us.* We beseech Thee, Lord and Master, to be our help and succor. Save those among us who are in tribulation; have mercy on the lowly; lift up the fallen; show Thyself unto the needy; heal the ungodly; convert the wanderers of Thy people; feed the hungry; release our prisoners; raise up the weak; comfort the faint-hearted. Let all the Gentiles know that *Thou art God alone, and Jesus Christ is Thy Son, and we are Thy people and the sheep of Thy pasture.*

"Thou through Thine operations didst make manifest the everlasting fabric of the world. Thou, Lord, didst create the earth. Thou that art faithful throughout all generations, righteous in Thy judgments, marvelous in strength and excellence. Thou that art wise in creating and prudent in establishing that which Thou hast made, that art good in the things which are seen and faithful with them that trust on Thee, pitiful and compassionate, forgive us our iniquities and our unrighteousnesses and our transgressions and shortcomings. Lay not on our account every sin of Thy servants and Thine handmaids, but cleanse us with the cleansing of Thy truth, and guide our steps to walk in holiness and righteousness and singleness of heart, and to do such things as are good and well-pleasing in Thy sight and in the sight of our rulers. Yea, Lord, make Thy face to shine upon us in peace for our good, that we may be sheltered by Thy mighty hand and delivered from every sin by Thine uplifted arm. And deliver us from them that hate

us wrongfully. Give concord and peace to us and to all that dwell on the earth, as thou gavest to our fathers, when they called on Thee in faith and truth with holiness, that we may be saved, while we render obedience to Thine almighty and most excellent Name, and to our rulers and governors upon the earth.

"Thou, Lord and Master, hast given them the power of sovereignty through Thine excellent and unspeakable might, that we, knowing the glory and honor which Thou hast given them, may submit ourselves unto them, in nothing resisting Thy will. Grant unto them, therefore, O Lord, health, peace, concord, stability, that they may administer the government which Thou hast given them without failure. For Thou, O heavenly Master, King of the ages, givest to the sons of men glory and honor and power over all things that are upon earth. Do Thou, Lord, direct their counsel according to that which is good and well-pleasing in Thy sight, that, administering in peace and gentleness with godliness the power which Thou hast given them, they may obtain Thy favor. O Thou, who alone art able to do these things, and things far more exceeding good than these for us, we praise Thee through the High-priest and Guardian of our souls, Jesus Christ, through whom be the glory and the majesty unto Thee both now and for all generations, and forever and ever. Amen."

ON THE STUDY OF LATIN HYMNODY.

NO. I.

BY REV. SAMUEL W. DUFFIELD.

THERE are so many of our hymns which are derived directly or remotely from the Latin, that I shall use the space put at my disposal in THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY by way of giving what cannot elsewhere be easily obtained. I shall take it for granted that I write for my brethren who would gladly use hours of leisure in some such congenial pursuit.

If one wishes to know the history and incidents of *English* hymns, he naturally refers to the works of Christophers, Belcher, Miller, and the "Evenings with the Sacred Poets" of Saunders. The "England's Antiphon" of George MacDonald will introduce him to the religious poetry of his own tongue, and Schaff's "Christ in Song" will be found very helpful. I do not mention the better-known collections of verse, but only those which are historical and instructive. The notes of Prof. F. M. Bird, in the *Independent* (1882-3), are also good.

But for the Latin hymns an equipment is needed. The best and cheapest collection is an American work, "Latin Hymns," by Prof. F. A. March, of Lafayette College, published by Harper Brothers. Next comes Abp. Trench's "Sacred Latin Poetry" (third edition), MacMillan & Co. Both of these books are moderate in cost and satisfactory in selection, except that Trench will not include anything which is Roman Catholic, and thus shuts out the "*Stabat Mater*" of Jacoponus, and the "*Pange lingua * * * corporis mysterium*" of Aquinas.

There is a small work called "The Seven Great Hymns,"⁵ which has been much in vogue, and there is another, by Dr. A. Coles, "Dies Iræ: Old Gems" (Appletons, N. Y.), to which reference is sometimes made. Neither of these is of special account, if we have the works named above.

The best introduction to the general subject is Mrs. Charles' "Christian Life in Song" (Robt. Carter, N. Y.), a book with many errors, but written in a lively and interesting style, and with some excellent translations. Dr. Schaff's "Christ in Song" and F. M. Bird's "Songs of the Spirit" probably cover the best and most useful translations, with reference to the authors and their history.

If, now, one wishes to go more thoroughly into the topic, let him secure Daniel's "*Thesaurus Hymnologicus*," a German work, with Latin notes, in five volumes, and which is simply invaluable for its purpose. Its fifth volume contains the fullest index of the first lines of Latin hymns to be found anywhere. Starting upon this basis, I have myself proceeded to make an exhaustive index of the same kind, which, when completed, will show where every such hymn can be found in the original. Just now this exceedingly scarce volume of Daniel is the only resort of the student.

With Daniel may be classed Konigsfeld: "*Lateinische Hymnen und Gesänge*" (two vols. in one; Bonn, 1847-65). It is the most poetical and judicious foreign

selection, the hymns being translated into German.

F. J. Mone, another German, has made three volumes of hymns, to God and the Angels, to Mary, and to the Saints and Martyrs. The value of these "*Lateinische Hymnen des Mittelalters*" (Freiburg, 1855) consists in the fact that they are copied from secluded and unusual MS. sources. As an appendix to Mone and Daniel, we have a work by Morel: "*Lateinische Hymnen des Mittelalters als Nachtrag*, etc. (Benziger Bros., N. Y., 1866). It consists mostly of the "sequences" of St. Gall, by Notker, Hartmann and others.

The most disappointing book of these German scholars is the latest, viz.: Kehrein: "*Lateinische Sequenzen*" (Mainz, 1878), which is, however, valuable for its fine glossary of mediæval Latin terms. There are similar works, like the large compendiums of Koch and Wackernagel, and the selections of Bässler, Grimm, and others, but the previous list I regard as embracing the best hymnologic results of that country.

When we turn to England, though, we find an admirable volume, the "*Hymni Ecclesie*," prepared by Cardinal Newman (two parts in one; A. MacMillan, Edinburgh, 1865). This contains hymns not to be found elsewhere. So, too, the "*Sequentiæ Mediæ Aevi*" of Neale, may be named. For the Latin with translations I especially commend MacGill: "*Songs of the Christian Creed and Life*" (Pickering, London, 1879); Neale: "*Mediæval Hymns*" (London, 1867), and Morgan: "*Hymns of the Latin Church*" (privately printed, 1871—I possess a copy with the translator's own notes). The books named in this article cover the ground handsomely. In my next two papers I shall speak of the great hymns and their history.

LET us not dally with God when He offers us a full blessing, to take as much of it as we think will serve our ends, and turn Him back the rest upon His hands, lest in His anger He snatch all from us again.—*John Milton*.

SOME GREAT PREACHERS WHOM I HAVE KNOWN.

No. III.

BY DANIEL CURRY, D.D., LL.D.

JOHN P. DURBIN, D.D.

ONLY very exceptional conditions could produce such a character and career as were those of Rev. Dr. Durbin—preacher, educator, and organizer. Born in Kentucky, near the beginning of the century, he grew up rather than was brought up, and before he came of age he was a traveling Methodist minister in Ohio. He was at once recognized as a prodigy of eloquence, and, if almost wholly deficient in every educational preparation for his work, he was eager to learn as far as his circumstances would allow him; and learn he certainly did, in spite of all hindrances, and at length became a decidedly scholarly man. The boy preacher, among the pioneers of Southern Ohio, soon attracted attention and became a celebrity, and his oratorical abilities were recognized by all classes—the educated and refined, for some such there were, as well as by the susceptible masses, who are always delighted with eloquent speech. But the young orator was aware of his own deficiencies, and used such diligence for their correction that at the end of his first decade in the ministry, during which he had become widely renowned for his eloquence, he had also become pretty well versed in most of the studies usually pursued by undergraduates in American colleges, and had received the appropriate collegiate degree. In 1831 he first crossed the Alleghenies, having been elected chaplain in the United States Senate, which opened to him the way to a national reputation, to which he rose at once, and ever afterward maintained it.

Dr. Durbin's distinctive reputation was that of a public speaker—chiefly but not exclusively as a preacher. That as such he excelled to an almost unequalled degree, is certain; but how he achieved his remarkable success has never been explained. His personal

appearance was not imposing, nor was it contemptible. He was of medium height, light and wiry, slightly stooping, with a wide-awake expression. If noticed in repose by a stranger, while he would escape contempt, he would fail to arouse, by his appearance, any particular interest. In conversation, he was ready and vivacious, and during his later years especially interesting for the breadth of his views, and the evident fervor with which he discussed whatever subject engaged his thoughts; and, though a good talker, he was not celebrated as a conversationalist.

As a pulpit orator, Dr. Durbin was both a prodigy and an enigma. Tested by the usual rules of oratory, he ought to have been a conspicuous failure. There seemed to be no art, nor indeed law in his speech; and its qualities could be estimated only by the impression they produced—of which the subject wrought upon could usually give no explanation. In the pulpit his introductory reading and prayer were usually quite the opposite of striking. His voice in these parts was weak and thin, and his whole expression decidedly unassuring. His movement in the announcement of his text, and his introductory remarks, were often hesitating and apparently timid, and the whole process of getting his subject before his audience seemed labored and unpromising as to the outcome. But just as the unaccustomed hearer would be resigning himself to the apparently inevitable dullness of the hour, his attention would be awakened by the deepening of the voice, and the more masterful thought of the speaker; or, perhaps, his interest aroused by some unusual and striking thought, or by the unique setting of some common-place remark; and from this point onward to the close the speaker would have the entire mastery of the situation, and the hearer, dazed, charmed, or persuaded, would almost involuntarily yield himself, in passive quiescence, to the spell that would seem to possess him. His discourses, though often extending beyond the conventional hour, were usually

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heard with a kind of delightful fascination to the close, when the auditors would recover their normal state, breathe more deeply again, and remember with pleasure the sweet delirium which, for the time being, not only soothed their senses and pleased their tastes, but also commanded their assent.

But though in the days of his strength, covering the middle period of his active ministry, Dr. Durbin seldom made a decided failure in his preaching, yet he was never entirely free from a liability to do so, and then the failure would be indeed complete and conspicuous. In such cases his hearers, who knew his capabilities, could readily detect their manifestation, for at such times he often evinced his mightiest powers of thought; but they saw, also, the hopelessness of his efforts to arouse himself to the demands of the occasion. Nor was he less sensible than were his hearers, of the failure of his attempts to set forth, as he designed to do, the thoughts and mental images that were in him, but which for the time being refused to come forth at his bidding. But he had the good sense and force of will to rise above such discouragements; and, not infrequently, his next appearance would abundantly compensate his hearers for their former loss, and also avenge himself for his deep mortification.

As seen in the moments of his oratorical elevations, his appearance was peculiar and striking. His head was thrown slightly backward, and his face correspondingly elevated, and his eye-balls turned downward, so that half of the part visible was white—evidently entirely cutting him off from all clear vision. He himself confessed, among his friends, that at such times he saw nothing of the things before him, but was cognizant only of those of which he was speaking. It was evident that, physically, his brain became slightly suffused, which was evinced by the heightened color of his ordinarily pallid countenance, and quite evidently the imagination for the time had the mastery

over the merely speculative judgment; and, accordingly, he spoke in tropes and figures, with a rich gorgeousness of fancy, but with the steadiness of a stable conviction of the reality of the things declared. But in these highest flights of his oratory there was nothing strained or turgid, in either the imagery or the diction; his pictures were natural, and in good taste, and his language simple and classical, his enunciation clear, and his orthoepy even fastidiously correct.

During the last twenty years of Dr. Durbin's active life (1850-70) his duties as the executive head of the missionary work of his denomination called for other qualities than simply oratory, in which qualities he also evinced his distinguished fitness. He was indeed still called to address public assemblies, both official and popular; but the style of address was necessarily less impassioned than that which he had used in the pulpit; though even here his imagination and his skill in the use of words and of imagery were called into requisition. He also excelled in debate, in which, on certain great occasions, he displayed very high talent for argumentative eloquence, which may be seen in some of his written productions, in the form of reports, addresses, and arguments.

LIGHT FROM THE POST-BIBLICAL LITERATURE OF THE JEWS.

No II.

BY RABBI MAX MOLL,
Minister of "Aitz Raanan" Congregation,
Rochester, N. Y.

"AND God saw everything which He had made, and behold it was *very good*," *tob me'od*, טוב מאד (Gen. i: 31). This refers to the creation of man; for the words מאד (*me'od*), and אדם, (*Adam*), consist of the same letters. And God saw everything, etc.

"Very good" also the sufferings? Yes; because through them man obtains eternal life. "Very good" also the death of the righteous? Yes; because in life the righteous man has constantly

to struggle with his passions, but in the other world he finds reward for the anguish of death which he has not deserved. (Comp. Job iii: 17.) "Very good" also the passions? Yes; for without them man would build no house, would not marry, nor care for society or business. (Ecl. iv: 4.)

These teachings were directed against the doctrine of the "absolute evil."

The harmony of the creation is thus allegorized in the Midrash: "On the first day God made heaven and earth. On the second He created in the heaven the firmament, and on the third day, on earth, vegetables. On the fourth day, again in heaven; on the fifth day, on earth. On the sixth day God made the man; but if He created him entirely of heaven or of earth, the harmony of the creation would be destroyed; so He made him of earth and heaven—a connection between earth and heaven.

"And God blessed the seventh day" (*vide* Prov. x: 22). This is the Sabbath (Gen. ii: 4). "On the day that the Lord [Jehovah] God [Elohim] created heaven and earth." The word 'Jehovah' signifies mercy, and the word 'Elohim,' justice. That is to say, with mercy and justice was the world created. Like unto a king, who had empty cups, who said: 'If I pour into them hot they will crack; if I pour in cold they will burst.' What did he do? He mixed the hot with the cold, and then he filled the cups and it remained therein. Thus, also, said the Creator: 'If I create the world with the measure of mercy alone, sin will increase; and if I create it with the measure of justice alone, how can the world exist? I will create it with both, that the world may last.'

Gen. ii: 7—"And the Lord God created (וַיַּעַר, Vayecetar) the man." Why is the word וַיַּעַר written with two *? Because man is a creature of the lower and of the higher world. Rabbi Josua said: "God has connected in man four attributes from below and four from

* While in referring to the creation of the animals the word is written וַיַּעַר, with one * only. (Gen. ii: 19.)

above. The four from below are: Man eats and drinks, couples and increases, empties and dies like the animal. The four from above are: He stands upright, speaks, thinks, and can see, like the servant-angel."

Or, the two וַיַּעַר indicate two creations—in this world and in the next.

Or, they refer to the two impulses in man, viz.: "Yatser tob," the good impulse, and "Yatser hära," the evil impulse. Man alone possesses both.

The Talmud, speaking of the "Yatser hära," observes, very pertinently: "The evil impulse is, at first, a 'wanderer,' then a 'guest,' and at last the 'master of the house.'" (Comp. 2 Sam. xii: 4—הלך Halach, wanderer, ארחת Oraach, guest; אִישׁ, Ish, master.) The evil impulse is first like a spider's web, but at last like a thick rope on the wagon." (Comp. Isa. v: 18.)

The Talmudical expressions, "Yatser tob" and "Yatser hära," are derived from the Bible. (Gen. vi: 5; viii: 21; Dent. xxxi: 21; Ps. ciii: 14.) The term וַיַּעַר (Yatser), according to its root, יָעַר (Yätsür), signifies the inner forming of the thought and will, the musing or thinking on an action; hence the impulse from which it proceeds. If that action is a good one, then was also the thought, the impulse, good—Yatser tob. Is the action an evil one? Then the musing on it was also evil, and is therefore called Yatser hära.

BOOKS AND READERS.

BY ROBERT COLLYER, D.D.

THE SURE CRITERION OF JUDGMENT.

WHAT I deem the sure criterion by which we are to judge which, in the vast and teeming store of books in this age, may be bad for us, and which may be good, is: If, when I read a book about God, I find that it has put Him farther from me than He was before; or about a man, that it has put me farther from him; or about this world of ours, that the book has given it a new appearance of desolation, turning the greenness

into a desert; or about life, that it has made life seem less worth living; or about moral principles, that they are not quite so clear and strong in my heart as they were when this author began to open his mind to me—then I know that on any one of these cardinal things in our human life, my relation to God, to my fellow man, to the world I live in, to the world I hold in my own nature, and to the great moral principles on which all things stable rest and turn—that, for me, is not a good book. It may chime in well with some appetite, and be as sweet as honey to my taste; but it is not my book. It may be food for another; I can say nothing about that. I only know this: that in these great first things, if the book I read touches them at all it shall touch them to my profit, or else I must toss that book away and have done with it. Be it Carlyle or Calvin, the masters in fiction or poesy, philosophy or history or theology, as I set out in life, I must companion with those that can do this for me, or give them a wide berth; the grain and gist of their work must be sound and healthful for me. Here I must be a little selfish, and in this way get so much good by so much reading. I want bread, milk, meat. I do not want brandy, or opium, or hasheesh.

Or let the book discuss, as so many do now, the powers and passions of our common nature, and, as I read, let me find that the book tends to rouse those good servants, but bad masters, my passions, and to give them a certain mastery over my principles; or, in the relations of our lives, to make those relations less sacred and true between the man and woman, and start those questions which, in their solution, are so often only the skeleton keys that pick the guards of virtue, rather than the strong and safe bolts that keep it—then these are not good books for me.

And those are bad books for the youth of the republic to read, that set up the divine right of kings over the people; or teach that the more people have to do with their own concerns the worse it is for them; or that bemoan the advancing

and opening age as less hopeful and helpful than the past age—books that fill me with splendid dreams of what I will do some day, and paralyze my hand and my heart toward the humble work of *this* day, in this year of our Lord. As Milton says, I must have a vigilant eye “how such books bemean themselves, and if they are proven evil I must imprison them, and do the sharpest justice on them as malefactors; for books are not dead things, but contain a potency of life as active as that soul whose progeny they are.”

So it follows that in taking good and noble books to be my companions, these shadows so far must help me toward the light. Common fame can do something to guide me in my reading, but not very much. Criticism can do something, when your journal is not bought up at tariff prices to print any sort of notice. It is also a fine truth a dear friend of mine trusts and follows, that if you love good books, and there is a new one out, you are sure to lay hold of it within a year; but that is not always sure, because the last time he was in my study I pointed such a book out to him, a good deal over a year old, and he fell in love with it at once; but it being of a very choice make he did not ask to borrow it, but went right away to get a copy of his own.

These things may all help us. But the proof of the book lies still in the reading. If it be of religion, and brings God nearer to my heart and life; if it be of humanity, and brings me nearer to the world's heart and life; if it be of philosophy, and makes this world glow to me with a new grace; if it be a poem, or a story, a book of adventure, or history, or biography, and I feel that it makes me more a man, more sincere and trusty and true, then no matter who wrote it, or what men say about it, that is a good book for me and may be one of those friends and companions I want to keep by me all through my life.

So it is no superstition, but a clear human instinct, which makes our Bible what it is, and has been so long, the great divine book of the world.

Let our theories of inspiration be what they may, this is the book in which prophets and apostles, poets and psalmists, saints and martyrs, have hidden their hearts. The things are there which they waited for, and watched for, and fought for, and suffered; that stormed them, and surged through their souls, or entranced them, like the words and music of heaven. And to get at the secret of *this* book, and find its worth above all others, we must not rush through its chapters as we rush through a railroad dinner, or peep over a leaf to see if the chapter is a long one, and then perhaps give it up; we must watch and wait for its meaning to come out and to shine on the troubles or the joys that are one with the experiences of which they were born. It is the *one* book, a great and deep thinker says, in which for thousands of years the spirit of man has found light, and nourishment, and an interpreting response to whatever was deepest in his own nature. I think he is right, and that the Bible rests on no man's say so, but on its own intrinsic truth and grace. And so I count it first among the good books one should make his companions and friends, who would try to live a noble and useful life. And of all books I know of, remember, "We get no good by being ungenerous to it, and calculating profits—so much help by so much reading." It is rather when we gloriously forget ourselves and plunge soul forward headlong into its profound, impassioned for its beauty and salt of truth. 'Tis then we get the right food from this book.

NEW READING OF FAMILIAR TEXTS IN
THE OLD TESTAMENT.

No. II.

By G. W. SAMSON, D.D.

GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORIC NAMES.

A VISIT to the home of Washington makes the "Father of his Country" never after assume the character of a *real* person; for the conviction that we have seen him is added to the idea that comes

from *hearing* of the man. So the opening of the Bible lands to countless American as well as European visitors has made even a Renan to acknowledge the historic facts as to Christ's life, with as much certainty of their reality as of the life of Alexander or Cæsar, of Demosthenes or Cicero. This new knowledge of the geographical and historic allusions in the Old Testament must influence modern designations in revisions of the Old Testament writings.

From the day when (A.D. 1065) the barbarous Turks took Jerusalem, and Christian visitors began to be maltreated, fresh views of geographic and historic testimonies began to fade from Christian writings. Before that era a succession of European tourists—as the Bordeaux pilgrim of A. D. 333—had made Bible geography as familiar as that of one's own country. The Crusaders revived this knowledge; but after two full centuries of the enmity embittered by war, down to 1830, no European Christian dared to venture his life in exploring the Bible lands. The pecuniary, military, and diplomatic dependence of the Turkish sultans on Christian powers since that time has made the Bible lands again historic. Dr. Robinson, the American explorer, led the way, and many have followed from every Christian land.

The question now is vital: What use is to be made of this knowledge in translations? When, two and a half centuries before Christ, at the desire of Ptolemy, Alexander's second successor in Egypt, "seventy" Jewish translators put the Hebrew of the Old Testament into Greek, the Hebrew geographical and historic names were exchanged generally for Greek; as "Armenia" for "Ararat," in the antediluvian age; "Egypt" for "Misraim," in the days of Abraham and Moses; "Tartessos" for "Tarshish," in Solomon's history; and "Memphis" for "Moph," in the prophets. The translators of the time of the Reformation, as Tyndale, Luther, and the English revisers under James I., followed only in part the Hebrew-Greek authorities; sometimes, however, put

ting in the margin names found in the Greek translation.

Modern missions and their explorations, yet more collations by scholars from ancient authors, have made these facts palpable. Eden and Ararat, as the allusions of the prophets, and as the terms of the Greek translation indicate, were located in the mountains, with their delightful valleys, now peopled by the Georgians, Circassians and Armenians—the fairest specimens of human organism. The four rivers flowing from Eden were the Euphrates and Tigris, already known, because great highways; and the Araxes and the Halys, flowing into the Caspian and Black Seas. In the dispersion of the families of the three sons of Noah, to the list of those whose homes have been largely known, Bible scholars now add many a newly-ascertained location, among which these are specially interesting: Of the thirteen sons of Joktan, brother of Eber, the father of all Hebrews, the eleventh, "Ophir," peopled farther India, bordering on China; while the twelfth and thirteenth, as their names indicate, take in the region of Eastern Asia, including Thibet and China. For "Havilah," both in the Hamitic and Semitic designation, is, like "Galilee" in later history, a "circuit," or extended district, peopled by different tribes, such as make up the vast Empire of China; while Jobab is a "mountain-wild," like those between Siam, Burmah, Thibet and Western China. Again, Israel's life as a nation in Egypt, Palestine and Babylonia, is no wall fixed by modern explorations. Goshen was the east of the Delta of Egypt, the scene of the late armed conflict. The two treasure cities fixed in the Roman Itinerary of Antonine, and traced by the writer in 1848 as they are now refixed by German, French, and English collators of ancient history, were located, the one at the eastern, and the other at the western end of the valley which the fresh-water canal from the Nile to Ismailia traverses; while the three fortresses at the head of the Gulf of Suez, between which Moses and Israel encamped—two

of which Dr. Robinson identified—have as their third the ruined fortress walls of "Shalooofah." These, and a hundred others, should certainly be made familiar and home-like to the modern Bible student by the insertion of the modern names in the margin.

LIGHT ON IMPORTANT TEXTS.

No. XXVIII.

By HOWARD CROSBY, D.D., LL.D.

Who shall declare His generation?—

Isa. liii: 8.

THE Hebrew word for "generation" is translated "age" in Isaiah xxxviii: 12, but it more properly means "lifetime." The Septuagint translators have, however, hit the true idea of this passage in making the Greek word γενεάν, instead of βίον or αἰῶνα, for the thought regards the apparent brevity of Messiah's career. "He comes and He goes, and there is the end of Him. Who will take the trouble to think about a life that is cut off so soon and leaves, apparently, no trace? He has no successor, no family, no descendants to preserve His name." The Septuagint reading, therefore, while not a literal translation of the Hebrew, follows its thought. The Hebrew literally is, "Who shall think upon His career?" The Septuagint is, "Who shall describe or recount His race or generation?" The one refers directly to His lifetime, but indirectly to His posterity; the other confines itself to the posterity. Now, both questions are answered in verse 10: "He shall see *His seed*, He shall prolong *His days*." The Messiah will have a spiritual seed on the earth, and in them He will continue His own earthly life.

In this same wonderful Messianic chapter we find: "He shall divide the spoil with the strong" (v. 12); and this is generally interpreted as picturing a conqueror sharing with other fellow-conquerors in the booty of the conquered. But could that figure have any analogy in Christ's triumph? Who could be His fellow-conquerors? What

could be the booty of His conquered ones? Much better is it to consider "the strong," or "the mighty ones," to represent the powers of darkness, who have made spoil of the human race, and the division of the spoil with them by Messiah to be the rescue of souls from their grasp. The "many" (v. 11) whom He saves will then be the spoil He snatches from the great enemy, and we can read the whole passage: "By the knowledge of Him shall my righteous servant give righteousness to many, and He Himself shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide Him the many as His portion, and He shall divide the spoil with the mighty ones."

This allusion to the powers of evil gives completeness to the prophetic description. The humble birth, unattractive position in society, and unfavored career through life, are given in verses 2 and 3. His partnership with distress and His own sufferings are exhibited in verses 4, 5 and 6. His meekness is portrayed in verse 7. Then comes the apparent failure of His life, followed by its complete triumph in saving souls. We need a word regarding the enemy triumphed over to make the wonderful prophetic sketch complete.

Criticisms and Replies.

To The Editor:

"In Dr. Crosby's explanation of Joshua x: 12-14 (HOMILETIC MONTHLY, October, p. 47), he says:

"Probably, through the laws of refraction miraculously administered, the sun and moon were made, apparently, to remain in the same position, and then, after a few hours, resumed their natural places. The day was no longer than any other day."

"I do not see any light in such an explanation. If the sun and moon apparently stood still, it was apparent only, and not real, and then there was no miracle. If they remained in the same position and then resumed their natural places, it would seem that the sudden passage of the sun and moon across the heavens would have excited equal remark with their standing still. It seems to me that Dr. Crosby has, first, taken away the whole miracle by admitting that the standing still was apparent only; and, second, has added another miracle, which is not found in the story, namely, the sudden passage of the

sun and moon to their natural places after an apparent detention.

"Again, I do not see how the denial of one supernatural event logically compels the denial of all others. Dr. Crosby says that this incident related in Joshua is just as well founded as any other incident in Scripture. But this is one of the things to be proved; and assertion is not proof. S."

DR. CROSBY'S REPLY.

1. An apparent standing still of sun and moon was not an apparent, *i. e.*, non-real, miracle. The miracle consisted in making an apparent standstill at the command of God's servant, Joshua. The miracle was real, although the standing still of sun and moon was apparent.

2. There could be no other standing still of the sun but an apparent one, as in reality the sun always stands still, and the earth is the moving thing.

3. There was no "sudden passage" of sun and moon necessary. Simply, the sun and moon having for an hour or two appeared, each in one spot, suddenly *appeared* (not passed), each in a spot several degrees further west. That this fact is not mentioned in the narrative is not at all strange. The miracle is marked by its main feature.

4. God mingled the operation of natural laws with His miracles, as we see by the east wind bringing up the locusts over Egypt, (Exod. x: 13.)

5. If this incident is not "as well founded as any other in Scripture," it is for "S." to bring the proof. The *prima facie* evidence is with the affirmative.

ANOTHER CRITICISM.

To The Editor:

I have some objections to Dr. Crosby's explanation of Joshua x: 12-14, in October HOMILETIC MONTHLY.

1. That the miracle was for the purpose to prolong the day, as is clearly shown in v. 13. "Until the people had avenged themselves." This plainly indicates that the day was prolonged to enable the people to pursue the enemies, which they could not well do in darkness. (Comp. Josephus Ant., Vol. I.)

2. That the miracle was not performed in the morning at 8 o'clock, as the Doctor suggests, is again clearly stated by the words, "And the sun remained standing in the midst of the heaven. This could only be at or about noon."

3. The Doctor reads the last clause of v. 13: "And hastened not to go as a complete day." Not only is this exposition unintelligible, but it also offends against the rules of the Hebrew grammar. The Hebrew text runs thus: כיום תמים ולא את לבוא. Now, the prefix ב before words of number, time, and measure, always expresses the word "about." Parallels we find: Num. xi: 31; 1 Kings xxii: 26; Ruth i: 4; ii: 17. We cannot, therefore, but read: "And hastened not to go down about a whole day." MAX MOLL.

Rochester, N. Y.

DR. CROSBY'S REPLY.

1. "Until the people had avenged themselves" does not show that the day was prolonged, but only that the miracle lasted until victory was given.

2. "In the midst of heaven" is *bachatsi hasha mayim*. *Bachatsi*, like *bethok*, is used loosely (e. g., Num. xii: 12). Here it is evidently so, as the sun stood upon Gibeon. If it had been literally in the exact half of the heaven, then it could not have been over Gibeon. If the miracle had been wrought to prolong the day, the sun would have been in the west, over Ajalon.

3. The grammatical objection of *Caph* with words of number, time and measure, would be correct if the number, time, or measure were here the emphatic object; but the emphasis is on *tumim*. Hence the *Caph* has its primary meaning of likeness.

THE GOSPEL AND THE POOR IN OUR CITIES.

In our May number we printed a table of statistics and a map of lower New York, which we had had carefully prepared, by means of which several startling facts were made to appear: That in New York the distribution of church provision is in almost exact ratio with the distribution of wealth; that in the lower half of New York (the section inhabited by the poorer classes), the church attendance was but as one to five when compared to the church attendance in the wealthier half of the city; that the neglect of the poor was alike by both Protestant and Catholic. The figures presented were most startling.

We now desire to search for an explanation of these facts.

We premise by saying that New York is not exceptional in its neglect of the poor. The neglect in Brooklyn, the City of Churches, is even greater; and we doubt not that careful statistics gathered in Boston, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Chicago, St. Louis, and San Francisco would prove that the same grievous sin lies at the door of the Church in all our great cities.

One of the remarkable facts brought to light by the table of statistics alluded to is that the interest in the Gospel in the poorer districts is not equal to the inferior provision supplied. So, broadly speaking, the poor do not only *not* have the Gospel preached to them, but do not *care* to have it preached to them. On the other hand, great provision is made to reach the wealthier, and these, to a large degree, do make use of these provisions. The fact that was apparent in the days of Christ is not apparent now: the fact that the Gospel had its strongest grip upon the poor. Then not many rich, not many noble, were called; *now*, with pardonable exaggeration we may say, not many poor, not many ignoble.

How inadequate is the answer, "The poor have all the church provision they care for; if they do not hear the Gospel, it is because they do not wish to hear it." If they *desired* to hear they would be far already on the way to Christian development. To wait for the unthinking, godless masses to ask for Christianity would be like the farmer trained in the city, who went out to milk his cows and seated himself on a stump in a ten-acre field and waited patiently for the cows to *back up* to be milked. The uneducated cow no more appreciates the need of milking than the unconverted the need of conversion. It is our work to find these people who care nothing for the Gospel and inspire them with a care for it. The Church is impotent just so far as it fails to do this.

We cannot get around the fact that, for some reason or other, the relation of the Church to the poor and the well-to-

do to-day is the reverse of what it was in the primitive days of Christianity.

There are apparent reasons for this fact :

1. A very apparent one is that a Christian individual or a Christian community is the more likely to become wealthy. The Christian is temperate, is regular and frugal in his habits. Start such a man, or a community composed of such men, poor, and riches will be apt to be overtaken. Hence it is very natural that the wealth of the world, after these centuries, should belong to the Christian nations. Let Five Points, New York, become thoroughly Christian, and Murray Hill thoroughly wicked, in a century the children's children of the two neighborhoods will have changed abodes.

2. Another reason equally apparent is: The rich can *afford* churches. The church of to-day, with its many *modern* improvements, requires much money to carry it on. The poor have not the money and the rich have; hence it is natural to find that churches abound as riches abound. The desire for church services among the poor and rich being equal, the rich have the superior means for the gratification of this desire; exactly as they have for the gratification of the desire for pictures, for music, for splendid architecture, for theatres and other places of amusement. The same law governs all—a man has the gratification he can afford.

These two reasons are surface, apparent ones. A Christian community naturally becomes rich; then, when rich, it has churches because it can afford churches. But the true reason lies deeper.

Place the sentiment that is to control us in our Christian devotion on the same basis that we do the sentiment for art, the craving of passion or appetite, the explanation is wholly rational. But selfish instinct for safety or enjoyment is not what is to control in Christianity. It is *sacrifice*; it is work for others, not gratification of self. It is to follow the footsteps of Christ, who exchanged heaven for earth to benefit man—a race

that did not *care* to be benefited. The last and least worthy of Christian duties (nevertheless a duty) is to *hear the Word*. The superior duty is to lead others to hear and put in practice the Word. We are to yearn for the welfare of our fellows. Our highest gratification is to be found here.

If this is Christianity—if this is the motive that is to prompt us, the two facts which we have mentioned, namely, that Christian habits give wealth and wealth gives church provision, will not account for the fact that the poor have not the Gospel preached to them in our cities. The true reason lies back of all this. Given the right spirit, the more wealth the Christian has the more powerful he is and successful he is in bringing the Gospel to the poor. The need of a neighborhood is to him an irresistible call. "Ye reign," Paul would say, "that we may reign with you." A poor man becomes a Christian, and now accumulates wealth; if the spirit of Christ is fully developed in him, he devotes what he is and has to the lifting up of other poor. Give this spirit to the wealthy Murray Hill, and Five Points squalor will soon be but a memory.

But what is the fact? Is it uncharitable to say that the Christianity in vogue, in fashionable districts is not, broadly speaking, a religion of sacrifice? Respectability, fashion, the social instinct, the love for music, for architecture, for eloquence, are all on the side of fashionable Christianity. How much of what passes current for religion to-day is one or the other or all of these things! These are good, but without self-sacrificing love, the essence of Christ's religion, they are as sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. A man led into the Church by the spirit of self-sacrifice and held there by this spirit is a Christian after the pattern of Christ. He is impelled to work among the needy.

Who will question that were our churches north of Eighth Street, New York City, composed largely of this class of Christians, that they would *compel* the heathen crowds in the high-

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ways and byways of lower New York to come to the Gospel feast?

This is no new truth, but a stupendous, overwhelming, old, unappreciated truth.

Christianity, as presented by Christ and the apostles, was inherently attractive to the masses. To the poor in our large cities it is *not* thus attractive. In the early Church intense personal sympathy for man as man marked the disciples. Sacrifice for others was made, not from the selfish motive of laying up treasures in heaven, nor from the chilly sense of duty, *but from love*. A burning, passionate love for men is apparent everywhere in the speeches and writings of the primitive Christians. "How they love one another!" was not more true than "How they love all men!" They revealed to the world that essence of Christianity, *love*, and that is a magnet of almost irresistible attraction over the hearts of men. Christ lifted up on the cross, revealing wondrous love, will draw to Him all men—draw as the meaning of the sacrifice is understood. This is the measure and potency of Christianity—*love*. Now this element is not conspicuous in Christianity as Christianity is known in the poorer wards of our cities. Of course it is there, but it is not *conspicuous*. It is not *potent* enough to *force* itself on the attention of the people. The magnet has lost its magnetism largely. To the masses the church work going on among them "is a kind of business—the preacher preaches because he is paid for it; the churches, Protestant and Catholic, are working to swell their numbers like political parties." This is in the minds of the masses. It is not a *fair* judgment. It ought not to be there, but it *is* there. We have not had that energy of love that can *force* this misconception from the mind.

But are we wholly free from the taint indicated? Protest we well may, yet, after all protestations, admit it we must, a materialistic measure of worth has crept into our churches and made its way too often into our pulpits and synods and conferences. We measure

a man by the quantity and quality of his *brain*, by his *bank account*, by his *social standing*. The world has progressed somewhat. There was a time when, if it desired to know the worth of a man, it ran the measuring string around his *muscles*; then a Hercules was worshiped. But by-and-by we put the measuring string around the man's purse, and a Croesus was king. Now we are emerging somewhat from this influence, and with comparative self-equipoise we can behold a centuple millionaire or bi-centuple millionaire; even the shadow that is cast before of the coming plutocratic monstrosity, a billionaire, doesn't inspire overwhelming awe. We have learned that brains count more than dollars. Our measuring string that determines the worth of the man is now passed around the *head*. We realize that infinitely beyond the Rothschilds, the Astors, the Vanderbilts, the Jay Goulds, tower the Shakespeares, the Websters, the Emersons. But we have not yet attained to the Christian measure of worth. The time will come when to find the worth of a man we shall not pass the measuring string about the man's muscles, nor his purse, nor his head, but around his *heart*.

Even this is not the measure that should determine our interest in men. In olden days not many wise, not many noble, were called. Then there was no respect for persons; to-day there is. Then the *need* of a man determined the interest in him; to-day the independence of a man through royal brain or other endowments determines our interest. How often we hear church councils and synods say we must have a church in this or that influential neighborhood—there one church will outweigh in influence a dozen in the poorer sections of the city. In this we assuredly err and err most grievously. A live, great-hearted, working, loving church at Five Points is more influential in converting the world to the true Christ, God's embodiment of love, than is an equally large church on Fifth Avenue. The mission at Five Points,

or Mueller's Orphan Home at Bristol, as an embodiment of the love of man for man, has done more in staying the incoming tides of infidelity than almost any number of churches in our wealthy avenues—and has done this by the subtle power of the self-sacrificing spirit that gave it birth, and which it breathed out.

As we have already seen, it is not the lack of money, it is not the lack of church facilities, that causes this spiritual destitution in the more indigent neighborhoods. Church facilities abound beyond the desire of the masses to make use of them. Possibly the very abounding of these hinders spirituality. The abounding of the material without a corresponding abounding of the spiritual, hinders instead of helps spiritual growth. The shell should never determine the growth of the kernel, but the kernel the shell. A bark that grows in advance of the needs of the tree hinders and disfigures the tree. The outward must be an expression of the inward life. The life within must be *first*. There is a sense in which the figure of the camel and the needle's eye may have applicability to the Church.

The lack is not of money, is not of church edifices primarily; the lack is of *men*—men of great, loving, sympathetic hearts; men moved not by a sense of duty, but moved by love—a love as strong, as impelling, as that which moves our best missionaries to go to "Greenland's icy mountains," or "India's coral strand." A great, warm heart, willing to die for the people in our neglected wards, will win a hearing and a following any time. Jerry McAuley has no trouble in finding an audience. Judson in his new work in lower New York will find speedily the ears and hearts of the people.

Christ's proof that He was the Messiah was, that the poor had the Gospel preached to them. He seemed to lay little stress upon His miracles save as they gave relief to the afflicted. When asked to give proofs in the way of miracles, His answer was, It is

a wicked and adulterous generation that looketh for such evidences—evidences that come through the senses. The proof that He was God was, that He displayed a self-sacrificing love for man as man. The poorer, the more necessitous the man, the stronger that man drew upon Christ. There was no mistaking from whence such a leader came. He was from above and drew men upward by the power of love—the force of attraction in the spiritual universe; there gravity is upward, and that gravity is *love*. As long as the primitive disciples were dominated by this spirit they swept onward irresistibly, conquering what the mighty Hamilcar and Hannibal failed to conquer—the Roman Empire. The Wesleys were consecrated to the welfare of the masses. Methodism was an irresistible power as long as she was true to that spirit. The power of the Salvation Army in England is not in its extravagances, but in spite of these. Its power is in its devotion to the poor.

Multiply McAuley and Judson, in lower New York, by fifty, giving us a hundred equally great hearted and self-sacrificing men, and the battle in that section of the city would not be long or doubtful. The shame of the Church to-day is its *fruitlessness* in the production of just this class of men—men who are servants of the poor, for Christ's sake *slaves* of the poor—willing, glad to wash the feet of tramps and outcasts, if need be; and all this through an earnest, loving impulse of the soul; not from the dictates of conscience, nor the conclusions of judgment as to policy, earthward or heavenward, but moved by the impulse of love. Costly church buildings, well educated and highly refined ministers, and expensive church appointments, are not essential to this work among the poor, but the throbbing heart of a brother is.

Nature moves on fixed lines. Emerson represents her as saying to man, "I am ready to serve you; I am going your way. What can I do for you? I cannot turn aside to the right nor left; but find a pocket and get in, and I will

carry you." Lost man needs more than this. He needs a power that can and will go out of its way to find him, wherever he is, and lift him up and put him in the right pocket, and then help carry him onward and upward. The Church, when true to her mission, is that power.

A LETTER FROM MR. BEECHER.

WHAT HE SAID IN CALIFORNIA.

To the Editor HOMILETIC MONTHLY:

I inclose you a letter written in California, which I have clipped from a religious paper. The writer of the letter says that Mr. Beecher, in a recent lecture on the Pacific Coast, denounced the Church as unworthy, and as something which ought to be destroyed. It is amazing that such an utterance could fall from the lips of a clergyman, and that clergyman a son of Dr. Lyman Beecher!

ORTHODOXY.

ANSWER FROM MR. BEECHER.

To the Editor of HOMILETIC MONTHLY:

Your letter with inclosure is at hand. You sent me a printed letter from California, which, with many professions of kindness and admonition, is plainly written by an adversary. I quote but one paragraph—the one to which your correspondent, "Orthodoxy," refers:

"He (Mr. Beecher) has always held that the Church was useful to society in many ways, if not just what his ideal church called for; but on this occasion he denied that it was of any service whatever, and said that it would be better for society if every church were rooted out."

Nothing can be further from the truth than this statement. It is directly the reverse of truth. This will appear from the following brief analysis of that portion of my lecture:

The advance in scientific discoveries has produced a new era of thought in every department of human knowledge, and in none more perceptibly than in the department of theology. In Great Britain and in America, multitudes of young men, intelligent, active and influential, have been thrown, if not into absolute skepticism, yet into great perplexity and doubt. I am in a position to know this fact. I am surrounded by multitudes of professional men, artists, engineers, scientific men, over whom the Church is losing its influence. Atheism

and agnosticism are become almost epidemic.

It was my wish, in the lecture in question, to vindicate the essential of Christianity, and to separate it from its externals, and to show that, while religious institutions, philosophy and ordinances might be changed by new lines of thought, the essential, spiritual substance of Christianity was rather corroborated and confirmed by the revelations of science.

I argued that if the general theory of evolution be admitted, and even the hypothesis of man's ascent from the animal kingdom, yet it would not destroy religion, nor would it destroy the Church. It would not work toward atheism—but that the evidence of the existence of a personal God, wise and all-controlling, would stand as it always stood. Nor would it destroy the evidence for divine design in the creation of the world. It would only shift it a little further back—from each particular thing created to the construction of a world whose nature it was to work out creatures adapted to these conditions and environments. I held that, in my judgment, science did not invalidate the fact or philosophy of miracles, nor did it set aside the evidence of a particular Providence, nor invalidate the ground of prayer.

I declared that this did not tend to destroy churches, nor worship and ordinances of the Church; that it might change the theories of church government, of ordinances, of the authority of the Christian ministry, but that the Church would continue to be the school in which mankind would need to be educated in morals and religion, the institution *par excellence* for the indoctrination of men in character and conduct.

This was the substance of what I said on this branch of the subject.

When the writer of the paragraph above quoted declares that I said "that it would be better for society if every church were rooted out," he directly and distinctly misinterprets both my belief and my utterance.

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR SERVICES.

*Every anniversary is a mile-stone in life's journey from—WHERE to WHERE?
"I am growing old, so old I begin to think."*

Christmas.

HISTORY OF THE FESTIVAL.

CHRISTMAS was first observed by the Eastern Church on January 6, under the name of *Epiphania*, and by the Western on December 25, under the name of *Natalis*. This discrepancy arose from the fact that the Gospels give no date of Christ's birth. The date of the former is arbitrary, and rests on an allegorical inference. It was celebrated, not so much in honor of the birth of Christ, as in memory of the first manifestation of His divinity in human form. What ground there was for the Roman date, December 25, is not known. Still, the Western Church unanimously agreed upon this date.

The date once fixed, Christmas gradually became one of the three great annual festivals of the Church. No other Christian festival ever so penetrated into the households of Christendom as Christmas; doubtless because its character is essentially joy. Some of the features of its observance in the middle ages indicate that it gradually sunk down into mere social revelry. The giving of presents was a Roman custom. The Yule-tree and the Yule-log are relics of old Teutonic nature-worship. The Reformation resented the day from many of its abuses, and emphasized its Christian elements. Under the influence of evangelical Christianity, Christmas has become specially a children's feast, and the Roman Catholic Church has followed the example. Of late years the celebration of the day, either in a social or religious way, or both, has become well-nigh universal in England and the United States.

THE GLORIOUS ANNOUNCEMENT.

For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.—Luke ii: 10.

I. Note the attending circumstances: The cradle of this wondrous birth; the

time and place as foretold in prophecy and literally accomplished; the "shepherds abiding in the field" thus divinely honored; the angelic messengers, led by "the angel of the Lord;" Gabriel breaking the joyous news to the astonished shepherds, and the sudden appearance of "a great multitude of the heavenly hosts, praising God" and proclaiming Heaven's message of peace and love to man; and "the glory of the Lord which shone round about them."

II. Note the message itself, which the angel cohort brought down out of heaven. 1. The prelude: "GOOD TIDINGS," and not only good tidings, but "GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY," and not to this little band of simple shepherds only, but "to all people." 2. The glorious message, "There is born to you this day in the city of David, a SAVIOR, WHICH IS CHRIST THE LORD."

III. Note the testimony of "the angel of the Lord" respecting the personage of the Deliverer announced. They would find "the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." Nevertheless, He was the most august being ever born into the world—the "Ancient of days," the "Messiah" of prophecy, the wonder of history, the miracle of miracles, the Lord of Glory, the Redeemer of the world. Not only a "Savior," the Savior waited for through all the ages of Jewish and patriarchal faith and sacrifice, the Savior sent of God "to all people," but CHRIST, the "anointed" One, His official appellation denoting His kingly authority and Mediatorial position as the "Servant of the Lord," the administrator of God's government. And not only is He invested at His birth with this official glory and dignity and supreme power, but it is all His by absolute right. He is "CHRIST THE LORD," the Lord of angels and men, the Lord of heaven and earth, King of kings and Lord of lords, the Sovereign and Lawgiver and Ruler and Judge of the universe! Such is the Savior, as testified

to by "the angel of the Lord" on the night of His advent; no mere *man*, but God, the "Everlasting Father," "the Prince of Peace."

IV. Note, finally, the effect of the original proclamation of the Gospel. 1. Its subjective effect. Not one of them all disbelieved the strange announcement. "And it came to pass, when the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said, one to another, Let us now go even into Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us." (V. 15.) What faith! They left their flocks for the time being. They "came with haste," joy and gladness quickened their steps; and they "found Mary and Joseph and the babe lying in a manger," just as the angel had told them. Faith and sight! The test and the full blessed confirmation—just as there always is to those who seek the truth in the way of obedience. 2. Its objective effect. They became forthwith preachers of the wonderful tidings. The angel-message was too good to keep to themselves. Their hearts felt the great impulse of a new life. We suspect the celestial radiance which shone around when the angel of the Lord appeared to them was caught up and reflected in the faces of the simple shepherds as they hastened from the manger to spread the news which that night was borne down to them on angel wings and angel songs out of heaven. And they were not satisfied to speak of it among themselves, and to their families and neighbors. The message, heard by them first, was for "all people," and so they made it "known abroad," spread it over all the region round about. It inspired them with a *missionary* spirit, as the Gospel of the grace of God inspires all men who truly receive it into their hearts and lives. "And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds." (Verses 17, 18.)

THE GOLDEN CALF OF AARON AND THE LAMB OF GOD—AN INFINITE CONTRAST.

TEXT:—EX. xxxii: 4-6; Luke ii: 7-14; John i: 29.

1. The calf of gold was made of earth's choicest valuables. The Lamb of God was Heaven's greatest treasure.

2. The calf of gold was made to make God visible. Christ was God manifest in the flesh.

3. The calf of gold was made to meet a seeming extremity. Christ came when man was lost beyond hope.

4. The calf of gold was made to go before the children of Israel to the land of promise. Christ is the door, the way from sin, and from bondage more terrible than the Egyptian, to a land glorious beyond the imagination of man to conceive.

Who can estimate rightly this gift of God to man?

Says a Latin philosopher: "A gift is to be estimated according to the views of the giver." Whether we estimate this heavenly gift by its own value, by the advantage it is to us, or by the mind of the giver, it alike surpasses all conception.

CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS.

- ... 'Tis charity to hide charity.
- ... The cry of distress is a call to thee from heaven.
- ... The love of benevolence increases with benevolence.
- ... The manner of bestowment often greatly increases the favor.
- ... He is not charitable who estimates charity by its advantages.
- ... Gifts and alms, says Goldsmith, are the expressions of charity, not its essence
- ... The true Christian stands before man the embodiment of the grandest thought of God.
- ... Change the proverb, "*Homo homini lupus*" (man is wolf to man), to man is human to man.
- ... It is a right thing to feel that you were born not for yourself, but for mankind.
- ... By unloosing the strings of thy purse thou mayest unbar the gates of Paradise to some soul.
- ... There is a Latin proverb we would

change: Greet your friend as if you know that he will some day be your enemy. It should read: Greet your enemy as if you know that he some day will be your friend.

CHRISTMAS SERMONS.

The following Christmas sermons have been published in former volumes of THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY and elsewhere:

1. The Purpose of Christ's First Coming. By Canon Liddon, London.—1 Tim. i: 15. The Complete Preacher, Vol. I., No. 2.
2. Christmas-day Lessons. By Dean Stanley, London.—Luke ii: 10-11. HOMILETIC MONTHLY, Vol. IV., No. 6.
3. The Incarnate God.—John i: 14. HOMILETIC MONTHLY, Vol. VII., No. 3.
4. The Divine Incarnation. By S. T. Spear, D.D., Phil. ii: 6-8. National Preacher, Vol. XXXVI., March number.
5. Joy in Christ for all Nations. By C. A. Harless, D.D., court preacher at Dresden.—Luke ii: 8-11. Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century, pp. 55-62.
6. The Desire of all Nations. By Richard Fuller, D.D.—Haggai ii: 7. Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century, pp. 348-362.

The New Year.

Our birth is nothing but our death begun.—YOUNG.

THE EXCEEDING BREVITY OF LIFE.

What is your life? For ye are a vapor, that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away.—James iv: 14.

"Life, life, only life! . . . I must then think of God," were the frantic words of the dying voluptuary novelist, Hoffman. "My kingdom for a moment's time!" cried Queen Elizabeth, as she lay dying, stretched upon the floor and forsaken by all her courtiers. What was life to *them*? What in its purpose—what in its fruitage here—what in its eternal results hereafter?

TAKE A FEW ILLUSTRATIONS OF LIFE'S BREVITY.

I. The text supplies a very vivid one from *nature*, which God has put before our eyes a thousand times. While poetic in conception, it expresses a fact of solemn import. You gaze on a bank of fleecy cloud in the sky, or admire the white mantle which enwraps the neighboring hills, and while you

look the vision melts away, and not a vestige of the vapory cloud remains.

Such is life!—this life we are living away; this life on whose transient breath hangs everlasting destiny.

"How short is human life! the very breath Which frames my words, accelerates my death."

And yet

"Between two breaths, what crowded mysteries lie—
The first short gasp, the last and long-drawn sigh!"

II. Take a *mathematical* illustration, which we borrow from a sermon of the late Dr. Spencer, of Brooklyn. Suppose one's congregation to consist of 2,000 souls. Now estimate the prospects of these 2,000 souls by a general average based on the well-known laws of mortality, and we have these results:

In the course of one year 66 of them will die.

In ten years, 588 will have died.

In twenty years, 1,078 will be gone.

In thirty years, 1,477 will be no more.

In forty years, 1,744 will be in eternity.

In fifty years, 1,922 will be dead men.

Weigh well the words of this earnest preacher, based upon this striking and affecting illustration.

"Would that this picture were as efficacious as it is appalling! Would that the hearts of the two thousand in a promiscuous assembly were so affected with the idea that sixty-six of them would hear the voice of the Son of God and live! My hearers, your days are fast numbering up! The sands in your glass of life are fast falling! For you the shroud is nearing! for you the bed of death is spread! Your seat here will soon be vacant, and the ear that now listens to me will be sealed up, till the trump of the archangel shall awake the dead. Death is certain. Life is uncertain. 'To-day if ye will hear His voice harden not your hearts. To-morrow may be too late to hear.'"

"To-morrow?

Where is to-morrow? in another world!

For numbers this is certain, the reverse Is sure to none."

III. Take a third illustration from the Scripture idea of life as a *journey*. We are pilgrims here, sojourners as all our fathers were, having no continuing

city—ever on the move—going along, not alone, but in a mighty caravan, like the pilgrims on their way to Mecca; an endless procession of human beings, marching to the grave, the bourne from which no traveler ever returns. What a countless throng of human beings have been marching across the narrow plane of earthly existence during the past year! According to the usual estimate not less than 31,500,000 of probationers since the first of January, 1883, have gone down to the grave and entered eternity! Place them in long array, and they will make a moving column of more than 1,300 to each mile of the world's circumference!

Think of it! Ponder and look upon these astounding computations. What a spectacle, to angels, to men, as they "move on," tramp, tramp, tramp—forward, upon this stupendous dead march! Nearly 100,000 souls in this vast cavalcade drop out, die, *each day* of the year.

"Life is short, and time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though strong and brave,
Still like muffled drums are beating
Funeral marches to the grave."

NEW YEAR THOUGHTS.

- ... Be merry, but wisely merry.
- ... It is sometimes well to forget.
- ... Every man has his future in his own hands.
- ... Two things you will never be rid of—God and conscience.
- ... "Enjoy present pleasures in such a way as not to injure future ones."—SENECA.
- ... We bewail the loss of money with

tears, but who bewails with tears lost opportunities?

... It is easier to remember the errors of the past year than to avoid similar errors in the year to come.

... Evil done is evil done forever; however, the effects which flow from it can be modified by right living in the future.

... "We all must grow old or die," says George Eliot. That is true of the physical, but every true *soul* ages toward youth.

... See to it that you do not repeat in the coming year the errors of the past. "To stumble twice against the same stone is a proverbial disgrace."

NEW YEAR SERMONS.

The following New Year sermons have been published in THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY and "National Preacher."

1. Confessions of Dying Men. By Joel Hawes, D.D.—Heb. ix: 27. National Preacher Vol. XXV., January number.
2. The Ministries of Time. By A. L. Stone, D.D. Isa. lx: 22. National Preacher, Vol. XXXV., January number.
3. Timely Preparation for Death. By R. W. Dickinson, D.D.—2 Kings xx: 1. National Preacher, Vol. XXVII., January number.
4. How Old Art Thou? By J. Few Smith, D.D. Gen. xlvii: 8. National Preacher, Vol. XXIII., January number.
5. This Year Also. By C. H. Spurgeon, London. Luke xliii: 8. HOMILETIC MONTHLY, Vol. IV., No. 6.
6. Lot's Choice. By John Hall, D.D. HOMILETIC MONTHLY, Vol. V., No. 5.
7. A New Year in Jerusalem. By Rev. Joseph Elliot.—2 Chron. xxix: 17. HOMILETIC MONTHLY, Vol. VII., No. 6.
8. The Old Year and the New. By R. M. Hatfield, D. D. HOMILETIC MONTHLY, Vol. VII., No. 6.

LIVING ISSUES FOR PULPIT TREATMENT.

After all, Christianity is not a book, it is not a theology, it is the science of right living.

Poverty not a Necessary Condition.

For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty; and drowsiness [laziness] shall clothe a man with rags.—Prov. xxiii: 21.

SIN, in one form or another, is intimately associated with poverty. The text expresses a fundamental law in social science, a law that applies not only to the drunkard, the glutton, and the indolent, but also to all classes of

transgressors. Observation and experience the world over confirm the truth of this proverb. Hence the subject is one that deeply concerns the preacher, as well as the political economist. Some testimony recently given before the U. S. Senate Committee on Labor, in New York, sheds light on the matter.

The laboring classes in the United States are better off than in any other country; are better fed, and clothed, and

housed, and educated, and have more laid by for a rainy day. Still, as a class, there is a general lack of thrift among them, and far more poverty, distress, and social degradation, than there is any necessity for. And we have not far to look for the causes.

WHAT ARE THE CHIEF CAUSES?

1. Their own *improvidence* has much to do with it. Nowhere is labor so liberally paid as in this country. Reliable statistics show that the average wages of the skilled mechanic is larger than the average salary of the preacher of the Gospel, whose education cost him years of study and thousands of dollars. But no one will pretend that, as a class, the former make as good a show as the latter. The trouble is that frugal habits and forethought are, broadly speaking, not among the virtues of this portion of our population. As a rule, they spend as they go, and leave to-morrow to take care of itself. In dress, in waste, in extravagance in the household, our laboring classes are quite on a par with the middle classes of Great Britain and Continental Europe. Dr. Tyng, Jr., in a recent address in New York, after several years' residence abroad, bears strong testimony to the frugality and thrift of the lower classes in France, who, he says, largely own their homes, and are in the habit of investing their savings in government securities. Why the contrast with our wage class?

2. *Intemperance* is a frightful cause of poverty and wretchedness. The cost of beer and liquor, to say nothing of tobacco, is of itself enough to impoverish them. Says a highly intelligent witness, Samuel Medill, of Chicago, before the committee referred to:

"The amount of money squandered on intoxicating drink by the wage classes of the United States is \$400,000,000 per year; and this sum, had it been put to interest during the last ten years, would now amount to nearly \$500,000,000, enough to buy every wage worker in the United States, now paying rent, a comfortable domicile." He estimates "the receipts of the 250,000 dramshops which pay internal revenues at \$912,500,000 and affirms that half of the liquor consumed by our people is by the wage class."

3. "Strikes," now so frequent and on so large a scale, and made a prominent feature of the labor system, are a terrible tax on the "bread-winning" classes. They cost millions of dollars, in time and wages, every year, besides fostering habits of restlessness and idleness, and general demoralization.

History of the Bad Book.

And I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and when I had eaten it my belly was made bitter.—Rev. x: 10.

The experience of John here narrated is like unto that of many readers of a hurtful class of books in our days; books not given them by an angel's hand, but by the hands of men who recognize but one standard of action—pecuniary profit. To the vitiated taste, the sensation caused by the trashy filth that fills so many popular books is sweet as honey. But how bitter is the after-taste, the fruits, the results, in aroused passions, and in evil habits! Many a book which a man reads with avidity and pleasure, when it comes to be digested in his thoughts and assimilated in his tastes and feelings and life, is found to be rank poison. The sweet is but for an instant, the bitter may be endless. "A man who writes an immortal but immortal book," says Dr. Cheever, "may be tracked into eternity by a procession of lost souls from every generation, every one of them to be a witness against him at the judgment, to show to him and the universe the immeasurable dreadfulness of his iniquity."

Yet the bad book would never be written unless there was a demand for it. Said Martial: "Thou art the cause, reader, of my dwelling on lighter topics, when I would rather handle serious ones." Public taste must be refined, educated; the standard of literature for the masses will thus be elevated. How many tens of thousands of our population never read history, poetry, science, and yet they read, read—ever reading, but never coming to know-

edge! They illustrate the homely German proverb: "Milking a heifer in a sieve." They go to a source that is empty, with a mind that cannot hold knowledge. Those who have never learned to read the better books, know not what honey, sweet to the taste, present and after, is untasted by them.

Some books are lead to the soul; others are wings on which the soul mounts to the skies. The masses must be taught how to judge books.

THE LIQUOR INTEREST A FACTOR IN POLITICS.

Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth.—Acts xix: 25.

The brewers, distillers, and groggeries have combined to crush every candidate of either party whose record on the whiskey question is not satisfactory to them. The Republican party, in the recent election in Ohio, was beaten

by them. Judge Maynard, the Democratic nominee for Secretary of State in the election just held in New York, was defeated by 18,000 majority, while the rest of the ticket was elected. This was done at the dictation of the Whiskey Association; and money flowed freely and the State was flooded with printed documents in order to defeat Maynard, because they supposed him to be inimical to its interest. As Secretary of State, he could have done nothing to injure their cause. But this bold action was meant to be a rebuke and a warning to all our politicians and political conventions and parties. Shall we suffer such arrogance and dictation from such a class? They have thrown down their challenge; and we shall be amazed if it be not accepted and the issue joined squarely, and the battle fought on this line. We have no fear of the result.

HINTS AT THE MEANING OF TEXTS.

How shall we prove all things unless we not only tolerate them, but patiently hear and seriously consider them?—MILTON.

Funeral Service.

POSTHUMOUS INFLUENCE.

Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, that also which this woman hath done shall be spoken of as a memorial of her.—Matt. xxvi: 13.

The good never die. Influence, like the soul itself, is immortal. Example continues to preach when the tongue is silent. Even nature furnishes examples of this truth. The cedar is most useful when dead. There is no timber like it. Firm in the grain, and capable of the finest polish, the tooth of no insect will touch it, and time itself can hardly destroy it. It will diffuse a perpetual fragrance through the chambers which it ceils. The worm will not corrode the book which it protects, nor the moth eat the garment which it guards. Every true Christian is useful in his life; but the goodly cedars are most useful when cut down and cut up. Luther is dead; but the Reformation he begun lives four hundred years

after him, and was never more vital. Calvin is dead; but his vindication of God's free and sovereign grace will never die. Knox, Melville and Chalmers are dead; but Scotland still retains a Sabbath and a Christian peasantry, a Bible in every house and a school in every parish. Bunyan is dead; but his bright spirit still walks the earth in his "Pilgrim's Progress." Baxter is dead; but souls are still quickened by his "Saint's Rest" and "Call to the Unconverted." Cowper is dead; but his "Olney Hymns" go on their way rejoicing. Eliot, Carey, Brainerd, Judson, are all dead; but the missionary cause is going forward to victory. Henry Martyn, Mrs. Judson and Harriet Newell are dead; but who can count the apostolic spirits who have risen up to call them blessed? Howard is dead; but the work of prison reform is not forgotten. Raikes is dead; but Sabbath-schools have mustered a great army to the Lord, and its mission is only begun. "The widow's two mites" were long ago spent, yet every year and every day

they gather untold thousands into the Lord's treasury, as the "memorial" of her faith and humble piety is preached in all the world.

OUR LIVES IN GOD'S HANDS, NOT MAN'S.

And David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul.—1 Sam. xxvii: 1. So David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David.—1 Kings ii: 10.

So David's fears were groundless. He lived to be "very old," and died at last in peace, after a long and prosperous reign. Though Saul, by every crafty method in his power, sought to slay him—and several times David barely escaped from his insane and determined purpose—yet he was safe, in Saul's presence and when "hunted as a partridge on the mountain." An invisible and invincible shield protected him. No hand lifted against him was able to strike him down. God's time had not yet come. God had work for him to do, and he was immortal until that work was done. Not a "charmed life," but a mighty unseen Power was his defence. The Infinite in power and wisdom was more than a match for all the craft of Satanic malice and the combined assaults of the created universe. The death-knell strikes only when God gives the signal.

PERSONAL IDENTITY SURVIVES DEATH.

And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elijah talking with Him.—Matt. xvii: 3. To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.—Luke xxiii: 43.

The fact that every man will preserve his identity in the future world is thus clearly established from the Scriptures. For the reason for it we have not far to look.

1. It is essential to the ends of justice, both as it respects the righteous and the wicked.

2. It is essential as the connecting link between time and eternity, probation and retribution.

3. It is essential to the literal fulfilment of God's promises and threatenings.

4. It is essential to the perpetuity of the life and character here matured, in the eternal hereafter. Without it we should not know ourselves or our friends, and memory would cease its solemn function.

Revival Service.

PAUL'S PARADOX.

*But God chose * * * things that are not, that He might bring to nought the things that are.—1 Cor. i: 27, 28.*

Lightly God esteems the instruments through which He deigns to accomplish His purposes. He uses instruments, not from necessity, but often to show His independence of them—as if they were "not." He ordains the weakest, the most unlikely, those counted even "foolish" in man's judgment, to confound the "wise" and abase the "mighty," and exalt things "despised" by the creature, "that no flesh should glory in His presence." "Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there anything too hard for Me?" (Jer. xxxii: 27.) Above all change and vicissitude, above "the noise of a great tumult" and the "battle of the warriors with confused noise and garments rolled in blood," even "the wreck of matter and the crush of worlds," the true Christian hears the voice from out of Infinite Calmness: "Fear not!" "Be still, and know that I am God." God is not only in all things, but is *over* all things.

GOD IN HISTORY.

We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us what work Thou didst in their days, in the times of old.—Ps. xlv: 1.

There is divine revelation in profane history as well as in sacred. In turning the pages of history it is more difficult to deny Providence than to maintain it. We see in all ages the hand of God giving shape to events. All men and all things, willingly or unwillingly, work together for the accomplishment of His purpose. The great lesson of history is faith—faith in an overruling Providence.

SERMONIC CRITICISM.

Look well to your matter, and the manner will take care of itself.—PROF. SANBORN.

"One reason why we grow wise so slowly is because we nurse our mistakes too fondly."

LUTHER ON PREACHING.—Let him speak for himself. He says: "Cursed are preachers that, in the church, aim at high and hard things, and, neglecting the saving health of the poor unlearned people, seek their own honor and praise, and therewith to please one or two ambitious persons. When I preach, I sink myself deep down. I regard neither doctors nor magistrates, of whom are here in this church above forty; but I have an eye to the multitude of young people, children and servants, of whom are more than two thousand. I preach to those, directing myself to them that have need thereof. Will not the rest hear me? The doors stand open unto them; they may be gone. I see that the ambition of preachers grows and increases; this will do the utmost mischief in the church, and produce great disquietness and discord; for they will need teach high things touching matters of state, thereby aiming at praise and honor; they will please the worldly wise, and meantime neglect the simple and common multitude."

"A preacher ought to remain by the text and deliver that which is before him, to the end people may well understand it. But a preacher that will speak everything that comes in his mind, is like a maid that goes to market, and meeting another maid, makes a stand, and they hold together a goose market."

"When you preach, regard not the doctors and learned men, but regard the common people, to teach and instruct them clearly. In the pulpit we must feed the common people with milk. Keep to the catechism, the milk. Higher and subtle discourses, the strong wine, we will keep for the strong-minded."

The following incident is noteworthy: "In the year 1529, several noted theologians preached in the presence of Landgrave Philip. When Luther's turn came, everybody expected the great reformer to preach something new and

subtle; but Luther, plainly and simply, preached on the forgiveness of sins. And when the Landgrave asked his counselors which one of the theologians they were most pleased with, they said that they must confess that Dr. Luther's sermon was the best; for from it they learned how before God, the Father, they could get forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ; and also how they could rightly pray and comfort themselves in all their distresses and misfortunes."

Luther's words and example are as sagacious and timely to-day as they were four hundred years ago. Let those who honor the great principles for which he contended ponder them well.

UNCTION IN THE PREACHER.—The one great need of the pulpit is *power*. Notwithstanding the conceded high qualifications of the ministry as a class, there is yet an admitted deficiency in the pulpit, judging it by its fruits, which is the best criterion. Many of our churches are crowded, and the worshipers are interested and fed, intellectually. But they are not won to Christ, to a holy, consecrated life. The machinery is perfect, and the material abundant, but *power* is wanting. It is not scholarship, training, intellectuality, piety, that is lacking. What, then, is it? It may be that the pure, simple Gospel is not always preached, and this may partially account for the lack of power. But we must look farther than this for the solution.

Unquestionably the want of *unction* has very much to do with it. There is not enough of it. Some preachers have none at all. Their sermons are as dry, formal and rigid as a lecture on science or a demonstration in Euclid. There is no *soul* thrown into the sermon. The emotional nature is not touched. The power of the Holy Ghost promised by Christ in His parting words is not felt, and hence hearts are not melted into

tenderness and contrition; souls are not shaken by the powers of the world to come. No man can preach the Gospel effectively until he is brought by the power of the Holy Ghost into real, vital, personal sympathy with Christ. And such a sympathy will give a divine pathos and power to his words. The sense of eternal things in the preacher will awaken a corresponding feeling in the hearer. Whitefield is a remarkable example of this spiritual power, and he was the most successful preacher since apostolic times. "What ardent, fervent, pungent logic! What flaming evangelism! What glowing enthusiasm! What a divine earnestness! His mingled simplicity and sincerity, tenderness and directness, quelled the rabble at Moorfield, the rough colliers at Kingswood, and the murderous miners at Cornwall; and enchanted the versatile Garrick and the elegant Chesterfield, the philosophical Franklin and the skeptical Hume, as well as the ignorant, degraded outcasts of society." So with Jonathan Edwards. His famous sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," was preached with such tenderness and solemnity of manner that his audience at Enfield shrieked and groaned aloud until their cries drowned the preacher's voice, and he was forced to pause and quiet them.

When the ministry comes to recognize and realize the indispensable need of *unction*—the unction of the Holy Ghost anointing their spirits and diffusing the divine odor through all their speech—then will begin a new era of Pentecostal blessing.

A JERKY STYLE.—We once heard a preacher announce that he was going to give his sermon to the people in "chunks." He meant that he should not be at the pains to prepare it in the shape of dainty morsels, as if they were a company of dyspeptics or dialecticians, or babes that needed to be fed with a spoon. It was a lit at order, system, elaboration, painstaking in style and method. He would cut the Word into huge pieces, and fling them

at the heads of his hearers! Not a very wise method, we opine; but not much worse in its effects than is what we call a *jerky style*—a far more common fault than dealing out the truth in "chunks." It has the same effect on the aesthetic and moral nature of the hearers as a sudden and severe putting down of the brakes has on the passengers in a railroad car, giving them a tremendous jarring and shaking-up in general. It is a poor time to think, or moralize, or admire the scenery along the road. Your nerves are so shocked that you are sensible of nothing but extreme discomfort. So have we felt, on reading or listening to a sermon characterized by this fault. No matter what its ability, its originality, vigor of conception and expression, all will be spoiled in its effect by this glaring fault. Instead of the limpid, natural flow of thought in a graceful and spontaneous style of expression, like the gentle, even flow of a running stream through valley and meadow to the sea, the thought is broken, disjointed, and given in fragments, while the sentences, paragraphs, divisions and sub-divisions, instead of gliding quietly into each other, or dovetailed like a beautiful piece of mosaic, are all in confusion, and present to the eye and the ear a scene of discord and physical and mental disquietude highly unfavorable to a deep impression. There lies before us a sermon of this description, preached by a minister of considerable reputation before an association of brethren. Whatever the intrinsic merits of the sermon may be, in the nature of the case it must have been a failure on the audience. Each sentence, paragraph and division stands out by itself; there is no unity, fellowship, flowing together and onward rush. To listen to its delivery must have been a sore tax upon the nerves; to read it seems like wandering through a forest, "in mazes lost," amidst all sorts of trees scattered about in wild confusion, with no paths, or guide-boards, or clews of any kind to direct your way out of it.

THE OLD MASTERS.—I do not set my-

self up as a critic, but beg to take exception to that "bit" of a letter from C. H. Hall, D.D., on page 124, November MONTHLY.

I am a lover and student of the old masters. I have read over a hundred sermons of South, and many of Hall's, as well as others. They are storehouses of wisdom. From them may be gathered things new and old. Where is the modern pulpit orator, except Beecher, Spurgeon, and a few others, as fertile in pointed illustration (which is an element in good preaching) as Robert South? Where do we find a purer diction and more precise statement than in Hall? And, should our younger ministers read and study the "giants" of old more, the pulpit would be much the gainer. I would not be understood by this to ignore the study of modern preachers, but urge a more careful perusal of the ancient.

If they are "exhaustive essays," should they not so much the more be studied? It does a man good to take the dimensions of the "old giants," and feel of their sinews. Dr. Hall himself is an illustration of the thing he slightly condemns. Had he not studied the "ponderous sermons" of South, Barrow and Hall, would he be rector of "Holy Trinity"? Beecher tells us that he was, in his younger days, a great lover and ardent student of South, and the thunder of the old divine of the seventeenth century has not died wholly in Plymouth pulpit even to-day. Broadus tells us, in his paper on Spurgeon, that he "has been a great reader of the Puritan divines." Some of our young preachers, who were a few years since firmly anchored in God's Word, are now anchored in a "quagmire." They sailed over the sea of "old divines," never so much as casting out the anchor to see if they might not find something to which it would catch.

Perhaps I say these things too forcibly. It is the result of actual observation. So I say, study the modern, read the new; but do not neglect the old.

L. D. VAN VALKENBURGH.

Poultney, Vt.

Things a Preacher Should Be Sure Of in the Pulpit.

—That he heartily believes and personally experiences the blessed truths he commends to others.

—That he speaks as "a dying man to dying men," and that each sermon and prayer may be the last they will hear from his lips.

—That he stands there to preach "Christ and Him crucified" as the only and all-sufficient Savior of lost men, and not for any personal end or selfish interest.

—That he comes before his people each time on the most solemn and urgent errand that God ever intrusted to a creature, and in the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of peace.

—That if a single sinner go forth from God's sanctuary impenitent, rejecting Christ, his blood will be upon his own head--the preacher having faithfully warned him, and delivered his own soul.

—That he is there fresh from communion with God in His Word and in prayer, fully equipped for his work, and conscious in his inmost soul that without the Holy Spirit to aid him, his message will be in vain.

—That he makes himself heard by every one in the auditory, if a distinct enunciation, life and animation in the delivery, can accomplish it. Failure in this first requisite is common and usually inexcusable.

—That the particular message he is then and there to deliver is a message out of God's living Word, and has been thoroughly studied by him, and that he both comprehends its purport, and his whole being is permeated by and is in full sympathy with it.

—That he makes himself understood, by great simplicity and plainness of speech; by using no words or phrases not familiar to or readily understood by "the common people," and by familiar illustrations, after Christ's own example, and the example of Whitefield, Spurgeon, Beecher, Talmage, and other eminent preachers. "To the poor the Gospel is preached."

What a Preacher Should Not Be Sure Of in the Pulpit.

—Of his own infallibility. Modesty becomes him. He is no pope. He may well distrust his own wisdom and opinions. He is sure of his ground only when he is firmly planted on the rock of eternal truth. His words are entitled to full credence only when they are backed by a "Thus saith the Lord."

—That his view of any truth, or any mooted question in the minds of his hearers, is the only consistent and proper view, and all who question it are foolish or schismatics. There are many silly, "opinionated," oracular people in the world, and they are not all in the pews. Truth is many sided. Humility, caution, deference, are still virtues, though they are becoming rather obsolete in this wise age.

—That he can truly interpret the future. He may read the past, and know the present, but God only knows what "to-morrow" may bring forth. Prophecy, "the signs of the times," have made fools of many would-be wise men, and wrecks of many a reputation. Better stick to history, actual realization, truths plainly revealed, and let "God be His own interpreter" of the future.

—That there is not an anxious, inquiring sinner, or a burdened heart, sitting there before him, longing for light and comfort, and the peace of God. Taking God at His word, and going the rounds of his parish in search of such, has rebuked and gladdened many a despondent pastor. Tears and thanks have oft been his welcome.

PREACHERS EXCHANGING VIEWS.

*Like light connecting star to star
Doth thought transmitted run.*—LORD LYTTON.

Good Men Helping Bad Reading.

I greatly admire your zeal in warring against evil literature, and while reading "A Clean Press" in the November HOMILETIC MONTHLY, where "J. S." so strongly urges the Church to "lead in a crusade" against this evil, the question arose in my mind, and I desire your answer in the MONTHLY: Why is it, when such efforts are being put forth by the lovers of good and pure literature to exterminate this evil trash, that such men as Dr. — and Dr. — will contribute to such sensational papers as the ————, etc.? Members of my church read these papers, and when surprise is expressed they reply, "Why, Dr. — or Dr. — writes for them, or permits his sermons to be published in them, and, therefore, they can't be very bad." Now, are not these papers, and others of the same class, degrading and demoralizing in tendency; not as bad, it may be, as some others, but vitiating in their effect on the minds and morals of the young? I confess this thing puzzles me, though I may look at it in the wrong light. Will you not give us light on the subject? S. T. W.

Goodville, N. J.

We omit the names given by our correspondent. The principle is the point. And we confess that our surprise has often been great, not in relation to the particular cases here cited, of which we know nothing, but to cases that have fallen under our own observation. The tact and shrewdness of the men who cater, through the press, to the low and depraved tastes of the masses are marvelous. They know the art of deception to perfection, and the power there is in a name to gloss their iniquity and decoy the public, and the more respectable and exalted, the better for their purpose. And by tempting offers, and various considerations, and persistent efforts, they sometimes entrap a worthy minister or Christian layman of note, and use him as a "card." It is not many years since that the best known and most popular preacher in the American pulpit, by the offer of many thousands of dollars, was induced to write a novel for a weekly in this city, of questionable standing then in the minds of a large part of the community. As a speculation it proved a grand investment to the proprietor. But the pro-

priety of it on the part of the preacher was called in question by many greatly, and its effect was to stimulate similar experiments.

One fact, however, must be borne in mind. The printing of a sermon, or address, or essay, from a clergyman, in the columns of this class of papers, is no evidence that he "writes" for that paper, or is in the least responsible for its being there. One of the leading dailies of New York, not noted for its high moral tone or religious zeal, went some years ago into the business of reporting, in a wholesale way, the sermons of our leading preachers; so that on Monday morning the names and sermons of a dozen or more of our noted preachers would appear in the same sheet with a score of columns of advertisements, many of which were of a most abominable character! And this is not all. Our Sunday papers, in order to prove their piety and respect for God's institutions and inveigle Christian people into patronizing them, salt their sheets with the names and thoughts and biographies of our most eminent clergymen. The children of this world are very wise in their day and generation. And there is no way to prevent these things. But obviously these ministers cannot be held responsible for them. No clergyman who values his good name, and is alive to the evil of an unclean and demoralizing, or even frivolous press, will give aid or countenance to writing for or commending or lending his name to any flashy newspaper or periodical, or advertisement or book, whose tendency is even doubtful. Inconsiderateness or a tempting "wage of gold" may work evil in a thousand circles and to an extent of which he little dreams.

How to Double the Value of the Standard Library.

Take the edition that is bound with manilla paper and pull off the covers carefully, so as not to tear them apart

in the middle. Out of stiff pasteboard, cut two pieces for new covers. These covers should be one-eighth of an inch longer than the pages in the book, and not so wide by three-eighths of an inch. Lay these covers down lengthwise, and side by side, but one inch and a half apart. Fasten them together with a strip of black cloth nine inches in length, and three inches wide. (Wigans will do.) This will allow three-fourths of an inch of cloth to be pasted the full length of each cover. The surplus length of cloth should be equally divided between both ends, and passed over on the other side, and pasted down. (Use flour paste.) After the covers are dry, and firmly fastened together, put a good coating of paste on the inside of the strip of cloth, one inch and a half wide, which intervenes between the covers; then stick the covers on the book, dividing the strip of cloth equally on both sides. Press the newly pasted parts between books or boards until thoroughly dried. Take the manilla cover and cut out the back containing the title of the book, name of author, and name of publisher, and paste it on the back of book as rebound. Also paste the sides of the manilla cover on the pasteboard covers in their proper places. This makes a strong and slightly appearing book, worth twice as much as the original. T. W. RAYMOND.

Brownsville, Tenn.

An Admirable Plan for the Distribution of Books.

Of the many advantages of the *Standard Library* publications, there are several to which I wish to call attention.

It is an admirable plan to distribute by mail healthful books at cheap rates, bi-monthly—good for all of us, but especially for those possessing only small libraries and few leisure hours for reading.

1. People like to use what they pay for, and, therefore, will try to read them.

2. They will come to anticipate with interest the mail that is to bring them something new.

3. They will read more in order to get through one book before the next comes.

4. They will be so occupied in reading what you send them that they will have no time to give to trifling or evil literature.

5. Their taste for what is solid and instructive will be so educated that they will lose relish for what is superficial or debasing.

I sincerely wish that the patrons for the *Standard Library* may be indefinitely multiplied.

J. L. BURROWS.

Norfolk, Va., Nov. 12, 1883.

Boasting of Orthodoxy.

I love to prove a man sound in the faith, but I do hate to hear one endlessly boasting of his soundness. I know that there is pride in such an one, and I cannot help feeling that there is a vein of hypocrisy. This class of people find a worthy representative in the old Scotch woman, who stoutly maintained that in all the parish, herself and the parson were the only ones "*sound in the faith*," and added, in a whisper, that sometimes she had doubts even of the soundness of the parson!

S.

QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

"D. E. I."—What is the best work on the life or history of Joseph?—A.: Several books on this subject have been published, as "Through the Prison to the Throne," by Van Dyke, \$1; "Joseph and his Friend," by B. Taylor, \$1.50, and "Joseph and his Brethren," by Sprague, \$1. All of these are valuable helps.

"L. B. C."—Will you tell me where Dr. R. S. Storrs' works are published? Dr. Butler, in his "Bible Work," has a great many gems from his pen. Where does he get them?—A.: Dr. S. has published very few books: "Conditions of Success in Preaching," \$1; "Early American Spirit and the Genesis of It," \$1; "Lectures on Abelard;" besides

several sermons in "National Preacher" and HOMILETIC MONTHLY, and several orations and addresses on great public occasions. We suspect that Dr. Butler has culled from all these sources and others we know not of, as nothing escapes his Argus eyes.

"U. S. S. M."—Under what circumstances, if any, should a minister apply to a vacant charge to become its pastor?—A.: No general rule can be given. It must be left mainly to the discretion of each minister in view of the circumstances. It is safe, however, to say that it is better every way to make the application, not in person or by letter direct, but through the agency of some friendly minister or layman who knows you and can say a good word for you. If you know of none such, it is always proper to send your name and address to a vacant pastorate, stating your wish and referring them for information to some particular person or persons.

"C. E."—What is the meaning of the silent letters in the proper names in Max Muller's "India"?—A.: This query we referred to the editor of the American edition, who answers as follows:

"These letters are not silent, but are used by modern Indian scholars to express a somewhat modified sound of the letter thus italicised. It was the practice to print such letters with a dot beneath, which made much trouble, and led to this substitution of the Italic letter instead. The sound *c* is almost like *si*, as *Asoka*, *Asioka*. The *n* as in *Panini* is similarly modified into *Paninyi*, etc. There are forty-two letters in the Sanscrit alphabet to be expressed by twenty-three in the Roman.

"A. WILDER."

"MIXED MARRIAGES."—Cardinal McCloskey's recent Pastoral Letter opposes mixed marriages, *i. e.*, the marriages of Roman Catholics and Protestants. Will you give us your views on the subject?—A.: In some quarters this letter has been severely criticised for its opposition to such marriages, on the ground that the tendency of such teach-

ing is to exaggerate and inflame "sectarian differences," instead of ameliorating them. But we believe this view is based on a misapprehension of the facts of the case. Such marriages, as a rule, add bitterness to religious differences, and introduce into the family circle the worst elements of division and contention. So that, for social and economic reasons, we should discourage such ill-assorted marriages.

"J. K. L."—(1). At my admission into full connection with the Conference, to the Bishop's question, "Will you wholly abstain from the use of tobacco?" I replied in the affirmative. If, now, a good physician advises me to use tobacco, would I be justified in so doing? (2). In my congregation there are several laymen who pronounce the benediction at the close of every meeting they lead. Is it wrong?—A.: (1). If you do not violate your pledge until a "good" physician gives such advice, we think that your bishop will be satisfied. If it should ever turn out that tobacco, like whiskey, has medicinal properties, that would alter the case. But be sure that the physician so advising is a "good" physician, and then follow his advice *under the direction of your common sense*. (2). The benediction, in almost all denominations, is regarded as an official act of the clergy. It might not be wise, however, to take exception to the action of your laymen, if they are "disposed to make a point of it;" that is, unless there has been a ruling in your Conference, district or general, touching the matter. It is largely a question of order, to be determined by the higher officials in your denomination.

"W. A. Y."—I acknowledge myself a moderately slow reader. I crave rapidity. How shall I and the many thousands of your readers acquire the coveted power?—A.: It is impossible for all to become rapid readers. Practice can do much, but not all. Training may quicken the step even of a Clydesdale draught-horse, but it can't make a St. Julien of him. Quick think-

ing and quick reading must go together if the reading be not superficial. This said, a hint or two may be of value. And the first essential is that the reader should know *about what he is after*. Read the table of contents *carefully*, and don't skip the preface. If a man is to do rapid sight-seeing in a metropolis, he doesn't want to throw away the guide-book, saying, "I'll form my own judgment on what are the points of importance, after I've seen everything." He might spend half an hour on a third-rate painting, and have to slight the masterpiece in the next alcove. Then to read a book with dispatch, one should know beforehand something about its subject. He should have done *some thinking of his own* upon it. He should

have some idea of the size of its circumference and the position of its center. He should have the pigeon-holes ready and classified, and then he can arrange the thoughts he gets without hesitation, and when he wishes to refer to one, he knows where to find it. One should not read rapidly books too high above him. The child prattles over Hamlet's soliloquy and learns it by heart, and probably *never* will get out of it one-half its value, because it became familiar to him when he couldn't appreciate it. Take your time to a book which opens up a new field of thought. Fix the main principles firmly in your mind, and then you can absorb all that's written on the subject with two-fold dispatch.

GERMS OF ILLUSTRATION.*

Strong is the dog that has his own home knoll for a battlefield.—AN OLD GAELIC ADAGE.

A Roman army once fought with such enthusiasm as to be insensible to an earthquake that rocked the ground beneath their feet.

The water lily so beautiful as it floats on the surface of the clear water, has an unseen root way down amid mud and darkness at the bottom of the pond.

In the highlands of Scotland it is the general belief that the spirit of the last person buried has to keep watch and ward over the graves of the burial ground till the spirit of the next person buried takes its place.

At a cock fight the friends of each of the birds were betting freely on their favorites. A spectator advised one party to be careful or he would lose his money, which in the issue proved true. The loser was curious to know how the man knew that his bird would be beaten, to which it was replied, "Why, did you not see him looking over his shoulder for a place to run?"

There is something extremely beautiful in one of Dr. David Brewster's last utterances upon earth. On the morning of his death Dr. James Simpson, standing by his bedside, remarked that it had been given him to show forth much of God's great and marvelous works, and the dying philosopher solemnly and quietly replied, "Yes, I have found them to be great and marvelous, and I have found and felt them to be *His*."

It was a question in a church meeting who should circulate the subscription for

foreign missions. It was a labor from which many excused themselves. One was too busy, another said that he would *give* but he would not *beg*. This brought to his feet an earnest man who was known to be one of the largest merchants and most busy men in the church and city—as well as a most liberal giver—who said: "I am busy, as you all know, but I am not too busy to work for Christ when needed. I, too, am ashamed to beg; rather than beg I would starve or live upon dry crusts. But for this cause, brethren, I am willing to beg from door to door. Won't you do me the favor to put me on this committee?"

That different colors reflect and absorb different quantities of light and heat is a well-known fact; and scientists tell us that there is reason to believe that every spot and mark on skin, hair, feather, scale, egg, leaf, flower or bud has its particular use—as these enable the animal or plant to assimilate force (light) in kind or amount suitable for the stimulation of the different sets of nerves or muscles, or for the elaboration of the secretions on which the growth of the animal or plant, or the reproduction of its kind depends, and to reject force which in kind or quantity is unsuitable. "*Light, the dominant force of the universe.*"—SEDEGWICK, p. 209.

A fairy knoll is a little grassy mound dedicated to the fairies. There existed some years since in the highlands of Scotland and the Hebrides—and it is not altogether unknown at the present day—a custom of each maiden pouring from her milk-pail evening and

* This page is under the editorial charge of the editor of the Book Department

morning on the fairy knoll a little of the new-drawn milk from the cow, by way of propitiating the favor of those good people, and as a tribute, the wisest, it was deemed, and most acceptable that could be rendered, and sooner or later sure to be paid a thousand fold. This was termed paying "the fairies their due on the fairy knoll." And the consequence was that these fairy knolls were clothed with a richer and more beautiful verdure than any other spot, howe or knoll in the country.

It is a fact very generally known that when two lutes are tuned to the same key and placed near each other, when one is struck the other will send forth notes of kindred melody. But it is not so generally known that a fact the very opposite of this has been observed in the mysterious realm of sound, viz.: that inhar-

monious sounds under certain circumstances seem to propagate themselves, e. g.: A first-class piano may be put in perfect tune, and soon after, a single key will seem to be quite out of tune, and when struck it sounds as if a bit of paper were lying upon the wire. To discover the cause often baffles the expert. But instances have been known when the dangling of a bunch of keys hung on a gas-fixture near by, or the tinkling of the shade unsteadily seated on a chandelier, or a bit of bric-a-brac on a mantel or "what not," the motion of which caused a slight noise, seemed to be the disturbing cause, and when removed the instrument was found to be in perfect tune. That which renders this still more remarkable is that often only a single note is affected by the discord. There would seem to be a sort of aptitude in that particular note to contract the discord.

NOTICES OF BOOKS OF HOMILETIC VALUE.

By J. STANFORD HOLME, D.D., EDITOR OF BOOK DEPARTMENT.

ANCIENT EGYPT IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN DISCOVERIES. By Prof. H. S. Osborn, LL.D. Robt. Clarke & Co.: Cincinnati. Price \$1.25.

The history of no nation, except that of the Jews, is so full of interest to the Christian scholar as that of Egypt; and yet none is more perplexing in its chronology; nor are the historical records of any nation more difficult to interpret. Yet great advance has been made within a few years past in both these directions. And although some of the earlier and more distinguished students of Egyptology have not been friendly to Christianity, and have found an inspiration to their labors in the hope of making discoveries that might work its overthrow, yet this very study is now beginning to afford rich returns to the labor of Christian students, and in many important particulars has confirmed rather than invalidated the sacred records.

Difficulty of access to the sources of information, and the extreme costliness of most of the books needed, has deterred many from these studies, but in this work of Prof. Osborn's a manual is supplied of great excellence and usefulness, and within the reach of all. It is a very complete epitome of Egyptology to date, with a map and many illustrations.

Ever since the Obelisk, in its peregrinations around the world, from its original site at the entrance of the Temple of On, in Egypt, to its present seat in Central Park, New York, tarried a week under our study window, and spent with us the very Sunday on which our Sunday-school chanced to be studying, by appointment, the history of the marriage of Joseph to Asenath, the daughter of the Priest of On, we have been trying to locate the reign of Thothmesel, the Pharaoh who is supposed to have erected this Obelisk, and the reign of the Pharaoh who gave to Joseph the daughter of the Priest of On in

marriage. We can hardly say that this volume has made it as clear as day! But we seem to have some new light on this dark subject, and hope by a diligent study of Prof. Osborn's facts and chronology to get still more.

IN THE SHADOW OF THE PYRENEES, FROM THE BASQUE LAND TO THE CARCASSONNE. By Marvin R. Vincent, with Etchings and Maps. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Price \$1.75.

On opening this little volume of travels, the first thing that attracted our attention was a quotation to this effect: "*It is the point of view that is the essential thing.*" And it is this which commends this book to us, and in this is the ground on which we commend it to the readers of THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY. The point of view of the traveler in this volume is clearly the pulpit of the Church of the Covenant, New York. By this we mean that Dr. Vincent looks at everything through preacher's eyes. He may have resolved to leave Christ and pulpit and sermons at home; he may have doffed the church coat and the white necktie, and donned a soft hat, and a business traveling suit; but as he took *himself*, the preacher, along, the practiced eye will not fail to detect in his notes of travel the "*clerical habit*" on almost every page. A minister has a way of looking at things, of drawing practical lessons, of picking up bits of life adapted to illustrations, that is peculiar to ministerial thought. And when we say that this book is made up in a great measure of the fragments of a feast of travel, we do not intend to depreciate the work. For, like the old miracle, the *fragments* are more than the original feast is to most travelers, especially of the "lay sort." We hope we may be pardoned for the conceit, but we really think that ministers are the best of travelers, and that when they write a book of travels it is generally worth reading.

HELPFUL DATA IN CURRENT LITERATURE.

MILTON AND TENNYSON. By Rev. Henry J. Van Dyke, Jr., *Presbyterian Review* (October), 28 pp. A masterly paper, evincing rare literary taste and ability in so young a writer—the earnest of a brilliant future. The parallel of resemblances which he runs between these masters in the lyric art cannot fail to interest the cultivated reader.

THE GODS OF CANAAN. By Prof. A. H. Sayce. *Contemporary Review* via *Eclectic* (November), pp. 10. Students of the Old Testament will find in this carefully prepared paper much that will interest and instruct in relation to the several gods of heathen worship named or alluded to in Hebrew history. It is an important field of investigation, and the writer has done his work well.

EXPOSITORY PREACHING. By Rev. W. H. Black. *Cumberland Presbyterian Review* (October), pp. 10. It is a good sign to see the thorough ventilation which the methods of preaching are getting; great good will come of it. While there is nothing specially new in this paper, yet it discusses the subject intelligently, and states several weighty reasons in favor of the expository plan, in preference to the topical and textual.

THE LAW OF PRAYER. By James Gibbons, D.D. *Catholic Review* (October), pp. 20. Coming from a leading Roman Catholic divine, this paper has special interest. Its teaching, in the main, is sound and Scriptural, and is enforced by pertinent and impressive argument. He gives "a striking instance of the power of prayer and of the direct interposition of God in the conversion and illumination of a soul without the help or agency of man," which came under his own observation.

STUDIES IN ESCHATOLOGY. By Philip Schaff, D.D. *Presbyterian Review* (October), pp. 20. A timely and valuable historical presentation of the subject, giving the Jewish, the heathen, and the Patristic views, and, in contrast, the Eschatology of the New Testament, and the essential faith of the Christian Church as expressed in the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds and her various Liturgies. "Everlasting punishment," says Dr. Schaff, in his summing up, "always was, and always will be, the orthodox doctrine on that dark, terrible subject."

PROBATION AFTER DEATH; OR, THE SPIRITS IN PRISON. By C. F. Mussey, D.D. *Baptist Quarterly Review* (Oct.-Dec.), pp. 16. A very able and satisfactory exegesis of 1 Peter iii: 18-20. No attempt is made to review particular eschatologies, which advocate a probation after death, but this famous passage, on which those who favor that view mainly rely, is shown to teach no such doctrine. Its proper interpretation, as here given, is: "That Christ in His divine Spirit preached to the men of the time of Noah, who

were afterward—because they did not repent when they heard the messages of mercy—up to the time of Christ, and at present are, and till the judgment will remain, in prison."

THE BRAHMA SAMAJ. By Rev. C. W. Park. *Bib. Sacra* (July and October), pp. 32 and 33. Written by one lately of Bombay and familiar with the theme, these papers are exceedingly interesting and instructive; and the presence in this country of the able and distinguished expounder of this reformed Hinduism, on a mission of enlightenment to the Occidental Church, gives them special claims on the Christian scholar and preacher. As a reliable historic sketch of this remarkable movement, and of Ram Mahan Bai, the chief originator of it, and of his successors in it, and especially of the views and career of Keshab Chandra Sen, who has excited no little attention in England and in this country, some of whose utterances have approximated the teachings of Christianity, it is both timely and invaluable.

THE PRACTICAL BEARINGS OF OUR BELIEF CONCERNING THE RELATION OF DEATH TO PROBATION. By Prof. G. Frederick Wright. *Bibliotheca Sacra* (October), pp. 20. Both from an historical and a doctrinal standpoint, this article possesses decided homiletic value. "The belief that death ends probation has been so nearly universal in the Church that there has been little occasion to affirm it;" and this is the reason assigned why so many of the creeds have not definitely excluded the idea of another "chance." The views of Dörner are sharply criticised in the light of Scripture: it is shown that "no new light has dawned respecting these problems since the New Testament was written," and that "those who are endeavoring to unsettle the common faith of Christendom upon the subject of future probation cannot realize the responsibility they assume."

THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY. By F. W. Conrad, D. D. *Lutheran Quarterly* (October), pp. 18. The prevalent and the true theories, in relation to this vital question, are here set forth with clearness and decided ability. The present and prospective "death of ministers" lends special interest to this discussion. The writer reasons stoutly against what he calls the "prevalent" theory, viz.: a direct call from God to particular individuals, impressed upon their minds by the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit, and whom the grace and providence of God are sure to bring into the ministry. The "true" theory in his judgment is "rational," not "miraculous," "ordinary," not "extraordinary"—a conviction of duty arising from a survey of one's personal fitness, and the leadings of God's providence. And this view is enforced by weighty and conclusive reasons, drawn from Scripture, experience and the nature of things. The paper has an historical as well as practical value.

THEMES AND TEXTS OF RECENT LEADING SERMONS.

1. Supernatural Answers to Prayer. "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him and saved him out of all his troubles," etc.—Ps. xxxiv: 6-7. Arthur T. Pierson, D.D., Philadelphia.
2. Lines of Life. "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever."—Isa. xxxii: 17. John Hall, D.D.
3. Man's Higher Life. "Man shall not live by bread alone," etc.—Matt. iv: 4. J. B. Thomas, D.D.
4. The Sensitiveness of Christ. "Who touched Me?"—Mark v: 31. T. DeWitt Talmage, D.D.
5. The First Miracle: the Key-note of the Gospel Dispensation. "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory."—John ii: 11. P. S. Henschen, D.D., Chicago.
6. God's Love, Power, and Wisdom. "God so loved the world," etc.—John iii: 16. Bishop Warren in Washington Street M. E. Church, Brooklyn.
7. Death, Physical and Spiritual. "For to be carnally minded is death," etc.—Rom. viii: 6. John R. Paxton, D.D.
8. The Christian's Goal. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us," etc.—Rom. viii: 18-24. H. A. Buttz, D.D., Drew Theological Seminary.
9. The Sun of Righteousness. "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."—Phil. ii: 12, 13. Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, Brooklyn.
10. The Pre-eminence of Christ. "That in all things He might have the pre-eminence."—Colos. i: 18. John Hall, D.D.
11. The Form and Power of Godliness. "Having a form of godliness," etc.—2 Tim. iii: 5. F. M. Ellis, D.D., Boston.
12. Drifting and its Remedy. "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip."—Heb. ii: 1. Cuthbert Hall, D.D., Brooklyn.
13. Man's Relations with God. "Him with whom we have to do."—Heb. iv: 13. William M. Taylor, D.D.
14. Jesus's First Doxology. "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."—Rev. i: 5, 6. Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, London.
15. Emotional Element in Religion. "And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God."—Rev. xix: 10. B. F. Lee, Pres. Wilberforce University.

SUGGESTIVE THEMES.

1. The Unconscious Loss of Power. ("And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him."—Judges xvi: 20.)
2. The Manifest Presence of God the Occasion of Great Joy. ("And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shout," etc.—1 Sam. iv: 6.)
3. A Primitive Pulpit. ("And Ezra the Scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose."—Neh. viii: 4.)
4. The Educational Power of Gentleness. ("Thy gentleness hath made me great."—Ps. xviii: 35.)
5. The Night of the Soul. ("The night cometh when no man can work."—John ix: 4.)
6. The Insufficiency of Natural Virtue. ("But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in yourselves."—John v: 42.)
7. The Danger of Pernicious Literature. ("Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge."—Prov. xix: 27.)
8. Heart Language. ("As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man."—Prov. xxvii: 19.)
9. Like a Bottle in the Smoke. ("For I am become like a bottle in the smoke."—Ps. cxix: 83.)
10. The Piper's Lament. ("We have piped unto you and ye have not danced," etc.—Matt. xi: 16, 17.)
11. The Touch of Jesus Calming Fear. ("And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid."—Matt. xvii: 7.)
12. Opportunity the Measure of Responsibility. ("For him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."—James iv: 17.)
13. The White Raiment. ("I counsel thee to buy of me white garments, that thou mayest clothe thyself, and that the shame of thy nakedness be not made manifest."—Rev. iii: 18.)