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SERMONIC.

JOHN THE BAPTIST.

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*And this is the record of John, etc.—John
i: 19-34.*

LAST SUNDAY we spoke of the darkest hours in the life of a servant of God as exemplified in the man brought before us by the Gospel of the day. It was John the Baptist in prison, enveloped, not externally only in the gloom of his cell, but inwardly also, in the dark clouds of troubled thoughts, of anxious care for the kingdom of God, of painful doubt regarding the Messianic mission of Him on whom he had set all his hopes.

How different are the outward circumstances and inner disposition in which on this occasion we find this remarkable man of God. Here he stands in the height of his power, amid the fire of his activity; in his soul burns the bright flame of inspired zeal for the cause of his Lord; from his mouth streams the joyous testimony to Him of whom the Spirit had revealed to him: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh

*Translated from the German by Rev. Thos. Macadam, Strathroy, Canada.

[Many of the full sermons and condensations published in this MONTHLY are printed from the authors' manuscripts; others are specially reported for this publication. Great care is taken to make these reports correct. The condensations are carefully made under our editorial supervision. All the sermons of the "International Sunday-School Service" are written expressly for THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY.—Ed.]

away the sin of the world!" On his brow glows the confident assurance: The kingdom of God is at hand; after me comes One mightier than I, who will gloriously complete, as Lord and Master, what I only prepare the way for, as His servant and forerunner.

These are the high, exultant hours of a servant of God, granted him in the midst of the trouble and toil of his calling, to recompense him for many a dreary hour of external opposition and inner conflict. These are the bright spots and lofty summits of life, as they are now and again vouchsafed, even today, to a servant of God, to a handmaid of the Lord, even if the place whereon we stand be far humbler, the sphere in which we act far narrower, and the trust over which we watch far smaller than that of this great forerunner of the Lord.

Let the Baptist then, whom we lately contemplated in his dark cell, be today in his blessed field of labor a stimulating example while we learn of him:

WHAT ARE THE JOYOUS HOURS IN THE LIFE
OF A TRUE SERVANT OF GOD?

They are:

1. When he can testify of Him of whom his heart is full.

2. When he can see that his labor is not in vain in the Lord.

3. When he can hope that his work passes over into the right hands.

1. *When he can testify of Him of whom his heart is full.* "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord." Thus answered John when they asked, "Who art thou? What sayest thou of thyself?" To announce the kingdom of Heaven as at hand, to prepare the way of the Messiah, to startle the people from their sleep of sin, to make ready for a new and better time—that was his special task, his high calling, his divine mission, his sole passion.

The spirit of the old prophets, the spirit of rebuke and of warning, of consolation and of promise, of ardent patriotism and fiery zeal for God's cause, which once glowed in the hearts and sparkled from the lips of a Moses and an Elias, of an Isaiah and an Ezekiel—that spirit flamed up in his soul once more in its old might, after seeming for centuries to be extinguished.

Therefore it drove him out of the beaten track in which the priests and scribes of his time pursued their work; therefore were the schools of the Pharisees and the synagogues of the rabbis too narrow for him; therefore had the enjoyments of the world and the comforts of every-day life no attraction for him. Out in the wilderness of Jordan, where the living breath of God waved around him, where the spirit of an Elijah and an Elisha yet rustled among the crested palms—there was his delight; there must he at first, in still solitude, develop the thoughts in his great soul, and there, regardless of the fear of men or their approbation, and untrammelled by traditional forms of worship, utter in powerful preaching that of which his heart was full, proclaim among his people that which ministered to their peace.

He will be nothing more than he is; the dignity of the Messiah he meekly disclaims; with an Elijah will he not measure himself; nor does he once make pretension to the name of a prophet.

But what he is—that he knows, that he feels, that he claims for himself, that he holds fast and exercises so long as space and time are granted him: "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord."

This vocation of his is his element; in it he lives and moves, and thus feels in his measure what the Mightier One after him utters at Jacob's Well, in the beautiful saying: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."

To work in the calling appointed of God, to testify of Him of whom the heart is full—in this lies also, for us who are not worthy to unloose the shoe latches of a John, the noblest satisfaction, the true enjoyment of life. To dare to be what we can and will, to dare accomplish that whereto one feels in oneself the gift and vocation—therein lies, even from a human point of view, the true happiness. Read the biographies of remarkable men who have distinguished themselves in any department of human knowledge and action: how interesting when a special proclivity toward his future vocation manifests itself already in the child, and in the element in which the young soul lives, so that even the plays of the boy turn in that direction; how touching when, through all sorts of hindrances and difficulties, with severe struggles and abnegations, the native talent breaks its way till it finds the path of its calling and the sphere of its action! Ask any valiant man of sound head and heart: When art thou happiest? What are thy most fortunate hours? He will not be likely to say: My hours of rest, when I have nothing to do but care for my body; or my hours of recreation, when I unbend and enjoy myself in every way. But he will say: I am happiest in the work of my profession, in the full consciousness and full use of my God-given faculties. The learned man among his books, and the artist before his canvas or at his instrument, the teacher among his pupils, and the farmer in his field, the physician among his sick, and the artisan in his

workshop—each feels himself happiest there, where he can use his special gift, and labor in the calling assigned him by God.

How much more happy should we feel, how many more contented, truly gladsome hours might we enjoy in life, did we always think of this when, instead of seeking our happiness beneath us in lower enjoyments, or above us in ambitious straining after what stands too high for us, or by our side in things that do not concern us, we were to seek it in what lies before us and in us, in the true use of our gifts, in the cheerful performance of our duty, in the honest service of our Lord. This, indeed, is our common vocation, however modest our endowments and station in the world. Let each be in his own place and sphere a servant of God, an handmaid of the Lord.

Make straight the way of the Lord! That applies not only to the great forerunner, but also to an humble follower of the Lord; not only to pioneer spirits like an Elijah or a John, a Paul or a Luther, but to all who number themselves among the people of God. To prepare the way of the Lord in thine own heart and life by allowing His Word and Spirit to work on thee; in pious devotion and willing obedience, and courageously combating all that grieves His Spirit and degrades thy soul. To prepare the way of the Lord around thee also, by professing thy faith and letting the light of a God-fearing walk shine in thine own circle, while furthering what is good, and stemming evil when thou canst—that, dear Christian, is thy high and holy, thy beautiful and blessed Christian vocation. And in such service there are hours of joy to be tasted, hours of quiet devotion and hours of joyful work, hours of filial thankfulness and hours of triumphant victory over self and sin; hours of joy which no earthly lust gives us, which far outweigh all the abnegations and deprivations of the narrow way, which yield us a foretaste of heavenly joys, and let us experience what the hymn says:

"How blessed to be free from sin,
 Servant of Christ to be.
 Service of sin is slavery,
 In Christ is liberty."

The servant of God can also reap the fruit of his work.

2. *When he can see that his labor is not in vain in the Lord.* It was so with John the forerunner. Though a preacher in the wilderness, his voice died not away in empty air. His powerful preaching of repentance struck in among the people like a mass of rock plunged into the water, dashing high the waves and propelling the ripple-rings around in ever-widening circles. It was not from the immediate neighborhood alone that the people—rich and poor, scribes and soldiers, pharisees and publicans—streamed forth to hear his preaching and to receive his baptism. No; the souls of men were stirred even to Jerusalem, from whence came priests and Levites to ask: Who art thou, and what seekest thou? John might thus be satisfied with the results of his preaching—not for his own sake, as if it had been his aim to attain consideration among the people, and make a reputation in the land, like some ambitious sect-founder and party leader—no; but for that cause which was God's cause, for the Lord's sake, whose way he sought to prepare.

And might he not rejoice from the heart at such a popular movement? If once on a time his predecessor and brother-spirit, the prophet Elijah, in evil times complained despondingly in the wilderness: "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts, for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword, and I only am left;" if once the prophet Isaiah in sorrow cried to his people: "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" might not John rejoice before God that he remained no mere preacher in the wilderness; that his testimony found an echo in many hearts; that his people appeared to awake from the spiritual sleep of stupidity and ignorance into

which they had been lulled by a priesthood without soul or conscience?

Are these not usually the real hours of joy and moments of exaltation of a servant of God, the true gleams of light in his life, when he can hear an echo of his testimony and is permitted to see some fruit of his work? Not that a true servant of God is not often forced to work on for long years without a sign of recognition by the world; not that we should attach much importance to the applause of men, or build high hopes on a spasmodic movement of men. But yet it is a sweet recompense for much trouble and toil, a joy to the heart amidst many depressing experiences, a strengthening of faith for courageous endurance at our posts, when, now and then, we see, hear, and feel: My work is not in vain in the Lord; when the preacher perceives: I am no mere preacher in the wilderness; I speak not here to mere stones; I see here and there a rousing of hearts, a grateful reception of the divine Word, a penitential feeling within the breast, an earnest seeking of the truth; when the teacher and tutor has the consciousness: the young make progress, my counsels take hold, my instructions bear fruit, I find entrance into heads and hearts; when the philanthropist, with much trouble and labor, against much prejudice and opposition, succeeds in calling into existence some good work and in seeing his honest purposes recognized; when the writer, poet, artist, who places his gifts at the service of the true, the good, the beautiful, reaps the applause of the good, and finds approbation among sympathetic souls; when a true servant, an honest worker, obtains now and then a sign of confidence, of esteem, of love and gratitude from those for whom he devotes his powers—these are sun-gleams on the path of our vocation, joyful hours in this life full of battle and strife, for which we may thank God from the heart. And the great God in heaven leaves none of His servants entirely without such strengthenings to faith, and often just there where we least

expect it; often just then when we think we have cast out our net in vain, we are rejoiced with an unexpected draught of fishes, which again shows us: Thy work is not in vain in the Lord. Do thou thy part; God is doing His. He does it even when thy strength is gone and thy time has reached its end. Even then there are joyous hours for a true servant of God:

3. *When he can hope that his work passes over into the right hands.* "I baptize with water, but there standeth one among you whom ye know not; the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. . . . Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." These are the glad promises wherewith John points out to himself and his people the Mightier One, who cometh after him. That his own power was limited he declares with clear consciousness in his testimony of himself. That his time was destined to be brief he was soon to experience in the prison of Herod. But what consoles him for the narrow range of his own capacity and calling, for the short space of his own life and work, is the certainty: God's work is in good hands. What I only begin, that shall the Mightier complete. And as Moses from Mount Nebo cast his dying gaze over the Promised Land which himself should never enter, so does the forerunner of the Lord, ere he quits the scene, cast forth a glad glance of hope on the glorious work and blessed kingdom of his Lord and Master.

Happy be who can imitate him. A bad man that, who thinks of naught beyond his own brief existence, or who consoles himself: If I only get along, let it go as it may after me, and the worse it is after me, so much the better, for the more will people miss me. A sad man he, who must leave his unfinished day's work with the thought: What I have begun must lie unaccomplished; what I built up must fall to ruin again; what I gathered must be scattered, for there is here no hand to carry it forward. But happy the man who, when his time is over, can transfer his work into the hands of a trusty son,

of an honest successor. And blessed the Christian who knows: What I leave behind on earth is in good hands—not in human hands only, but in the hand of Almighty God. The servants change, but the Lord remaineth; our years fly away, but God's kingdom continueth, and cometh and groweth even over our graves. Such confidence makes glad the servant of God in the very evening of his life, so that with John he can say in hope: "I must decrease, He must increase;" and with Simeon joyfully cry: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

In such confidence will we also turn our eyes from the great servant who presents himself to view, to that Mightier One, whose birth-hour is the great hour of joy for the whole human race, which casts the true light of peace into all our hours of suffering, whether in life or in death. To Him will we also anew consecrate ourselves, and say:

"Lord Jesus Christ, Thee I adore,
And say, I would be thine:
Take me to Thee, for where Thou art,
There should thy servant be."

THE UNBRIDLED TONGUE.

BY CHARLES H. HALL, D.D., [EPISCOPAL] IN THE HOLY TRINITY CHURCH, BROOKLYN.

*If any man among you seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, * * * this man's religion is vain.*—Jas. i: 26.

THE Epistle of St. James is held to be very much like a pastoral letter, though formally addressed to the brethren of the dispersion everywhere.

The sources of its thoughts and expressions were from ordinary parish life, just as they exist in all ages since, just as we may find them in our own times. It is peculiar in its style, and differs most widely from any of the letters of St. Paul or St. Peter. The two latter apostles were engaged far more with the generalizations of men who were being instructed in the ideals of reformation of life and conduct, with great schemes of doctrine, or with the comprehensive principles by which truth is

propagated or error refuted in large bodies of men of different nations and countries. St. James is far more personal and particular. He condescends to what we call little matters, because they happen in ordinary life among the few members of a household, and because their influences are not strikingly pernicious or advantageous; because they do not stir the dramatic sensibilities, but have the monotony of serious duty or warning. While reading an epistle of the great apostle to the Gentiles, whose wandering life led him away from the minute observation of the habits and manners of simple folk, and compelled him to deal with men in masses, and to oppose the Cross to the prejudices and passions of nations, we feel the great wave of Catholic life sweeping us into the great centre of the truth which applies to all times.

But, on the other hand, we seem to get away by ourselves and hear a man whose habits and manners are more like our own, speaking to us on our own level certain *home* truths, as we ponder the language of the first bishop of Jerusalem. We recognize the pastor, rather than the apostle. We have no doubt, as we read, that he had found many occasions in the humble homes that knew his form, to observe these evils that beset all men, whether Jew or Gentile, in their homes. We may note this difference in the radical manner of the two men, by laying side by side the instances in which they enunciate the same precept concerning a Christian judiciousness of speech.

St. Peter, as was natural to him, began far back with the venerable and influential example of Sarah, in her modest method of saluting her husband Abraham, and passed at once to the great principle of utter self-denial which was sublimely illustrated in the unparalleled submission of the cross, on which Christ taught the world that He resigned His own will and His soul to the will of the Father. Midway, as it were, between the two, He wrote His precept thus: "He that will love life and see good days, *let him refrain his*

tongue from evil and his lips that they speak no guile; for the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers." We have in mind the long life and good days of the simple patriarch, whose fate was so largely decided by the fact that he caught divine observation, that he ruled his own household well, and with that the all-perfect example of the Son of God, influencing us to a pure and guarded tongue. Again we discover that the apostle has had in mind language made familiar to all his countrymen by the use of the Psalms of David in the liturgies of the synagogues. On the other hand, St. James speaks dogmatically and personally. "The vile fire of an unwise babble is vain—the tongue is a world of iniquity, defiling the body and setting the passions on fire—itself too often set on fire of hell." This is fervid, if not scorching prose; it seems quite like a bitter personality. Some men—possibly more women—must have felt it to sting.

In the case of St. Peter, you rise to the heights of a loving philosophy, and by the natural instinct for the green pastures of divine contentment, you yearn to forget the strife of tongues and to hide in the pavilion of sublime and holy contemplation. In the latter case, the subject is not half so practical. You hear the somewhat stern rebukes of a teacher who is bent on leaving you no room for practical error. You feel that St. James has had to deal with babblers and busybodies in other men's matters in his own congregation, and has drawn his wisdom from some unpleasant experiences of quarrelsome believers. Considered in this light, the form of the precept is invaluable. Let us take it as one of the apostolic *pavo chalia*, a bit of every-day life, not unlike all other lives; not without its humbling application to our own hearts.

It is a very solemn thought that any one's religion may be nullified by his tongue. That man's religion is vain—*μάταιος*. It amounts to nothing. This result is effected, not by crimes that rouse or madden or destroy the

conscience; not by steeping the body in drunkenness; not by debauchery or bold villainies, but by an unbridled tongue; by a tongue left to itself. The metaphor of the writer is very striking as we meditate upon it. You seem to see a wild colt on the race-course. His owner is anxious for him to win, relies on his speed, and boasts of him to others. He has staked his all upon him. He has fed and trained him; he has done all for him—but *bridle* him. The animal life and wanton courage of the beast send him rushing along the track as swift as an arrow. He can win, that is plain to all the crowd—yea, win all the better for running light, for being at perfect liberty. Alas, how many a young man or woman has just his consciousness and exultant confidence! Only he is unbridled and unguided by a mind above his own, that can appreciate the amount of restraint necessary to success. The colt bounds and rushes along; now distances all competitors; now madly runs in the way of others; now scours along in pursuit of some who have gone ahead, and gains precedence only to feel again the wantonness of mere brute nature, and lose the race by excess of liberty. Such is the significance of the metaphor of the tongue without a bridle. A man's religion is thus made vain by the animal nature within him, not in its base and brutal side of vices and crimes, but by its better side—by lack of a bridle on that one member which is the index of his inner natural self. As the great ships driven of fierce winds yield to the touch of the governor's hands upon the smaller rudder; as we put bits in the horses' mouths that they may obey us, so with the tongue; a little member that boasteth great things, without the restraint of a spirit that can guide and guard it by a loftier principle than itself, becomes dangerous and destructive—a little fire kindling a great forest.

Note, if you please, that St. James held that the man has a religion—"that man's religion is vain." He is no brute nor infidel. He is a professor, a member of the Church. He has got-

ten a religion. Speak softly to him: he may be as good as you are. Deal tenderly with him: he may have the tongues of men and angels, and much of the wisdom of the great world. He can argue skillfully; can enunciate smoothly in responses of the liturgy. Perhaps he is eloquent at the prayer-meeting; is apt at Scripture, and can point a rebuke with a glittering citation. He can put a needle point on a witty epigram, or can delight many hearers as he leaps into a controversy about doctrine, like an athlete into the arena. Possibly he can soothe his victim into admiring the lance that transfixes him, and prove that his skill has been learned by study of the law of Moses—perhaps not the law of love. It is his religion that is made *vain*, and evaporates—vanishes. Therefore he has a religion.

The word religion—and it is a singular fact about it—is hardly ever used in the Bible. St. Paul spoke twice of *Joudismos*, that is, Judaism, or as the translators have it, the Jew's religion. We have in this passage the only other instance of its use. And again the Greek word in this case is a very peculiar one. It is *θηρησια*—the outward cult, the worship or visible part of religious service. It is that part which the aroma is to the rose, or the incense to the sacrificial worship; it is as David's subtle poetic thought of the lifting up of the hands being an evening sacrifice. It is the outward, visible sign, not merely as a sign for its form, but for the essence and life that is invisible, filling and producing it, and exhaling in it with fragrance. Thus we catch a profound law in the other side of this word, "pure religion and undefiled;" not the within and deep, invisible meditation of the soul, but "a clean religion and unwemmed amentis god," as Wiclif has it. Pure and clean worship, what God sees, and yet what we see too—the smoke of the sacrifice, the outer, visible sign, is to visit the poor and to keep the life unspotted. It is no mere morality of charity, but all luminous with the inner

purity shown out in deeds. Properly, St. James puts it: If any one among you *seem* to be religious (not in a bad sense, as a hypocrite); but, if he is seen to be religious, then let him bridle his tongue, or he will lose it. He must fail.

There is hid in this same word another idea, which is worth remembering: The lexicons point out the fact about it that the word also signifies a leaning to excess of visible worship. It is a *worm profession*, a notable worship, with a mere fraction of superstition, if we give the latter word the best sense it can bear. Religion, as we use it, often effervesces in words, and loses its vital power in noise. Probably every one has had experience of instances of piety that will justify my remark, that the most subtle delusion, after all, that our weak human nature is liable to, is the form of religion in which the hearing and talking portions of it usurp the place of inward contemplation, and equality of active work. For our religious life has much to do with talking, much to do with hearing. Both are fascinating, especially when compared with that other important part of all manly religion, doing what is unpleasant—taking up the cross, and mortifying the lusts of the flesh. There is no industry so active as the feverish bustle of the man who ought to be doing something else. Many a child is betrayed to the watchful mother by its excessive industry in doing what is not required. Of all our unhappy signs of a low state of piety and lack of real wisdom, I am often tempted to put this, being busied about many things, to the detriment of the spirit that seeks the one thing needful, as the most alarming in our churches. It is said that a king of France was a most notable locksmith while the throne was crumbling beneath him, and of all possible occupations that of a locksmith was not his vocation. So find we a man with a certain keenness of conscience that does not suffer him to rest in sin, and which does suffice to keep him from shameful acts, but goes little farther, and you

have a fit subject for the apostle's animadversion. He is religious negatively—that is, he does not lie, or steal, or make a *very* hard bargain with his neighbor. He has conscience enough to keep him respectable and outwardly devout, and *no more*. Now mingle with that a little fervor of an unregulated imagination and some morbid fear, and his case is hopeless. For the conscience, whose province is to induce *right actions*, and which, to do so, needs the Spirit of God speaking to it, is impotent and misses its point. It creates the readiest substitute for dutiful activity, which is infinite talk about religion, and, as we often see it illustrated, excess of ritual. Sanctimony usurps the place of sanctity.

We have witnessed among us sometimes to our annoyance, the ritualistic movement, and have deplored it, possibly, for its intrinsic errors, but chiefly, because it is so often the result of this law on a large scale. Men rush from profanity of mind into superstition. From no forms they will attempt to find rest in a multitude of forms. So, doubtless, in the Church at Jerusalem, the pastor saw this evil appearing and warned men against a worship of God with the lips only, while the heart was far from Him. He condemns a religion of the tongue, and commends that undefiled sacrifice which shows the inner faith by the two compendious signs of mercy and purity of life. He would have them cleanse the inside of the cup and platter, that the outside may be clean also, and bids them not to rest satisfied with any forms or manners which fail to manifest the power of the mind of Christ who went about doing good.

We may now apply this proposition of the text: *a man's religion may be utterly nullified by an unbridled tongue*. The other words, profession without possession, is a dangerous condition for men in the Church. I say *in the Church*, not out of it. The tongue which St. James is condemning, is one "where-with we bless God even the Father, and curse men made in his image"—one

that sends forth, out of the same source, both sweet water and bitter. Such surely is a Christian man's tongue; for it does bless God, does send forth sweet water. It is the tongue of one who hears the Word, and only does not fulfill its commands; one who has religion enough to make him reputable and orthodox; not enough to make him merciful and pure.

I would remark, then, that as there is a season of fermentation in the must from which one would make good wine—that, if it is delayed and pragmatically disturbed, eventuates in vinegar; so there is with us all a similar law in respect of the higher vintage, by which one's religion may become *vain*, and fit for neither God's glory nor man's advantage. There is said to be no rage so bitter as that of a renegade: so, when one escapes the corruption which is in the world through lust or passion, and becomes conscious of a new life stirring within his soul, there is with him the possibility of great wisdom in centering his energies upon his own life, or equally great folly in spending them upon the air. It was unquestionably a matter of vital importance in the critical history of Saul of Tarsus, that after his conversion, near Damascus, he stepped out of the turmoil of busy life among men and spent three years in the desert of Arabia. There silence was the true teacher. There in solitude he could review his life and learning, and duly reconsider and perfect his repentance. There he could expend the enthusiasm of his novel experience upon the wild Bedouins, without detriment to himself or to them. So may I be allowed to suggest to all young Christians, that the worst use to which they can possibly put their maiden faith is to subject it to the passions and accidents of controversy. There is a geometry of the inner kingdom. Its book of propositions is as lucid as the order of Euclid. It seems to be so easy to a young Christian who is reveling in all the freshness of a loving faith, to accept certain dogmatic statements, and, perhaps, to improve

on their language, that the temptation is irresistible to devote an undue portion of one's time and zeal to the formularies of the faith and to the outward service of the truth, forgetting that the Integral Calculus is still hid away in the secret shrine of experience and in the keeping of the Holy Ghost, to be taught only by "*the unction from on high.*"

St. Paul saw in the case of some of his disciples the need of patient waiting, if God would yet teach them some things which they had not then received. He evidently knew himself to be one who was diligently striving to *grow* in grace, if so be that somehow he might apprehend that for which he had been apprehended of Christ. There are always two parts in religion, as there are two wills connected in it—the will of God and the will of the believer. There is always necessity that one deeply ponder, for what God has called him out of darkness; for what God is in him, to will and to do. We are parts of a stupendous plan of salvation, which not only looks to saving the individual, but also and beyond that, to making him worth saving, and to using him in Christian work. Each one is a "lively epistle." How carefully should he watch in silent waiting to see what words of communication to the little world about him God is inditing upon his soul and life! How swift should he be to hear! how slow to speak! always remembering that the *wrath* of man, in its best sense, worketh not true righteousness of God.

Let there be in every man's life a time for silence and for holding his tongue, of keeping it back, like David, even from good words—even though it be pain and grief to him. In all the sea of bubble which rises over this great city to-day, there are many words that pass into the common air as useless, or worse than useless. There are many hearers who will be all the better for not doing as they hear.

For, think of it: the real work of religion at last is to breathe out of us, to be God's own breath, theopneustic,

passing through us, as the inspiring aroma of the Python's cave issued from its far off cavern, out of the perforated rock. Any man's real religion is, after all, the final issue of all he is, as God has made him and sanctified him. It is not his *profession* before men—not by any means contracted into his most magnanimous intention; all that is of the earth, earthy. The real power is the Lord from heaven. First, there is the old Adam; then the second Adam gradually transfiguring him, that he may be changed from glory to glory. God looks to the heart, and Christ's real kingdom is within you. It is not in one's words; for,

"Love's meanest deed more favor bears,
Where hearts and will are weighed,

Than brightest transports, choicest prayers,
Which bloom their hour and fade."

There is in us all this untamed nature, that must be curbed by the wisdom which is from above—the old Adam, the unurtured wild-grape spirit, that only God's constant work of grace can temper and sweeten. If one could believe in condensing efforts into one moment of time and could win heaven at a leap, what a wretched place would the Church become, with its children all released from the ordinary rules of Providence! But we dare not, we cannot believe it. "If God be for us," one may ask, "who can be against us?" If I have such a conversion, what can harm me? Yea, but what if we are against ourselves? What if we let slip—silently, unguardedly let slip—not cast it away, not rush from it, only *let slip*, the true confidence of the faith—the mind and habit of Christ? Time must pass with us—time of patient continuance in well-doing—before we can undertake to tell of the growth of grace in this lower, disturbed nature of ours. Even as the husbandman hath long patience and waiting for the early and the later rain, so must the Supreme Gardener wait and watch this "tender plant out of a dry ground"—a Christian. The culture is not of the winds that blow around it on every side, but is of the soil. We must, as a people, return

to something like that old Oriental wisdom, which taught men to put off their shoes from off their feet when they claimed to be standing on holy ground. I have always admired—perhaps more admired than imitated—that strange Arabic incident in the Book of Job. The three friends of the old sheik came to him to condole with him in his sorrows. It says: "So they sat down with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great." They were rare old gentlemen, with courtesy equal to their gravity. Would that they had now the ordering of our funeral customs in these times!

The central point of true religion is to be God's child—not to profess it, nor hope for it, nor to be in transports of imagination about it—but to be it. Only God can give us the integral life in Him. He does it by life and in life. As a tree puts forth its multitudes of leaves and sees them fall off and go into earthy mold at its feet, and drinks in their chemical juices by its roots wherewith to put forth other leaves for other autumnal frosts and wintry decomposition, until the power is born in its mystic laboratory to enter on higher work and to bear fruit—so let our words be viewed in comparison to our deeds. The world is all upset on this point. Elisha would be the paragon of this age. What young Christian would now be found, to say publicly: "I am young, and ye are very old; wherefore I was afraid, and feared to show you mine opinion. I said, Days should speak, and multitudes of years should teach wisdom." That reticence is a lost art. Our religion is a hortatory system of half-learned rhetoric. So much do we labor to exhort, that tongue-bridling, dutiful silence, have passed away with the race of hermits.

I conclude with a single rule: *Be*, rather than seem, religious. I do not ask you to neglect the proper precepts of a covenant profession, for that would be sheer paganism; but, in the church, be true to the wisdom that God has re-

vealed. If the religion of the uncontrolled tongue is vain, learn to put the bridle of silence and discretion on it. The bridle has two reins: one of silence, when not to speak; the other of discretion, when to speak promptly. A man is none the better for being dumb. But oh! that in the strife of tongues, one might call back the churches to true wisdom. We must feel that we are opposing the wild spirit of the age when we venture to commend that one's words be always "fit, though few." Each Christian must learn for himself the old-time wisdom, to govern himself with discretion, to deepen his sources of sacred thought and activity, and to bridle his tongue.

Says a didactic poet—and there is more useful truth than poetry in his lines:

"Prune thou thy words, the thoughts control,
That o'er thee swell and throng;
They will condense within thy soul,
And change to purpose strong.
But he who lets his feelings run
To soft, luxurious flow,
Shrinks when hard service must be done,
And faints at every woe."

REPRODUCTION IN KIND.

By REV. A. McELROY WYLIE [PRESBYTERIAN], IN NEWTOWN, PA.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.—Gal. vi: 7, 8.

Our text calls us to consider the parallelism which exists between sowing and reaping in the natural world and the analogous processes in the spiritual world. We see the apostle prompted to the use of this striking figure, by his survey of the harvest-field and reapers, as the wheat is being bound in golden bundles to find its place in the granary, and the tares carefully separated, to be burned or left upon the field to rot.

1. The first law which invites our attention in the field of reproduction is, that *like produces like*. The seed of a fig never can be made to produce a thistle,

nor the thistle-seed a fig. The corn, concealed for three thousand years within the hand of an Egyptian mummy, and last year discovered and planted in the earth, produced precisely the same sort of grain which grew so many centuries ago from similar seed.

The same law is equally imperative as relates to every variety of the animal species. Sheep and goats, though mingling for centuries in flocks cared for by the same shepherd, never confuse their distinctive features. The ant which to-day runs athwart our path is the same insect, in kind, to which Solomon directed the sluggard, to learn a lesson of wisdom in industry. The lark which now rises upon the wing of song to meet the early morning rays is the same songster, in kind, which regaled the ears of Adam in Eden's bowers.

Like produces like; and whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. Words, thoughts, desires, are seeds; eye-glances, and ear-attentions, and hand operations, and feet movements are seeds; habits are seeds. The lives of others are gardens; so likewise the home circle, the social assembly, the church, the congregation, the office, the warehouse, the public conveyance—ay, every child or adult—the very laws and elements of nature are gardens in which we are sowing these seeds; and "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

God has so ordered the vast machinery of our earthly habitation that we shall be paid in the harvest that which we have scattered in the seeding-time. It is the law in individual *sympathies*. Love begets love, and hate excites hate, and anger arouses anger, and the results of our mental dispositions return into our own bosoms. Impatience provokes impatience, and violence awakens violence, and we reap the harvests of our own moods and humors.

But that like produces like is most clearly evinced in this: that that state and temper which we cultivate assumes a more intensified form. The man who once gives way to forbidden pleasure reaps the harvest of a stronger and

stronger desire, till, upon further indulgence, the desire is followed by a craving, which, in turn, is succeeded by insatiable rage. A moderate heat is agreeable, but a burning fire is torture. So the early indulgence of unlawful passion (though for a season it be pleasurable), the harvest of misery and corruption will but too quickly and surely succeed. What is the consuming thirst of the inebriate but the harvest of a once manageable but indulged desire! What is the wasting passion of the debauchee but the harvest of those urgencies which could once have been controlled! What is the maddening passion of the gambler but the harvest of that seed which was scattered in the earlier indulgence of the spirit of venture! What is the idolatry of the covetous man but the reaping of those habits which were sown in the cultivation of desires for gain forbidden by the Tenth Commandment! What is that dolorous and destructive emulation of the ambitious man but the returning into his own bosom of the harvest which was sown by the indulgence of vanity and pride! What is that outward and ragged filth of the blear-eyed and staggering prodigal, but the harvest of indulged inward impurity! Can a more terrible harvest be reaped than that self-consuming, ever-increasing intensity of passion which is the necessary result of indulged and unlawful desire?

Like produces like, and we cannot sow vice and reap the reward of virtue. Idleness can never rise to gather in the rewards of industry. Unbelief never can be followed by the golden harvest of faith. The acceptance of error never can be made to produce the good effects of truth, nor can truth ever be made to damage the soul, like its opposite. The only possible way in which we can reap good is to sow good; for an unchangeable law of God it is, that like must produce its like.

2. A second law of reproduction is, that the harvest *multiplies upon the sowing*. One grain may produce a hundred. This is true of good seed, and likewise of the bad. One thistle-down,

which blew from the deck of a vessel, is said to have covered with full-grown thistles the entire surface of a South Sea island. A single error or sin of youth may overspread our whole life with misery; and a life spent in impenitency here will be followed by an eternity of regret hereafter. This law may seem unjust and oppressive; but that it is a law cannot be denied, and that it is also just must necessarily follow, for it has been ordained by Him who is alike incapable of either error or injustice. A single word or deed sets in motion influences and effects which spread over the surface of society, multiply throughout the lifetime, and are not arrested even when they impinge upon the shores of eternity. Every sin and every godly deed finds a response in three worlds. Well will it be for us if the ingathering be the golden returns of virtuous and godly deeds. What a power for good or evil do we carry in the tongue, the eye, the hand, the foot! What is more easily sent upon its errand than a word! The slightest movement of the lips with the fraction of a breath, and we give birth to an angel, celestial or infernal, which begins a rapid flight for good or evil, limited not by time or by the circumference of the present world. "Kind words," it is said, "never die;" and likewise it is true that ill words never die. The seductive word, once spoken by the serpent in Eden and re-echoed by Eve, has already lived and multiplied its forked and fiery tongues through six thousand years; has scattered fire upon every human garden throughout the world, and will not cease its desolating work until the flames of retributive justice are extinguished. Day by day, hour by hour—by tongues and hands, by conversations and habits—we go up and down in the world, sowing the germs of good or evil. The time is fast approaching when we shall reap that which has been sown, and we shall reap abundantly. If we have sown to the flesh; if we have pampered our carnal appetites, lived in ease, in self-indulgence, expressed our natural tempers, we shall reap corruption. But

if we have sown to the Spirit; if we have mortified the flesh with its evil affections; if we have laid up our treasure in heaven and walked in the fear of God, then, of the Spirit, we shall reap life everlasting.

3. A third law of reproduction is, that *the bad is voluntary and the good is involuntary*. Marvelous it is to behold how prolific the earth is of the useless and the vile. Find us a spot on the surface of the globe where weeds, thistles and brambles must be planted, or where corn must be rooted up! You may gather in an entire harvest before you can exterminate the thistles from a limited garden-spot. Here behold more than a mere resemblance. God has put upon the surface of the earth a trifold lesson—a geography, a history, and a prophecy of man's moral nature. The ground owes the weeds to itself, and the corn to the hands of the husbandman. The seeds of evil lie deep and lie long, and are instantly responsive to circumstances favorable to their growth.

For sin we are indebted to ourselves; for righteousness to the gracious purpose and intervening hand of God. Any system of religion or education, therefore, that goes upon the supposition that evil, sin, wickedness, corruption, are accidental or involuntary, will as certainly fail as that husbandry which casts seed upon the unprepared soil and leaves the earth, unassisted, to produce the harvest. Discover to us a garden where a weed will not grow, and we will find you a natural man possessed of a trait of heart commendable to his God. In the kingdom of grace there may be examples—like Samuel, and John the Baptist—who display the fruits of the Spirit at the early dawn of life; still, it is none the less true, in these cases as in others, the fear of God is planted by the agency of the Holy Ghost.

In a tropical latitude the fields may be waving their golden grain when, further from the equator, the mantle of winter is still enshrouding the earth. But at the South the ground, covered with fruit, is as much indebted to the

hand of the husbandman as, at a later period, the northern fields are dependent upon the seed of the sower and the care of the laborer. So, whether piety be exhibited earlier or later in life, we are equally indebted to the gracious and merciful intervention of the divine Husbandman.

The earth, too, when once prepared, and after it has received the good seed, exhibits continually more favor toward tares and weeds than kindness toward the growing grain. The evil grows more rapidly than the good, and after the good has been received and cherished, even then the evil, by neglect, will soon grow rank and tall, overtopping and choking the good. It is not even necessary to sow the evil. Neglect or indifference will as inevitably be followed by a harvest of mischief, as indefatigable industry in sowing broadcast the seeds of corruption; the only difference being found in the degree of returns coming home to our own bosoms.

4. A fourth law of reproduction is, that *the season of sowing is limited*. Even in those climates where frost and snow are never known to cut short the tender blade, still seed time and harvest, sowing and reaping, have their appropriate seasons; and seed cast into the ground at harvest time will not be productive.

With us, the barriers that separate the seasons of the year are utterly impassable, and force a respectful and attentive consideration upon the part of every one who addresses himself to the pursuit of the husbandman. If we pass the springtime in idleness or neglect, not all the forces in the universe can restore to us our lost opportunities. The ground which passes the seed time unplowed and unplanted will, like the western prairie, when the summer has gone, be swept by an onrolling sea of fire. Thus has God ordained in the moral and spiritual world. There comes to us a season in the freshness and impressibility of youth, when every one who sincerely seeks the kingdom of heaven shall secure this inner planting of the incorruptible seed of the word of God, for, meeting us at this period

is that sweet assurance: "They that seek me early shall find me." In the natural world the husbandman may not reap where, in the proper season, he has sown. Not so in the kingdom of grace: never did God say to any who applied in the acceptable period, "Seek ye my face in vain."

"Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap;" and in the moral world we *must* sow either good or corruptible seed. If to-day we are not sowing to the Spirit, we are sowing to the flesh; and if we are not advancing to the harvest of life, we are coming upon the harvest of death. With some of us it may be the last hours of spring, and another call we may never hear if we dare despise the present opportunity. Let us call upon God to arouse our dormant energies while yet the season lasts.

THE OBLITERATION OF MORAL DISTINCTIONS.

BY ARTHUR T. PIERSON, D. D., IN BETH-ANY [PRESBYTERIAN] CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA.

Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.—Mal. iii: 18.

It is a sad state of society when moral distinctions become obliterated, and especially the faculty of moral discrimination is blunted. The twelve minor prophets were the apostles of repentance, appointed to rebuke just such religious degeneracy. During the five centuries covering their joint lives, "Ichabod" was written in ashes where once shone the Shekinah; and the ruins of the temple stood as symbols of departed beauty and glory of the Hebrew church. Jonah, first of the twelve, was sent to the colossal capital of Assyria, to sound the dread trump of doom in the ears of the Ninevites. But each of the remaining eleven was bidden to remonstrate with God's own people, with reference to iniquity scarce less gigantic.

I. One sign of the practical obliteration of these vital distinctions may be seen in the prevailing depreciation of

sound doctrine. Men try to mix truth and error, as though they were not inherently different. A false liberalism propounds the plausible theory that it matters not what one's opinions are if he be sincere. Such liberality is laxity. It upturns the very basis of truth, for it puts truth and error on a level: and since all history and experience show a natural link between truth and goodness, faith and practice, doctrine and duty—to depreciate the importance of discovering and embracing the truth undermines, also, the true basis of morals. Sincere convictions may thus be urged to justify crime, as the Spartans upheld secret theft, and David Hume secret adultery.

The Word of God shows a vital bond between doctrine and duty, charging us to hold fast the form of sound words, and warning us of a way which seemeth right to a man, yet whose end is death. The Hindu wife and mother thinks it right to hurl her child into the Ganges, and lay herself on her husband's funeral pile. Simon Magus thought it right to buy and sell the miraculous gifts of God: his condemnation is written in the very word "simony," which he has thus given to the crime of bartering in ecclesiastical preferment. Saul of Tarsus "verily thought he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth," yet he deemed himself "the chief of sinners, because he persecuted the Church of God."

Nowadays there is a clamor for the surrender of every distinctive doctrine of our faith, in order to make the Gospel more palatable to the worldly heart. Infidelity, in the guise of liberalism and charity, says to Christianity: "Come, let us look one another in the face;" but our reply must still be the parable of Jehovash: "The thistle, that was in Lebanon, sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon, saying: 'Give thy daughter to my son to wife;' and there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle." While we are asked to concede equality between the thorny thistle and the gigantic, fragrant, undying cedar, the

wild beast has his hoof on the thistle, while the monarch of the forest, which has reigned for a millennium, still proudly defies destruction.

II. Another sad sign of the obscuration of the line between the righteous and wicked, is found in the practical association of those that serve God and those that serve Him not. God decrees separation, as the means of expressing and impressing these vital distinctions. Abram was called out from idolatrous surroundings, an historic type and symbol of separation and consecration; and the one law of all holy life is, "Come out from among them and be ye separate." To avoid or evade this separation, Satan perpetually plots, and Christians, often, are unwittingly giving him aid.

1. For example, many believers in Christ are only secret disciples. While their faith rests on the Word of God as the rule of duty, and the blood of Christ as the ground of salvation, they are like the seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal, who yet left Elijah to feel himself alone in love and loyalty to God. These secret believers actually give color to the pretense that worldly men exemplify all the virtues of Christian disciples; for, however complete their dependence on divine grace, however devout their life, they are classed with the world. As the ring of a few pieces of genuine metal among counterfeit coin helps to give it currency, so do they help justify the claim that the world is as good as the Church. Their very success in practising Christian virtues is disastrous, fostering self-righteous hopes in worldly hearts, and leading men to confuse worldly morality with genuine piety.

2. Another thing which contributes to the confusion of godly and ungodly, is the fact that many worldly men are professed disciples. Secret believers make the world seem more godly; unregenerate professors make the Church seem more worldly, and so there is double confusion: worldliness made respectable, Christianity disreputable, and practical difference reduced nearer to nothing.

The Reformation of the sixteenth century did much to restore spiritual separateness; but "a cloud no bigger than a man's hand," hints that the dark ages again threaten us. Christianity is dangerously secular and popular. Our church buildings and services draw by not a few of the attractions of lecture-hall and concert-hall, opera and theatre. We yield to popular clamor, in introducing into church gatherings the charms of secular circles, pampering, by feast and fun, to appetite and amusement.

Meanwhile, the appetite for spiritual food is not fed, and spiritual food is not furnished; even the pulpit is secularized, and the energies of both preacher and people are diverted into the channels which bring gratification to a worldly mind and taste. Again, with deep conviction and emotion, we say that God means that His Church shall win souls, weary of sin and surfeited with the world, by attractions wholly spiritual; that pure preaching of the Gospel should foster and feed an appetite for godliness; that association in prayer and praise, holy life and holy labor, should meet a lack and generate a power wholly above the world's capacity to supply. And if, by attractions however innocent or harmless in themselves, we displace these normal features of church life by secular charms, we help to wipe out all marks of distinction between church and world!

3. Whatever relaxes the demand for godliness of character, lowers the standard of piety, and so lessens the contrast between righteous and wicked. Beside secular influences, there are many ecclesiastical tendencies hostile to holy living. Ritualism furnishes one example. Forms, to some extent, inhere in worship; but when the soul of devotion leaves them, we have the dead body of formalism. To lift to undue prominence the ordinances or sacraments of God's house, helps hypocrisy and veils with illusion the eyes of the unregenerate. But the lack of holiness of heart is the main cause of the slight contrast between the servants of

God and of mammon. Christ "came not to send peace, but a sword" of separation, which should cleave asunder even members of the same household, setting them at variance, because sanctity and sin are at war. Family ties—even nuptial bonds—were not to prevent spiritual division between the child of God and the child of the devil. Above all other things, the practical existence of Christianity hangs on the holiness which fixes a great gulf between the righteous and wicked. Our Christian banners must bear two words: "SANCTITY" and "SERVICE." The heart must be right in the sight of God, and the life must evince entire consecration to His glory, writing even upon the bells of the horses as well as on the brow of the disciple, "Holiness to the Lord!" It is vain to try to fence in the church and fence out the world by an arbitrary and artificial paling; or to prop up such a fence by ecclesiastical legislation or discipline. Personal holiness only can draw the needed line of separation.

Most earnestly, therefore, do we plead in God's name for practical separation between the godly and the ungodly. "The Lord knoweth them that are his." A greater boon God could scarce give the Church than this, that Christ's sword should cleave a chasm between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. God, in the very drift of the age, seems to be compelling a division, bringing men to see that a qualified acceptance of Christianity is its rejection. Science and literature already lift the flag of professed materialism and atheism. For one I am glad of it. Better any definite position and decisive issue, than delusive neutrality and vague uncertainty. If men hold matter to be self-controlled; if they believe in spontaneous generation, Godless evolution; if they are atheists, let them say so, and let men know what it is to be their disciples! The time draws near when, if the conscience of the Church does not, the judgments of God will part righteous and wicked. His feet shall stand upon the Mount of

Olives, and, as in Zechariah's vision, the mount shall cleave in the midst thereof, and there shall be a very great valley; and on one side or the other of that chasm you and I shall stand. Of God's process of separation we know not; but of its completeness and decisiveness we can have no doubt. Not more searching the refiner's fire; not more cleansing the fuller's soap! He will sift the house of Israel like as corn is sifted in a sieve; yet shall not the least grain fall upon the ground, while the chaff is blown away as from the summer threshing-floors! By the two-edged sword of the Word, by the clear witness of the Spirit, by the bold march of His providence, by the conscience of the sinner, which even the tongue of pagan Rome called "*index, iudex, vindex*;" by the consciousness of the saint which testifies to the Spirit's indwelling; by the large blessing which rewards the faithful rendering of tithes, and the sure curse which with swift foot overtakes robbery of God; by the living grace which proves Christ in the soul, and the dying grace which shines so brightly from life's broken pitcher—God will make men to discern between the righteous and the wicked, so that they shall say:

"In very truth for righteous men there is a sure reward—
A God that judgeth in the earth—the everlasting Lord!"

TWO PAULS AND A BLINDED SORCERER.

BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON [BAPTIST], IN
METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, LON-
DON, ENGLAND.

Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.—Acts xiii: 12.

CYPRUS was by no means a reputable island; it was devoted to the goddess Venus, and you can imagine what her worship was, and what would be the fruitful licentiousness which sprang of it. It was the native country of Barnabas, and, as he was at first the leader of the missionary party sent out by the church of Antioch, it was fit that Bar-

nabas and Saul should begin preaching there. Landing at one end of the island, the two apostolic men traversed it till they came to Paphos, where the Roman governor resided. Paphos was the central city of the worship of Venus, and was the scene of frequent profligate processions and abominable rites. But God had prepared the way of His servants, as He always does when He sends them to a particular field. He prepares a people wherever He sends a minister to gather them in. The Governor of the island, whose name was Sergius Paul, was a seeker after truth. Pliny mentioned him among the authors from whom he quoted. A certain Jew named Elymas had gained influence over him, not by teaching him the truth, but by initiating him into the mysteries of the Magi. But the Governor, hearing of the arrival of other teachers from the East, sent for Saul and Barnabas to come and teach him the Word of God. And they gladly obeyed the message.

I. Note, first, *opposition to the faith*. Elymas "withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith." This is true the world over. The greater the opportunity, the greater the opposition. The devil is ever on the lookout to defeat, if possible, the servants of God and hinder the effect of truth. But *opposition is overruled for good*. The intense opposition of Elymas only served to draw the attention of the deputy more intently to the doctrine of God's Word. But more than this: when Saul pronounced upon him the solemn judgment of God, the proconsul saw that it was in very deed the Word of God. The blinded sorcerer, seeking some one to lead him by the hand, was a visible witness for the truth against which he had fought. So that the overthrow of the opposition made the victory of truth the more conspicuous. And this is always so.

II. We have done with the *opposition*; now let us consider certain *aids to faith*. Sergius Paul, "when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord." I

have not called miracles causes of faith, for they do not cause it, although they may lead up to it. What Sergius Paulus saw did not make him believe, but it helped him to believe. What did he see, then?

He saw the great courage of Paul. In another case boldness struck a blow at unbelief, for when the rulers saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled. In this case the effect would be the same. Saul fixed his eyes on Elymas as though he were perfectly master of the situation - as indeed he was; and without hesitation or apology addressed him: "O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" Intense conviction in the mind of Paul led him to speak thus plainly, sternly, and even indignantly; but it was not the heat of his own spirit, for we read that he was filled with the Holy Ghost. Let every teacher of Christ be thus filled, and then let him speak boldly, as he ought to speak. Come not forward with your "ifs" and "buts" and "peradventures" to prove God's Word. Tell out the message God hath told thee, as from Him, and not as thine own opinion!

God's judgments are aids to faith. If Sergius Paul was deeply impressed with Paul's boldness, he was still more deeply moved when he saw Elymas stricken with blindness. If God's wonders and judgments are aids to faith, *what shall I say of His wonders of mercy?* Conversions are the standing miracles of the Gospel, the best attesting seals the truth can have. I knew a man who was of a fierce temper, a troubler to his own household; he was so passionate at times that I should not like to tell all the wild things which he would do. I have seen that man since his conversion, and he has had things to test him which might, as we say, have provoked a saint, but he bore them patiently, and in a manner which I desire to imitate. The lion has become a lamb; he is gen-

tle and tender; no one could think that he was the same man; indeed he is not, for grace has made him a new man in Christ Jesus. We have seen persons reveling in licentiousness who sinned greedily, who could not be satisfied with any common sin; but they have heard the Gospel, and become chaste and even delicate in purity, so that the very mention of their former crimes has shocked them and made them weep. Such persons have manifested a watchful care against the fault in which they once delighted. They have been afraid to go near their old haunts, or to mix with their old companions. What has wrought this? What teaching must that be which accomplishes such marvels?

III. Lastly, let us observe *the source of faith.* "Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord." *It is doctrine, then, or faithful teaching, which brings men to Christ.* Let those who despise doctrine mind what they are doing, for the doctrine of the cross is only foolishness to them who perish. Under the influence of the Holy Ghost, the plain teaching of the Word of the Lord leads men to believe in Jesus. I do not think it is any great good for a preacher to stand up and cry, "Believe, believe, believe," if he never tells you what is to be believed. There is plenty of this kind of preaching about, and the result is sadly transient and superficial. Poor souls say: "We are ready to believe, but tell us what to believe; we are ready to trust, but tell us what to trust in." If we do not preach the great doctrine of the atoning sacrifice, if we do not lift up Christ as suffering chastisement in man's place and stead, we have not put before them the basis on which their faith is to be built. Justification by faith and regeneration by the Spirit must be taught continually. The proconsul was, no doubt, astonished to see Elymas blinded, but he was a great deal more astonished at the doctrine which Paul preached when he began to tell him that salvation was not by the works of the law, but by

faith in Jesus Christ; that the way to be accepted of God was not by presenting to the Lord anything performed by us or felt within us, but by laying hold upon the righteousness which Jesus Christ has wrought out and brought in. When he heard this good news, he might well be astonished, and yield his heart to Jesus. Dear friends, the most astonishing thing in the world is the Gospel. O listen to it! Close in with its offers of grace. Come, then, my hearers, come and candidly study what is to be believed. Come and be astonished at the doctrine of Christ crucified! Incline your ears, arouse your minds, and yield your hearts; be eager to be instructed of the Holy Ghost, who waits to teach you. If you are willing and obedient you shall eat the good of the land. If you desire to know God, you shall know Him. The great Father is not far from any one of you. There is the light! It is not dim, nor far away. The fault is in your eyes if you do not see. Oh, that you would cry out with Bartimeus, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" Oh, that your prayer would be, "Lord, that I might receive my sight!" Then you would see and believe, and live forever. God grant it this very morning, to the praise of the glory of His grace!

STEADFASTNESS OF PURPOSE.

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

He steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem.—Luke ix: 51.

It was a solemn hour. The resolution was not lightly taken. It meant death; and no man who loves duty and honors it, takes the step that leads to the ceasing of his labor in this world, unless he feels that it is right and absolutely demanded by his mission. It were treason to Jesus to imagine that for any other reason than the gravest and best considered, He took the step that inevitably led to the cross; that any personal reason induced Him to seek death. It was not the act of a moral suicide, but of one

having supreme regard to an infinite good beyond, that put in force that resolute determination to bring the whole of His mission to the last test.

It was, then, no hasty or ill-considered thing, no mere reckless or weary impulse, that sent Jesus back to Jerusalem. It was steadfastness of soul which impelled Him to return. Nor was despair of life or impatience of trouble, as some have alleged, the reason for His apparently hurried desire to die; the whole history is against it. He himself, from the beginning, had foreseen the possibility of His death at the hands of the Jews. It lay hidden in His war against their thoughts of the kingdom. And as His ministry developed, the possibility became a certainty to Him. He frequently talked of what was to be. Again and again the amazed ears of the disciples heard Him speak of death when they hoped for triumph. It was, therefore, a thought well known to Him, deeply set in His soul; and when He turned to Jerusalem, He must have done it because He was convinced the time was come for Him to meet the hour for which He was long prepared, and in the shadow of which He had continually lived. Had anything more been left to do or say, it had been different. But His work was over, and He knew it; and, if it were not, God, He felt, would then keep Him from His foes; he would know at Jerusalem if He were to go on further. We can see, as we look back, that He was not mistaken. His work on earth was done. Had He lived ten years longer, He could have done more. "I have finished the work thou hast given me to do," He said in full conviction to the Father. It was when all was done, and not till then, that He brought things to a point. It was time to seal the letter He had written in His life, and to direct it to Mankind. And the seal was impressed on it on Calvary. Humanity opened it, and read the good tidings of His life with joy and fervent gratitude.

Many hours like that hour in kind, but not in degree, have come to men,

when they have been compelled to choose whether they would go or not to their Jerusalem and test their work; and some have shrunk from, and others fulfilled, their duty. The time sometimes comes in life when, after much work in and through the thoughts on which your life has been wrought out, you are called upon to bring your work to a crisis; to choose whether you will carry your ideas to their conclusion, or remain at ease where you are. And voices come to you from all sides, and from within, crying: "Be still; stay in Galilee, where you are in no danger; do not hasten to finish your thought; lay it by for a little at least, and wait till you see your way more clearly. Do not bring things to the point; do not go to Jerusalem. You may keep all the good you have won or done; but you will risk it all if you face conclusions." That is common—in politics, in business life, in war, in religious life, even in our life with one another as men and women; even in our own home-life.

And there is only one thing to be said: when staying where you are only makes your inner life more troubled; when conscience or feeling or thought get more and more confused the longer you are undecided—then you must not hesitate, but steadfastly set your face to bring things to a goal. Or, when you find that your whole life is losing vigor and energy through waiting; when the ideas you have loved grow less dear to you and you are obliged to lay them aside, because there is nothing more to do with them save to push them to the conclusion to which you do not wish to put them; when you find yourself, because you will not go on, obliged to hush your conscience; and when emotion and passion no longer rise naturally round your thoughts or your work, because, not being urged to their natural results, they are losing interest, and dying for want of it—why then—whatever be the work or the point, at home or abroad—break loose from this evil silence and reservation, and fear and trembling; drive the thing

to its conclusion; re-establish your inner life; get rid of confusion and complexities; rise out of the mists into clear light and simple action; recover energy, passion, interest in life, by living out your soul into action; wake up conscience and bid her do her work rigidly; carry all your work of years to the point it ought to reach; set your face steadfastly, and go straight up to Jerusalem. What matter what meets you there! You will be alive, and free, and awake to meet your God. And if you meet your cross, as well may be—yet in some lowly way you may be able to say with Jesus: "My Master, that part of life, that piece of work, is finished!"

Or the crisis may come, not in outward life, or in matters that bear on outward life, but in the inward and secret privacy of the soul, where none are present save God alone. You have been driven to a point of life where you may stay, but whence you know you ought to go on; for on every side enemies of your peace and your work are closing in around you. If you elect to stay, you may be comfortable, but it will only be by abdicating your character, and handing over all your powers to the enemies of your life. If you look back with regret, or with hatred, and dwell in either, you see that darker and darker grows the sky behind. The whole landscape is slowly being blotted out. Only in front of you is light in the heavens, only in steadfastly setting your face to go forward—there, where you do not wish to go, is any path open to you; only in marching on to that which seems to be death in life, right into the jaws of suffering, is there any freedom, any reality. Stay where you are—as many do—and the uprolling darkness swallows you up; you sink to the bottom of life's ocean like a stone—not dead, indeed, but self-scorning, useless, and dishonored. Go steadfastly on, day by day, toward greater trouble, but yet toward the light, having made up your mind to any pain rather than to stay in the darkness—and I do not say that you will escape the cross—no

indeed, you will have it to the full; yet, if you do not let love of man go, but are faithful to it through all suffering, you may be allowed, sooner or later, to say, "It is finished;" and to be able to say that, is all a man need trouble about.

PAUL BEFORE FELIX.

BY REV. THOMAS KELLY, IN TRINITY
M. E. CHURCH, CHESTER, PA.

And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time: when I have a convenient season I will call for thee.—Acts xxiv: 25.

IN all probability this memorable service was held in the executive mansion at Caesarea. The circumstances and motives of both the preacher and his audience, and the practical lessons to be drawn, are singularly impressive and profitable.

I. *The preacher.* "Paul." Faithful, fearless, sympathetic, uncompromising, heroic. A man unsurpassed in native and acquired ability; well versed in scholastic subtleties, and a match for the proudest Epicurean or Stoic philosopher of his day. Here he stands before us with the enemy at bay, and the world beneath his feet; a conqueror, not a captive; a hero, not a slave. Though his limbs were manacled with the prisoner's chain, his spirit mounted and reveled in a liberty which no tyrant could destroy, and no prison-walls could circumscribe.

II. *The hearers.* "Felix and Drusilla." (1) Officially high. Felix was Governor of Judea. (2) Socially great. In those days, as well as now, money or office cleared a man's social standing-ground, and without inquest for character, or intelligence, he was admitted into the best society. (3) Morally corrupt. There are few crimes of which Felix had not been guilty. He was living then in adultery. Indeed, at that time, he was the husband of three wives. Tacitus tells us that "in his official capacity he manifested the spirit of a slave, and indulged in every species of cruelty and lust." Drusilla was no better. Having listened to the over-

tures of the wily Felix, she deliberately abandoned her husband, left his house unto him desolate, that she might bend about her dishonored brow the diadem of borrowed royalty. (4) In reputation bad. With the stains of cruelty, robbery, adultery and murder upon them, their reputation grew worse and worse until driven from the country into exile and disgrace.

III. *The sermon.* (1) Its style. "He reasoned." It was an argumentative discourse. Christianity thrives best in the unclouded light of reason, and has nothing to fear from the merciless rigors of logic. (2) Its divisions. (a) Righteousness. Justice, in the broad sense of rendering to all their due. Right with God above, and fellow-man below; right when we could do wrong with impunity as when we could not; right everywhere and always. (b) "Temperance." Meaning not merely total abstinence from intoxicants, but the right control of the whole man, with special reference to chastity. (c) "Judgment." That great day when Felix shall be like Paul; when all earthly distinctions shall vanish, and only moral character shall avail. What a mere child Felix must have felt himself to be in the grip of this iron-bound free-man! It will be seen that this discourse was (a) comprehensive; (b) sublime; (c) practical; (d) exhaustive.

IV. *The effect.* "Felix trembled." Gospel preaching is divinely intended: (1) To convince the intellect; (2) Stir the sensibilities; and (3) Affect the will: and I doubt if a soul can anywhere be found who has not at some time responded to its felt truthfulness. Call it what we will, explain it as we may, there is in every man the instinct of retribution, and ever and anon the imagination comes flying back from the future pale with the tidings it brings: and from before these spectres the mind recoils and the knees smite together.

V. *The failure.* "Go thy way." He was powerfully moved; he felt a great crisis was upon him. Why did he not yield? Indisposition to stop sinning was the cause. So is it always. Dru-

silla was the stumbling-block in the way of Felix. He was living in adultery with her, and lacked the manhood to set himself right; but quieted his conscience by a lying promise of future reformation. Felix never had a return of that auspicious hour. After that the shadows lengthened, and his sun went down in darkness.

A CONTRAST BETWEEN PAGANISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

BY BISHOP SIMPSON, SHORTLY BEFORE HIS DECEASE, IN ST. LUKE'S M. E. CHURCH, NEW YORK.

And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.—Dan. ii: 44.

You will recall to your minds King Nebuchadnezzar's wonderful dream, and the interpretation of it by Daniel.

God can touch the heart of a person in sleep. He can touch the heart of a man dead in sin. How easily He gains His purposes—the forgetting of a dream raised Daniel next to the throne.

In the dream we find revealed a contrast between Paganism and Christianity.

1. Paganism is *constructed*; Christianity is a *growth*. The image was *builded* of gold, of silver, of brass, of iron, of clay. But the little stone *grew*.

2. Paganism is of *human origin*; Christianity, like the little stone, is *made without hands*.

3. Paganism *divides* men; Christianity *unites*. Disorganization is inherent in paganism, and it cannot but crumble. How different with Christianity! Its centre is God, and that Centre is everywhere, and its circumference is nowhere. Every individual in this kingdom is at the very centre of power. We have even no need of one to stand between us and this Centre, for Christ is God.

The advance of civilization is destructive to error; but Christianity is fitted for the highest civilization. The

greater the advancement, the more irresistible becomes this stone cut from the mountain. Its development is the crowding out and destruction of all false systems. There need be no fear that science will harm Christianity; it will, in the end, help it, not harm it. Literature is on this side. Never has Christianity exercised so great a power over the press as to-day. Education is also helping, not hindering, religion. Our colleges are nearly all in the hands of Christian people. Nine-tenths of all educational endowments are the gifts of Christian men and women. Art is not hostile to Christianity. The best of painting, the best of sculpture, the best of architecture, the best of music, is helping to roll this stone that is filling the earth.

4. The power which makes this stone irresistible is God. It is omnipotent as is the throne of Jehovah. No man-made power can resist it. Gold, brass, iron, are crushed beneath it.

The great movement for the purification of the earth is going forward. God wishes us to join in this work. Blessed are we if we are found co-workers with Him.

INSPIRATION.—(2 Sam. xxiii: 2). Inspiration is: I. Subjective; II. Objective. I. Subjective is: 1. Active; each writer using his personal abilities. 2. Passive, as in case of Saul and Balaam's ass. 3. Temporal; interpretation of dreams, errors of chronology, etc. 4. Permanent, as in the case of the apostles, having knowledge of the facts and taught the interpretation thereof. Hence subjective inspiration is essential to the infallibility of God's Word. II. Objective inspiration is experienced by deep contemplation of external objects, and is subject to external laws: such is music, poetry, etc. Subjective inspiration only is plenary, not necessarily verbal. Each writer maintains his personal identity. The writing of Moses and David are entirely distinct, yet inspired by the same Spirit. The writings of Milton's two daughters, in "Paradise Lost," are exactly alike. This is dictation; one is verbal, the other not.

Ellwood, III. A. L. H.

THE INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY-SCHOOL SERVICE.

King David's Repentance.

(Lesson for August 3, 1884.)

SERMON TO BOYS AND GIRLS.

BY THOMAS ARMITAGE, D.D. [BAPTIST],
NEW YORK.*My sin is ever before me.*—Ps. li: 3.

THE great King David had sinned a great sin against the Lord, and the thought that he had done so gave him great pain all the days of his life. When you have done wrong, and come to think about it, you also suffer. At times you are not able to sleep. You feel so unhappy that you are almost sick; you wander about your home, and are very restless. The ill-feeling in your heart goes with you into the street, and the school, and the playground, and you are ill at ease wherever you go. This is because sin and pain are twin sisters, and they always go hand in hand. One of them is the form that walks forth, and the other is the shadow that goes with it all over. And this fact shows how kind the Lord is to those who do wrong. You see that here, pain is a great blessing, for it often prevents the doing of wrong the second time. Now, if a child burns his finger with fire, or cuts his hand with a sharp knife, the pain is very great. This is to guard him against the fire or the knife the next time; and it shows how good the Lord is to send the smarting blister, or the quivering gash in the flesh; for, if the fire and the knife did not hurt him, he might be so careless as to cut or burn his hand off, and lose it for life. So God lets you suffer when you sin, that you may stop sinning.

King David knew that he had sinned. He says, "my sin is ever before me." Sin is a thing that you cannot see with the eyes in your head. But we have all eyes in the heart, and with these we can see our sins, day and night—quite as well in the dark as in the light. No one could look into the face of King David and see his sin; and he could look at his own face in a bright mirror without seeing his sin. You could look all over his robes without seeing one spot; you

could look all around the crown of gold that was on his head, but every diamond in it and every precious stone was just as bright as if it shined on the brow of an angel. But sin had made his heart very bad and black, and whenever he looked down into it, made him afraid. You read stories sometimes about old castles, and towers, and houses and ruins being haunted; and these things frighten you so much that you see the beings that haunt them yourselves. And so it was with King David. He had had one of the officers of his army killed, and then had wronged his family. The man's name was Uriah. This brave soldier was dead, and the king could not undo his sin in slaying him; and every time that he looked into his heart he seemed to see this murdered man lie there. His face was pale, and his eyes set in death, and his body was all stained with blood. David's heart appeared to have become an open grave into which the murdered man had been thrown and buried.

Every time that the king looked down into his own dark heart, he saw this face all ghastly, and these glazed eyes seemed to stare at him, and he felt now and then as if these stiff limbs moved. He knew that God's eye looked down to the bottom of his wicked heart, and saw all that was there. And each time that he thought of his sin his face blushed and turned red with shame, and a new pang of grief wrung his heart.

There is something very touching in these words that fell from the royal lips of David: "My sin is ever before me." You have often walked through your father's parlor, and seen some one's portrait hanging on the wall; and whichever way you turned it watched you, for its eyes followed you. So it was with him. His sin was springing up before him all the time, like an image that was alive. Go where he would, he could not escape its look. When he sat upon his throne and held his sceptre, his eyes could see the picture of a warrior's

head, very white and livid, wearing a helmet. This image seemed to be drawn on the back of his own hand, and he laid the sceptre down and put his hand under his kingly robes, to get it out of the way. If he took up his harp to sing a sad psalm, he saw stains of blood all over his fingers, and the harp only groaned, and he laid it down again. We read that when Adam had sinned against the Lord, and was walking in the Garden of Paradise in the cool of the day, he was afraid to meet the Lord. He had injured the Lord, and so was afraid to meet Him. In the same way, King David had no peace when he went into the royal garden, because his heart was so heavy with its load of sin. The ghost of Uriah appeared to meet him in every walk, at every bush, and under every tree. When the birds sang, their music filled his ears with the voice of his sin, and when he looked on the walls of his beautiful palace he saw the shadow of a skeleton hand move over them, writing his sin everywhere. No doubt, at times it seemed to him as if he had no friend in the world. The very animals about him appeared to know about his sin. It was no secret: they had each a tongue which said to him, "Thy sin!" and the trees by the wayside said, "Thy sin!" and the birds that flew far above his head acted as if they were afraid to fly low and near him, and all the time kept screaming, "Thy sin!" Everywhere he stepped upon the earth it sunk beneath his feet, as if it were unwilling to bear him up; and he said that he walked in slippery places, and his feet had well-nigh slipped. And yet, King David had not a cowardly spirit, for he was as brave a man as ever lived. But he was full of grief for having offended so holy and loving a God. His heart was broken for having done such a wrong thing. His guilt cut his heart like a sharp sword. Oh, what a hard and bad thing it is to sin!

But King David found the forgiving love of God as great as all his sin. All the time he prayed to the Lord for pardon. He said that tears were his meat day

and night. He could scarcely keep his eyes dry enough in the daytime to attend to all his kingly duties, and at night he made his pillow wet with weeping. He was constantly praying: "Lord, wash me; make me clean from my sin. Be gracious to me and blot out my sin; cover it, O Lord, with thy love." You see, then, that God keeps a book of guilt; and David asked Him to blot out all the charges against him—just as you would like a pen run through a debt that was charged to you on a book. You know how you rub out sums from your slates at school, and he prayed the Lord to blot out his sins in the same way. Then, sometimes you get a drop of ink, or a stain of fruit, or perhaps a drop of blood on your linen, and it has to be washed very hard to get it all out, that it may be as white as snow again. And King David asked the Lord to do this for his soul, by washing out all his blood-guiltiness. He confessed that his sin had left a crimson stain of a very deep tint. The prophet speaks of our sin being "like scarlet." Once a year the Jewish high-priest laid his hands upon the head of a goat and confessed over it the sins of the people, and then sent the animal into the wilderness to bear them all away; but he tied a scarlet band around its head, first, to show that it carried away their sins. So, when the Lord pardoned King David, he made his soul clean, white and pure, by removing his sin. And only the Lord can do that with your hearts. When Pilate was guilty of the death of Jesus, he took water and washed his hands, and said that he was innocent; but the water on his hands would not wash his heart. And no one can wash away the sin from your souls but the sin-forgiving Lord. The apostle Paul says that Jesus has blotted out the handwriting against you by nailing it to His cross; and this simply means that He nailed your sins to the cross, and put His hand over them to blot them out or cover them up. And when the Lord forgave David by taking the sin out of his heart, he was not tormented by his

fears any more. He felt very humble, and lived a holy life. But when he looked at his hand he saw no blood-spot upon it that would not out, for it was fully washed away.

Now, the great thing for you to do, my dear children, is to come to the Lord, and find that His love is greater than all your sin, and that He takes it all away so that it shall not be forever before your eyes.

Absalom's Rebellion.

(Lesson for August 10, 1884.)

By P. S. HENSON, D.D. [BAPTIST],
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

Honor thy father and thy mother, etc.—Ex. xx: 12. Lesson, 2 Sam. xviii: 24-33.

THE fast young man is not peculiar to our time, for he has figured ignominiously in all time; and yet, perhaps, he has never been so offensively conspicuous as in our age and land. And never was there greater need than now for pondering the profoundly suggestive lessons taught us by the history of Absalom.

I. *The characteristics of the fast young man.*

(1) The first thing that strikes us is a certain audacious dash and brilliancy, such as challenge admiration. Handsome in form and feature, elegant in apparel, courtly in manners, adventurous, hearty, enthusiastic; so rich, and yet so affable; so high-born, and yet so gracious; the very prince of good fellows, we are ready to forgive him beforehand for an occasional escapade. So genial and generous and "good-hearted" seemed this fast young man who lived three thousand years ago. Even so we find him very frequently to-day. On the street corner, in the lobby of the theatre, in the bar-room and the gambling-hall, you encounter him. Radiant and rubicund, winning in his manners and lavish with his money, he seems to the unsophisticated the very beau-ideal of young American manhood.

(2) And yet, in the case of Absalom, back of all that graciousness, there was unutterable baseness. Given over to

lust, and extravagance, and love of display, he was ready, in order to compass his ends, to be guilty of the basest perfidy, and even to redden his hands with his own father's blood.

And so to-day the fast young man, as a rule, is ready to sacrifice the dearest interests, betray the most sacred trusts, and commit the very foulest crimes, in order to maintain appearances, and gratify a passion for sensual indulgence. That fair exterior is but the glistening of the serpent's coil; and while his words are honeyed, the poison of asps is under his lips. He is, commonly, but a hollow-hearted hypocrite, as cunning and as cruel as the spider that spins its glistening web, and then lies in wait for its silly prey. I say not that all fast young men are of just this villainous type; but I do say that the tendency of such a life is to drag him down to the depths of shame, and burn out every trace of virtue and native nobleness.

II. *The causes that produce him.*

(1) One common cause is wealth of natural endowment. Absalom was a splendid specimen of manly beauty, and that inflated his vanity and inflamed his ambition. Such physical endowment is frequently a snare and peril. The like is true of extraordinary intellectual gifts—as witness Byron, Burns, and Edgar A. Poe.

(2) Another thing which frequently contributes to a young man's ruin, as it did in the case of Absalom, is, to be reared in the lap of luxury, to be beyond the need of labor, and to be supplied with abundant means for the gratification of every caprice and passion. A fortune is to most young men a positive misfortune. It was rather in mercy than in anger that the Lord ordained that man should eat bread by the sweat of his face. To have a rich father, and to have nothing to do but eat and drink and dress and drive, seems to many to be a condition most desirable; and yet, in point of fact, scarcely anything could be more deplorable. If a young man, in the midst of such environment, develop real man-

hood, one is disposed to regard him with the same admiration that we would a live salamander that is supposed to be able to live in the fire without being burned.

(3) Sometimes the cause is parental mismanagement. It may be allowing to the child unlimited indulgence, instead of maintaining a wise restraint. Such was the fault of Eli, and such is the fault of many an American parent who fails to recognize the fact that God has clothed him with authority, and that if he fail to exercise it, he is sure to put his child in peril.

On the other hand, he may rule with a rod of iron and hedge his children in with such cold and hard and arbitrary restraints, that his children are tempted to rebellion at the earliest possible opportune moment. Undoubtedly David's treatment of Absalom was anything but judicious and kind. The young man had committed, indeed, a grievous offence, but under grievous provocation. For three years he had been a fugitive from his father's displeasure; and when at last he was permitted to return, his father only half-way forgave him, and for two whole years, though the same city walls inclosed them both, he never saw his father's face. If David had drawn his erring boy closer to his heart he might perhaps have saved him from his final tragic fate.

(4) Parental sin sometimes produces bitter fruit in filial disobedience and sin and shame. David's own life had not been pure. David knew it, and God knew it, and David's family knew it. No man can sin as David did and maintain unbroken his hold upon his children's reverence. God forgave David, but certain natural consequences followed which wrung his heart with dreadful pangs, and Absalom's rebellion is possibly to be reckoned one of them.

III. *The consequences which come to the fast young man and his associates.*

(1) To the young man himself. We know what they were in the case of Absalom. Caught by that hair in which he gloried, pierced with javelins, thrust

into a pit, a heap of stones cast upon him, buried like a dog: such was his end! And it fitly represents the ignominious end that commonly awaits the fast young man. With shattered health, and blackened reputation, with nothing to live for, nothing to love, he closes his career in a felon's cell, or by the suicide's hand, or the hangman's rope!

(2) A scarcely less melancholy fate awaits his only too confiding companions. The companion of fools shall be destroyed. Along with Absalom went a band of silly dupes, of whom it is said that "they knew not anything." They came to know when it was all too late. Of Absalom it was true as of Ashar, that "that man perished not alone." And very exasperating it is to think of the wreck and ruin wrought, especially in a great city, by a single fast, fascinating, unscrupulous young man. We cannot too earnestly warn the unwary against his insidious wiles and perilous friendship.

(3) And dreadful are the consequences that come to those who, in spite of all, cling to him with a deathless love, as David did to Absalom. Never did a bitterer cry of anguish break from human lips than that which David uttered when he learned that his wretched boy had been overtaken by his doom. No keener pang this side of hell can human nature feel than that which tore this father's heart as he vaguely, horribly realized that his wretched boy was not only dead, but damned.

May God save all our young men from such a disgraceful life and such a dreadful death! And may He save all of us that are parents from a sorrow like this, for which not even religion has a gleam of consolation!

Absalom's Death.

(Lesson for August 17, 1884.)

By J. L. HURLEUT, D.D. [METHODIST],
PLAINFIELD, N. J.

Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death.—Mark vii: 10. Lesson,
2 Sam. xviii: 24-33.

A SHIP once went out of New York

harbor with sails set, flags flying, cabins decked with flowers, and passengers waving gay farewells to friends on the pier. Three days afterward, that vessel was a wreck, foundered in mid-ocean, crushed in pieces by the waves, and its company of passengers lost, or clinging to spars and masts in the sea. A fragment of its keel, tossed up on the shore, revealed the cause of its destruction. Its timbers were unsound, eaten up with dry-rot, and they crumbled under the blow of billows which a harder vessel would have ridden out in safety.

Such a ship was young Prince Absalom. As he rode in state through Jerusalem, how many envied him his noble birth, his manly beauty, his popular, winning ways, his brilliant prospect as the successor to the throne of David, as the heir-apparent over all the lands from Egypt to the Euphrates! Three months passed, and the corpse of Absalom was rudely thrown into a pit in the wood of Ephraim, and covered with a pile of stones, while the only one to mourn was that wretched father in the chamber over the gate at Mahanaim.

Every effect has its cause. Even in his hour of prosperity, Absalom was in danger; and had David earlier cried, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" his anxiety might have been of some avail to save him from his fate. We see the causes at work for Absalom's destruction, like the dry-rot in the ship's timbers, long before the final ruin came. Let us examine *Absalom's elements of danger*.

1. He was in danger from *filial irreverence*. The curse causeless comes not, and one of Absalom's curses was his impiety toward a too tender father. We see it in his desire to supplant his father in the love of the people, in his foul conspiracy, in his unnatural desire to slay one whose greatest fault was his mistaken kindness toward his favorite son. The promise to the child that honors his parent, "thou shalt live long on the earth," receives a new sanction over the dishonored grave of the

young man Absalom. The youth who refers to his father as "the old man," "the governor," etc.; who is restless under home-control and seeks liberty, is taking the first step in Absalom's downward course.

2. Absalom was in danger from selfish ambition. David accepted the throne as a trust from God, for the people's sake; Absalom sought it for the sake of its opportunities for personal aggrandizement. The one was the spirit of Cromwell, saying: "I can do more for England than any other man;" the other, the spirit of the modern politician, saying: "To the victors belong the spoils." There is too much of Absalom's greed of office in our public affairs; and many a demagogue has met with Absalom's ruin in the collapse of his schemes.

3. Absalom was in danger from un-governed passion. A fiery steed, or a steam-engine, or a quick, hot blood, is a good servant when well kept in hand. It may execute our will with quickness and with vigor, and be a means of power to its possessor. But either of these is a hard and dangerous master. Let your steed run away with you, and you are like Mazeppa; in the power of the uncontrolled steam, a hundred lives may be lost; and the mettle of a quick temper may drive its slave to deeds of violence. Awhile ago, a condemned murderer in Pennsylvania, standing upon the scaffold with the noose around his neck, said: "If I had learned to control my temper while I was a child, I should not be here to-day." Absalom's ardent, impulsive temperament was one element of his popularity, but it was uncontrolled by judgment or principle, and hence was a cause of his destruction.

4. Absalom was in danger from the want of religious conviction. His mother was a heathen princess, and, without doubt, the gods of Geshur were worshipped as often as the God of Israel. The only instance of a religious act in Absalom's history was his request to go to Hebron for the fulfillment of a vow; and then he used relig-

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ion as a pretext to hide rebellion, thus adding hypocrisy to his many crimes against God and man. Infidelity never yet inspired a true morality, for without the fear of God there can be no upright character. The teachings of the Ingersolls and Paines, on one hand, and of the Comtes and Fisbies on the other—the one, popular infidelity, the other, scientific agnosticism—are sowing the seed for a generation of Absaloms. It is for the Sunday-school, the home, and the pulpit, to avert the harvest by planting reverence for God in the hearts of the young.

When the Indian on the prairie hunts the wild horse, he never follows him in a direct line, for he knows that the free, riderless steed can outrun his own. But he knows, too, that the mustang never runs in a straight line. His course is the curve of a vast circle, and the hunter strikes across the country in a straight line for the spot where he knows the mustang will be at the end of his gallop. And when the horse comes up breathless, thinking his enemy is far away, suddenly the Indian leaps up from the grass at his feet, the lasso is thrown, and the horse is a captive. Such is the fate of every youth whose character, like Absalom's, has in it these elements of danger. In an hour when least he expects it his destruction comes.

The Plague Stayed.

(Lesson for August 24, 1884.)

BY HOWARD CROSBY, D.D. [PRESBYTERIAN]. NEW YORK.

The Lord repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough; stay now thine hand.—2 Sam. xxiv: 16.

THE sin of David was also the sin of the people. It was a fomenting of the division between Judah and the rest of Israel, which had begun before Saul's day. (See 1 Sam. xi: 8.) It was a numbering of the people, so that the rivalry on each side would be increased. That it was also a boastful act for all Israel to show their great numbers, there can be no doubt. That it was an act hostile to faith in God's promise to

increase Israel to an *innumerable* number, is also asserted on the ground of 1 Chron. xxvii: 23, 24; but this is somewhat doubtful. It is, however, clear that the people generally were as guilty as the king. Joab is the only one who is spoken of as opposing the action; and from Joab's character we may suppose his objection to have been rather on political than religious grounds. A pestilence raged for three days through the whole land as a punishment for this offence, and seventy thousand persons died. Over Jerusalem the angel of the pestilence (comp. Rev. xv: i.) was made visible to David, who with his nobles clothed themselves in sackcloth, and fell down upon their faces in supplication before God. In response to this prayer, we read that the Lord repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, "It is enough; stay now thine hand." That which astonishes us in this record is, that the Lord is said to repent, when we are expressly told that "the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent; for he is not a man that he should repent" (1 Sam. xv: 29), where Samuel but repeats what Balaam, with the prophetic Spirit upon him, had said four centuries before. If God can repent—that is, change His mind or purpose (for, of course, no repentance of sin could be referred to)—then what certainty or sureness is there in the universe? How can we depend on any promise or mould any expectation? That which sheds great light on our perplexity in this question is the fact that in the very chapter of 1st Samuel from which we have quoted the words, that God will not repent, only six verses later we read, "and the Lord repented that he had made Saul king over Israel." The sacred writer did not think he was writing any contradiction in this passage. A contradiction in terms is not necessarily a contradiction in reality. Examples like that of our Savior's words immediately come to the mind: "From him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." In the case of Saul it is very clear

that God's purpose (or mind) did not change at all, but His outward actions toward Saul, through Samuel, changed in their character, *as would have marked repentance or change of purpose in a man.* The language is thus anthropomorphic and phenomenal, and as such is readily understood by the ordinary mind.

Here, in the case before us, God stayed the angel of destruction on the penitent supplication of David and the elders (see the account in 1 Chron. xxi: 16), an act of staying which He had before purposed in this very connection, but an act which *had the look of pursuing another determination.* And this is the repentance of God we may always expect upon our fervent and faithful prayer. The 107th Psalm is full of this thought. Men cry unto the Lord in the trouble which He has brought upon them, and He delivers them out of their distresses, satisfying the hungry soul, breaking the prisoners' bonds, and making the storm a calm. (Ps. cvii: 6, 13, 14, 19, 28, 29.)

God has so arranged and ordered all things, that His apparent change of purpose shall follow every true prayer, and His nature of love and tenderness be revealed to every humble and waiting soul. When our afflictions have wrought out in us the ends which His wisdom and mercy have sought, and have brought us in a right frame before

His truth and majesty, we shall be able to discern modifications in His treatment, which are as if our God had changed His mind toward us, but which are really but changes in methods proceeding from the same mind and purpose of mercy and truth. We need all along our road in life the visitations of God's rod. God could not be a faithful and loving Father and withhold the rod. (See Heb. xii: 6-11.) Our stupidity and waywardness demand this interference of the rod. It comes in sickness, pecuniary losses, family bereavement, false accusations, and in many other ways. None of these come by chance. God is behind each, and that, too, in love. Blessed is the man who discerns this. Blessed is the man who can reckon on the rod as part of his spiritual wealth! Blessed is the man who can say with David, "Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me!"—where the chastisement and support are seen to come from the same hand and to prove the same divine love.

Let us enrich our lives by these golden thoughts, and take away the sting of trial by grasping its meaning and co-operating with its purpose. Let us bow before the Lord, in humble contrition and true faith, till our spiritual education is complete, and we hear the final command of our heavenly Father to the agent of His chastisement: "It is enough—stay now thine hand!"

THE PRAYER-MEETING SERVICE.

By J. M. SHERWOOD, D.D.

Aug. 6.—*Missionary Service*—THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST THE GREAT NEED OF THE CHURCH.—Acts i: 8; ii: 1, 2, 38; xix: 3, 21.

THE tendency of the times is toward the outward—the natural, the instrumental, rather than the inner spiritual life, and the supernatural energy. As faith and piety decay we cling the more tenaciously to the form, the ceremonial, and exalt the externals of religion.

THE ONE SUPREME NEED OF THE HOUR IS A PENTECOSTAL BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST.

1. *To revive and strengthen the faith of the Church.* It is now dim, feeble, obscured. And yet the word and providence of God are calling for *apostolic* faith—faith to expect and undertake *great* things for the kingdom of God. Look: the fields are ripe for the harvest! Look: the doors of entrance are thrown wide open! Hear: the cry is echoed from every mountain top, and rolls up every valley, and resounds among the thousand isles of the ocean: "Come over and help us!" 2. *To put new life into every Christian soul.* An in-

finite work for Christ and perishing souls waits to be done. Dead bones need to be revived, divine energy infused into all our activities, and the sacramental host of God's elect rallied, inspirited, and made strong and valiant for the fight on which hangs the destiny of the world. 3. *To raise higher the standard of personal holiness and consecration.* This must be done, or Christianity will never vanquish sin and the devil and the world. 4. *To conserve the truth and call forth a testimony instinct with the teaching of the Master and faithful to the high and solemn interests intrusted to us.* If truth perish; if the faith once delivered to the saints be frittered away; if our pulpits come to give forth an uncertain sound, "woe to the world!" *Nothing short of the baptism of the Holy Ghost can meet the necessities of the hour and carry the Church forward to a triumphant issue.*

Aug. 13.—HOW TO HAVE A REVIVAL.—
Amos vii: 2.

Israel was in deep distress. The judgments of God had swept over the land like a desolating flood. Grasshoppers devoured every green thing, and fire burned up the houses. God seemed about to make an utter end of His people, because of their "wantonness." But Amos, who laid their troubles to heart, cried unto God and pleaded their cause, and prevailed.

HOW A CHURCH MAY SECURE A REVIVAL
OF TRUE RELIGION.

1. *The first step is humiliation.* Sin, in one form or another, has grieved away God's Spirit, and He will not return till that sin is searched out, repented of and put away, in the spirit of heartfelt repentance. No amount of praying, preaching, striving, will avail aught till this is done. 2. *The second step is reformation.* Not enough that we confess and forsake our sins; we must come back to God in the spirit of our first love, and do works meet for repentance; repair the spiritual wastes which sin and worldliness have wrought in our hearts and lives, and re-establish our relations with God and His kingdom.

3. *The third step lies in the direction of religious duty.* Falling away from God is not a solitary act. The Holy Spirit is not driven away by a single neglect or grievance. The hand of duty is first let down in the closet, and then the spirit of decay and carelessness and indifference gradually comes to pervade the whole life. The fire on the altar must be rekindled. The path of duty must be again frequented. The cross must once more be carried. DUTY must become, what it once was, the paramount consideration. 4. *The spirit of prayer must be sought and exercised till the blessing comes.* Humiliation, repentance, observance of duty, and prayer, will bring down the Holy Ghost upon you. Nothing short of this will. Will you have the blessing at this cost?

Aug. 20.—AN EVIL HEART OF UNBELIEF.
—Heb. iii: 12.

We are prone to lay the stress of religion on the head and the outward conduct—on an orthodox faith and a correct life. But we make a grave mistake. Not with the *head*, but "with the *heart*, man believeth unto righteousness." It is "an evil heart of unbelief" that is our greatest danger. The intellect may be sound and clear, and give its assent to the Gospel, while the affections are alienated from God, and the spiritual man is enshrouded in darkness and dead in trespasses and sins.

WE ARE SPECIALLY WARNED AGAINST AN
EVIL HEART OF UNBELIEF.

1. *Because of the insidious character of such a moral state.* The danger is far greater because the eye of sense cannot detect it, nor public observation take cognizance of it. It is a secret enemy, ever lurking in our path, and ready to surprise us into sin. An overt act we cannot hide from view, but an evil heart may have seduced us far away from God before we are conscious of it. 2. *Because of the radical character of such a condition.* God looks mainly at the *heart*. The state of the *heart* toward God and truth and holiness, determines a man's real moral state and prospect for eternity. It is possible for a man's

life to be wrong in many particulars, and his heart be right in the sight of God. But a *bad heart* vitiates every moral act—"an evil heart of unbelief" turns every religious duty and exercise into an abomination" in the eyes of the Lord. "Unbelief" is the crowning sin of mankind. It towers to heaven and challenges God's severest punishment. "He that *believeth* not shall be damned." There is nothing the Christian should have a greater dread of than a *dead heart*, an *unbelieving heart*, a *worldly-conformed heart*. 3. Because the *danger arising from such a spiritual state is most imminent*. All sin has its seat in the heart. Religious declension, infidelity, apostasy, all begin within, proceed from the heart and often make fearful headway before they appear in the life or affect the outward man. "Take heed" "lest an evil heart of unbelief" betray your soul's eternal interests!

Aug. 27.—THE TEARS OF JESUS.—Luke xix: 41; John xi: 35.

The Son of God in tears! It were the wonder of angels, if they did not know the extent and awfulness of man's ruin, and the height of that blessedness to which the Cross may elevate him.

1. The tears of Jesus testify to His *love* for man even in his lost estate. Even in his ruin, the divine image is not wholly effaced, nor his capacity for restoration and a glorious future lost. Love is the spirit, the expression, the substance of Christianity. Love brought Christ down out of heaven to seek the lost, and even to die on the cross to save him. 2. The tears of Jesus testify to His *pity* and *sympathy* for a lost and sinning race. "Jesus wept" at the grave of Lazarus, demonstrating the glorious truth that "we have not an high-priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities," etc. "He wept over" Jerusalem, as expressive of His profound sorrow and grief in view of its unbelief and rejection of Him, and of the utter desolation and ruin that impended over that favored but guilty city. 3. The tears of Jesus witness to the

sincerity and intensity of His invitations and warnings in the Gospel. He "*spoke as never man spoke*," in instruction, in entreaty, in threatening. He *acted*, he *lived* out, His teachings. His "tears" are weighty arguments in favor of the truth and infinite moment of the message He brought down to man from the Father of spirits. The awful words of life trembled on His lips! "Tears" consecrated His life to save lost souls. 4. The tears of Jesus will be a *swift witness against the finally impenitent* in the day when this same divine Jesus shall judge the world.

CONCLUSION. *The deepest emotion is justified and demanded in the preacher*. It is *Christlike even to weep* over perishing sinners. Paul did not count it a weakness to beseech men with "strong crying and tears to turn to God." Also,

"He wept, that we might weep;
Each sin demands a tear."

THE FINGER OF GOD IN MODERN MISSIONS.*

By ARTHUR T. PIERSON, D.D.

FACTS are the fingers of God. Although indifference is not always born of ignorance, there will be little zeal without knowledge. To awaken a deep passion for the universal and immediate spread of Gospel tidings, believers must be brought face to face with those grand facts which make the march of modern missions the miracle of these latter days.

Not to go back further, for four hundred years we can trace signal providences casting up this broad, level highway between the centres of Christendom and pagandom. Near the close of the sixteenth century a new route to the golden Indies by way of the Cape of Good Hope led to the chartering of the East India Company a few years later; and so, while the Pilgrims were sowing the seeds of this Christian republic beneath the setting sun, Protestant Eng-

*In this and the September number of THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY, we give brief portions of Dr. Pierson's stirring paper on "God's Hand in Missions," written for our new edition of David Brainerd's Memoirs, now in press.—ED.

land planted an empire toward the sunrise, and in the very heart of the pagan Orient. Unconsciously the leading nation of the Protestant Christian world was reaching out one hand eastward, and the other westward, to lay the foundations of a world-wide Church. Subsequent conflicts in America and India settled the question that in both hemispheres the Cross was to displace both the crescent and the crucifix.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, America and Asia are respectively held by the two foremost Protestant powers of the world. England has a firm foothold in the critical centre of oriental missions, and in her hands holds the keys of the kingdoms of the East. This makes necessary, as a line of communication, an open highway for travel and traffic between the mother country and her eastern possessions. If Britain had any right in India, she had a right to a safe and peaceful road thither; and this political necessity was used of God ultimately to shape the attitude of every nation along that highway. Had England not held that highway to the Indies, the destinies of Europe and Asia might have been changed. Turkey would probably have been devoured by Russia, or divided between Russia and France; the Greek and Roman churches, crossing the mountains, might have swayed all Asia and kept out Protestant missions. Behold the hand of God, using English arms and diplomacy to hold popes, czars and sultans in check; to shield converts from persecution by Turkish Armenians, Persian Nestorians, Syrian Moslems, or Indian Brahmins; and giving Britain a casting vote in the affairs of the Sublime Porte!

What means this providential establishment of British empire in India? It is an entering wedge driven into the heart of Asia; a wedge the direction of whose cleavage is still eastward, splitting in twain these gnarled and knotted trunks of moss-grown empires!

Meanwhile, from seed sown at Plymouth, develops another mighty, evangelizing power. The Protestant

republic of America strides from Atlantic to Pacific, and, planting foot on the western shores, moves toward the eastern coasts of Asia, as though there were no more sea. Here is God's counter-force moving from the opposite direction to meet England and oppose her entering wedge with the resistance of co-operation, as anvil opposes sledgehammer. In other words, another irrepressible conflict has come. Commerce will have her highway round the world, and knocks imperatively at the sealed ports and barred gates of exclusive Oriental empires.

Our Republic leads the way. In 1853 Commodore Perry sails into the bay of Yeddo, spreads the Star Spangled Banner over the capstan, and the open Bible upon the flag, and, without firing a gun or shedding a drop of blood, peacefully opens the ports of Japan to the world. Five years later, four leading nations knock loudly at the gates of China, and the walled kingdom opens her doors, expressly stipulating by treaty that "any person, whether citizen of the country with which the treaty is made, or Chinese convert to the faith of the Protestant or Roman Catholic churches, who, according to these tenets, peaceably teaches and practices the principles of Christianity, shall in no case be *interfered with or molested*." This one edict of toleration gave religious liberty to one-third of the population of the globe. At one titanic blow, God levels an obstacle as high as the Himalayas, and opens the way from the Bosphorus to the China sea, through the heart of Asia.

Passing by all other providential interpositions, let us emphasize the recent unveiling of Africa. In August, 1877, after 999 days from Zanzibar, Stanley, emerging at the mouth of the Congo, completes the transit of the Dark Continent. The dying cry of Jesus has rent the last veil in twain, and the missionary has only to follow the footsteps of the explorer. The same Providence that opens the doors, prepares the forces of His Church for the crusade.

The missionary advance of this cen-

tury is directly traceable to answered prayer. Since Luther nailed up his theses, there has been no historic hour so dark as the first half of the eighteenth century. Even England was, as Isaac Taylor said, in "virtual heathenism," with a lascivious literature, an infidel society, a worldly Church, and a deistic theology. Blackstone heard every clergyman of note in London, but not one discourse had more Christianity in it than the orations of Cicero, or showed whether the preacher was a disciple of Confucius, Mahomet, or Christ. In America, Samuel Blaine declared that "religion lay a-dying." In France, Voltaire, Rousseau, and Madame de Pompadour led society; and in Germany, Frederick the Great made his court the Olympus of infidels.

If Collins and Tyndal denounced Christianity as priestcraft, Whiston called Bible miracles grand impositions, and Woolston treated them as allegories; if Clark and Priestly openly taught the heresies of Arius and Socinus, and even morality was trampled under foot, what missionary activity could there be? To diffuse such "Christianity" would be disaster; but happily such a type of piety has no diffusive tendency or power. If it has any divine fire left, it has not a coal or even a spark to spare to light a blaze elsewhere.

The only hope of missions lay in a revival of religion, widespread and deep-reaching; and God gave that to His Church through a wonderful constellation of evangelists: Whitefield, the Wesleys, Grimshaw, Romaine, Rowlands, Berridge, Venn, Walker, Hervey, Toplady, Fletcher—these Bishop Ryle names as twelve of the apostles of that new Reformation which, between 1735 and 1785, woke not only England, but the Protestant world from the awful apostasy of irreligion and infidelity. At first even the Church resisted all efforts to revive her dying life. Whitefield found Scotch ministers opposing him by set days of fasting and prayer; and church doors shut against himself and Wesley, compelled that open-air preaching which was the great stride

of the century toward the reaching of the masses.

But the Spirit of God was breathing on the dry bones. The fires, slowly kindled at first, burned brighter and hotter, caught here and there, spread far and wide, till even America, across the sea, was aflame. Within fifty years from Whitefield's first sermon at Gloucester, all Protestant Christendom thrilled with a revived evangelical faith, and as evangelistic zeal is sure always to follow, out of these Pentecostal outpourings came the flaming tongues of witness. The Church, from her silver trumpets, pealed forth her summons to prayer for the effusion of the Spirit upon all disciples, and upon the whole habitable earth. Praying bands answered the trumpet peal in all parts of Britain, and from American shores came the echo, in 1747, of Jonathan Edwards' bugle "Call to Concerted Prayer." The tidal wave of revival rose higher and moved with greater momentum under the Haldanes, Andrew Fuller, Sutchiffe, Rowland Hill and others.

In 1792 the Warwick Association formally made the first Monday of each month a "monthly concert of prayer" for the world's evangelization. No sooner did the revived Church, after this awful period of drought, begin to pray for a great rain, than a cloud like a man's hand appeared on the horizon; and in that same year (1792) the first Foreign Missionary Society was formed in England, and the next year sent to India its first missionary, William Carey, who, within the thirty years following, secured the translation of the Scriptures into forty tongues, and the circulation of two hundred thousand copies. Thus the revival of evangelical faith and of concerted prayer are the two pillars on which rests the arch of Modern Missions.

How fast that little cloud has grown, till the heaven is overspread, and there is a sound of the abundance of rain! During these eighty years the number of translations of the Word has increased *fivefold*, from fifty to two hundred and fifty; of Protestant mission

societies *tenfold*, from seven to seventy; of male missionaries *fifteenfold*, from one hundred and seventy to twenty-four hundred; of moneys contributed *twenty-fivefold*, from two hundred and fifty thousand to six and a quarter million dollars; of converts *thirty-fivefold*, from fifty thousand to one million six hundred and fifty thousand; and of mission schools *one hundred and seventyfold*, from seventy to twelve thousand!

The whole tide of thought has turned in the Church since William Carey first offered to go and meet the giant of heathenism. The wave, at its lowest ebb a century ago, now touches a flood-mark never before reached, and is still rising. Sydney Smith would no longer dare to sneer at the "pious shoemaker" of Paulersburg, or characterize his schemes as "the dreams of a dreamer who dreams that he has been dreaming." England is prouder of Carey than Athens was of Pericles, or Rome of Cicero, and lifts the statue of Livingston to its lofty pedestal in the metropolis of the world, to inspire Christian colonies to push into the heart of the dark continent. American churches hurl their columns against the ranks of pagan and papal superstition, and erect missionary lectureships in the foremost institutions of learning to train youth to imitate the devotion of David Brainerd, Henry Martyn, and Alexander Duff.

In fact, the whole history of Modern Missions is a Burning Bush, whose every twig is aflame with the divine presence. We are standing on holy ground. Many and marked are the divine interpositions. We see the iron gates open of their own accord, obstacles suddenly sinking, continents unveiling their secrets, and missionary exploration going forward so rapidly that the maps of yesterday are out of date to-day!

LITTLE THINGS.—Do not slight the little things that crowd around life; many are deceived and led astray by neglecting little things.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ILLUSTRATIONS DRAWN FROM HISTORY.

No. II.

By JAMES M. LUDLOW, D.D.

Acquiring Material.

I. EVERY preacher should be a *large reader* of history. The fact that in our preparatory days we went over the general ground, and could even yet pass a respectable examination in dates, should not be allowed to satisfy us. We need to have our minds enriched with fresh impressions of the most significant incidents and laws of events. Our active ministry has re-educated us, and we shall now see more meaning in the pages than we did when we were under-graduates. One who is reputed for the abundant and pertinent use he makes of history in preaching, attributes his success to the fact that during college days he read but little; that Gibbon, Hallam, and Macaulay came under his eye for the first perusal when he felt his need of such knowledge and was alert to make the most of it.

We misspend much time on other studies, if our life-work is to be that of the active ministry. It may border upon heresy to say so, but many are wasting their preaching force by brooding over theologies, biblical criticism, etc. They become very learned in such matters, and our chairs of dogmatics and metaphysics could be supplied from a host of our dullest pulpiteers. This will account for the fact that we make professors of many who have failed in the ministry. They have failed in the ministry because they have been for years qualifying themselves only for professors. One who, twenty years ago, gave promise of becoming the most popular man in the American pulpit, has evaporated into a lecturer on mental science; another has run to seed in ecclesiasticism, who, if he knew as much about the wants and virtues of men, as they have been expressed in the annals of human suffering and exploit, as he does about the decisions of church judicatories, would be as strong in the pulpit as he is on the floor of the Gen-

eral Assembly. Dr. William Adams was a model preacher in his use of history. His discourses sprang from a hearty appreciation of Scripture, even of its subtlest verities, but poured along like majestic rivers, gleaming with illustrations from all the centuries, fascinating and refreshing the thirsty minds of his hearers.

To reach men we must know men; and to know them we must read them, and read about them, at whatever sacrifice of other studies.

II. While reading much history, the preacher should do it with eye trained to note the phases of truth, the biblical doctrines and precepts, and the characteristics of human nature which its pages illustrate. It must be careful professional reading, and not for mere pastime or general culture. It should be as the painter gathers his lessons in color and form, from sky and fields and faces.

One will be surprised to find how rapidly the fund of good illustrations will grow. A few years will put him beyond the necessity of preaching a dry sermon on any subject, or a sermon that must be made interesting by the glamour of his mere rhetorical unction.

He will also find out in this way many new phases of human weakness and strength, which he would not discover by common observation or self-examination. He will be impressed that the Bible is indeed all men's book; that no age or place has been beyond its ken; that, like the Master, it knows "what is in man." Some of the best points of a sermon are often suggested by an actual occurrence, which would never have been brought out by logical analysis.

III. Besides tact in discerning the application of historical incidents, the preacher should have a *system of arranging* his illustrations under a full analysis of subjects. An impressive scene or event should never be dismissed until it has been securely pigeon-holed in the memory, or written index. The latter most students find to be a necessity. Memory is not sufficiently re-

tentive; or, if retentive, is not sufficiently sensitive to respond to the subtle analogy which would make the matter it holds useful. Dr. Alexander used to say that it was even better to have your library at your fingers' end than at your tongue's end. Those reputed as the readiest men, with especial bumps of pertinence, will be found to be rather the most patient men, who have put away their honey in paper cells.

One of the most useful devices would be a file, such as is used in assorting business letters. Into this, under their proper subjects, should be dropped hastily written descriptions, narrations, etc., prepared while the rhetoric is glowing with the heat of fresh discovery. A commonplace index should accompany this, in which to register pages where valuable matter may be found, and hints and catch-words of all kinds. This should be always at hand to catch the fair birds of valuable suggestion as soon as they touch the snare of your alert mind. A revolving book-case, a Tapley's file, and a Todd's Index Rerum at your elbow, will do more for your sermon than double the time spent in wringing out an already study-dried brain.

PASTORAL AND SERMONIC HABITS.

Personal Experiences of Distinguished Clergymen.*

No. III.

T. L. CUYLER, D.D. [PRESBYTERIAN].
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

I BEGIN work on my sermons on Tuesday, and I am so engaged, off and on, until the end of the week. Mondays I use for miscellaneous work. I never wrote but one sermon in my life on Monday. I do not think I ever wrote one, or prepared for one—that is, in the regular course of my ministerial work—on Saturday. While I am outside of an insane asylum, I never expect to do it. When Saturday comes, I have made it my rule to be clear for the Sabbath. I begin early in the week,

* In interviews for THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY.

so as to be free from any pressure and anxiety in the matter, and, in that way, can make allowance for interruptions.

The evening is a bad time in which to work, and yet many clergymen prepare their sermons at that time. All the sermonic work I have done at night in thirty-eight years would not amount, all told, to two discourses.

I lay aside memoranda to be used in preparing sermons, but I have no particular system about preserving it. I once tried the habit of jotting down thoughts for future use, but did not find that it worked successfully. But as to keeping a commonplace book, I think it is an admirable idea; and I would advise young clergymen to try the plan of writing down their best thoughts and pasting in such scraps as may be useful at some future time.

I do not think I have ever declined half a dozen requests coming from outside my parish to attend a funeral, and then only on the ground of previous engagements. Though my parish is large, it has been my rule not to decline to attend a funeral unless an imperative engagement prevented my doing so. There are cases where it is unreasonable to ask the pastor of a large church to do it; but, on the whole, I endeavor to be as accommodating as possible to the outside public. As to whether a fee should be received for such service, I have expressed myself before on that subject as follows:

"If a fee is offered, let it be received, except from the very poor, and used for a good object. To decline it, in most cases, would give offence. A service for those outside of the pastor's congregation often involves much extra labor; and a fee, under such circumstances, may often be proper."

I use as much of the five afternoons of the week as I can for pastoral work. Saturday I do not employ in that way. To tell the truth, I suppose, in proportion to the size of my congregation, that I have made more pastoral visits during the last thirty-one years, in New York and Brooklyn, than, may be, any other minister in those two cities. I have

gone to the extreme in that direction, and some say I have spoiled my people. This custom has cost me a great sacrifice of minister's ordinary recreations—especially in the way of literary recreations and enjoyments; but I have made that sacrifice from a pretty high ideal I have had before me as to pastoral work. Perhaps I have gone to the extreme in that direction. I cannot say that I would recommend all young ministers to do as I have done.

But my health is good, and I do not care for physical recreations. I never lost but two Sundays in my life on account of sickness. And I am a good sleeper. I have found that the key to a man's success as a minister lies in securing sleep. The word "sleep" covers half the battle, because ministers break down through the nervous system. The one restorative for the nervous system, and the only one, is sleep. As long as a minister can sleep, he will keep his congregation wide-awake; the moment he loses his sleep they will fall to nodding.

One of the fundamental methods of developing and keeping up an interest in the prayer-meeting, is in having laymen to lead it. In my church, the prayer-meetings are always led by the officers of the church, in alphabetical order; never by myself. Thus there is no temptation to the minister to absorb the meeting. Mr. Beecher, you will remember, lately lamented that his prayer meeting had run into a lecture service. Then, we have a rule in our church, that nobody is ever called upon to take part. That throws the responsibility back on the people, in the sense that every man is expected to do his part; then you make it a people's meeting. The question always is: Is it a minister's meeting, or a people's meeting? Another point is, the topic for the meeting is announced beforehand, on the Sabbath, so that people will know what to think, speak and pray about. That gives a certain unity to the meeting. In revival times you do not need that, because then the revival itself is the topic.

As to preventing the intrusion of callers at unseasonable hours, I would say that my study is in my church, and my mornings are my study hours; in the afternoons I am out making calls. While in my study I have this card pinned on the door:

VERY BUSY.

But people knock, nevertheless. If they want some paper signed, or some matter attended to, I quickly dispose of them at the entrance, without inviting them in to sit down. Most persons apologize, and say, "I see you are very busy," and leave at once. A little tact will be sufficient in all cases. Many of the callers, "bores," you might say—book agents, and so forth—go to my house, where, of course, I am seldom to be found during the day.

But a minister, I think, should remember that, while he is the servant of his people, he belongs, to a certain extent, to the public. It will not do for him to get the reputation of being unapproachable. A person may call in the morning on some spiritual errand; and I have always said that no sermon is so important as dealing with a soul. A minister had better let his sermon fly out of the window than get the reputation of being an inaccessible man.

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A SYMPOSIUM ON EVOLUTION.

IS THE DARWINIAN THEORY OF EVOLUTION
RECONCILABLE WITH THE BIBLE? IF
SO, WITH WHAT LIMITATIONS?

No. VIII.

By J. M. BUCKLEY, D.D.

This is a deep problem, on which it is easy to darken counsel by words without knowledge, and not easy to write anything which will elucidate the subject. Perhaps the concentrated rays of this symposium may either reveal the white line of truth, or (which is the best remaining service to the mind which does not discern the truth) they may show clearly where the truth is

not. No less than six factors may be involved in the problem.

What is the *Darwinian* theory of evolution?

Does the Bible contain a theory of evolution?

If not, does it reveal a process covering the causes of the same phenomena with which the Darwinian theory of evolution deals?

If either of these be found to be the case, do the Bible and the Darwinian theories agree?

If they disagree, is the disagreement fundamental?

If it be not fundamental, what modifications must be made in the Darwinian theory to harmonize it with the Biblical?

If the writer doubted the truth of the Bible, and had no doubt of the truth of the Darwinian theory, he would expound the latter first and make it the standard of comparison; but as he is an avowed believer in the Bible and writes for such, the first question to be examined is this: Does the Bible contain a theory of evolution or of a process covering the causes of the same phenomena?

Some preliminary observations are necessary.

Many think it not a difficult task to dispose of this question. They affirm that the narrative in Genesis is plain and straightforward. It teaches, they say, that the work of creation was divided into six days of *twenty-four hours each*. A few still linger who date the beginning of the universe from the beginning of the six days. Most assume a period of indefinite extent between the beginning of the first of those days and the event described in the first verse. They do this without hesitation, though it could never have been derived from the face of the narrative, unless an external pressure had driven the interpreter to seek relief. Most Biblical scholars now expand the days into six periods of vast but indeterminate length, utterly scouting the idea that only days of twenty-four hours are meant. This they do in direct opposition to the face of the ac-

count, and regardless of the reference to it in the commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy; * * * for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day."

The various theories of those who attempt to evolve the order and determine the time of the successive phenomena of the universe by the opening chapter of Genesis are as incongruous, and many of them as mutually destructive, and not a few as preposterous, as the tales in the Talmud, or the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. It is a question which of the two books—that with which the Bible begins, or that with which it ends—Genesis or Revelation, has been subjected to the greater number of chimerical interpretations.

As the limitations of space will not allow the full development of the writer's views of the subject, he will state in brief what he conceives the account in Genesis to teach:

1. It declares that God created the universe; and it implies that the conception of time was made possible by and from that primal act. 2. That certain types of living beings were subsequently created at a time or times which are not definitely stated. 3. That man began, not in the way of cause and effect, as his descendants appear, but was specially created, and that he existed for a time—not definitely stated—alone, after which woman was created. 4. That man, at his origin, was a moral and intellectual being, that he was definitely instructed by his Creator, and that he sinned.

Unbelievers, whether learned or ignorant, who reject the whole account; Jews, who hold that Genesis teaches a great deal more than the above points contain; and most, if not all, who claim to be Christians, concur that the denial that these principles are declared or implied in the opening chapters of Genesis, would reduce those chapters to a chaos similar to its description of the earth itself as "without form and void."

But a fact yet more vital is, that

throughout the Bible the same theory is taught by direct statement, by implication, by side reference, by elaborate illustration, and in every possible way. The whole Christian scheme, including the incarnation and the propitiatory plan of salvation, is based upon it. Job, David and Solomon unite to teach it.

Mal. ii: 15 deserves special attention: "And did he not make one? Yet had he the residue of the Spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth." Paul's sermon on Mar's Hill avows it explicitly. The discussion in 1 Cor. xv. without it would be a rhapsody. In Heb. xi: 3, it is stated with scientific precision: "By faith we understand that the worlds have been proved by the Word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which do appear." (R. V.)

If the foregoing statement be correct, any theory of evolution which assumes the eternity of nature, matter (or whatsoever term may be employed to represent the idea) is irreconcilable with the Bible.

Any theory which assumes in nature from eternity, or from any point prior to the appearance of man upon the scene, a potency to produce all phenomena without the direct and supernatural interference of the Creator, is irreconcilable with the Bible.

Any theory which assumes that man was not created by a special act of God, having no Cause, in the scientific sense of the term, so that prior to that time man was not, nor was there any thing in being which, without such act, could produce man; and assumes that woman was not *subsequently* created by a similar act, cannot be reconciled with the Bible.

Any theory that assumes that the first man was not possessed of a moral nature, and without the moral derangement which now exists, cannot be made to agree with the teachings of the Bible.

Any theory which assumes that the human race, in all its varieties, has not

descended from one pair, is contrary to the Scriptures.

Any theory that does not recognize a radical distinction between man and all other living beings upon the earth as respects the "image of God," rank in creation, and the future life, is fundamentally a variance with the Scriptures.

II. Does the Darwinian theory of evolution assume these things?

It seems to the present writer that some of his predecessors in this symposium have not attached due importance to this qualifying word, Darwinian. It is not with a theory, but with the Darwinian theory of evolution that we have to do. What is that theory, as set forth in his works and monographs, and as held by Huxley, Tyndall, Haeckel, Herber Spencer, and those most closely allied with Darwin? Since the first three of these have visited this country, and lectured here, and the works of all are well known by all well educated persons, it is proper to assume that the readers of this symposium are competent to judge for themselves. The writer, who has read all Darwin's writings, and those of Huxley, Tyndall and Spencer, so far as they relate to this subject, and of Haeckel (in English versions), as these works were successively issued from the press, bears testimony to the accuracy, in substance, of their representation of the Darwinian theory made by Dr. J. B. Thomas in a preceding article of this symposium (June, 1884). While Darwin, in his first work, assumes a Creator who breathes life at the beginning "into a few forms or into one," this seems a languid provisional hypothesis, which is ignored or practically repudiated. Thenceforth Darwin continually attacks "the miserable hypothesis of special creations," and a plan of creation. The views of those who are most closely allied with him are too well known to need statements, or to admit of debate.

The Darwinian theory of evolution is wholly opposed to the Bible at every point where they meet concerning God, creation, and man. To reconcile them requires that a Creator, who created

first the natural universe, and then man, whom He endowed from the beginning with the moral and intellectual powers which now exist, be introduced. Then what would be left of Darwin would be that for which he deserves the greatest credit, and by which he has been of great service to mankind—the irrefutable proofs of the changes which have taken place, are taking place, and will continue in nature as operating according to the laws made by its "Great Original," as effected by man, and as affecting man.

The Darwinian theory traces these changes back to a point where traces cease, and, with as much naked faith as the most heathen religion ever required, "projects," in the name of science, an inference back into the unlimited past, ruling out special creations. It is not charged that Darwin did not admit originally a creative act of "a few forms, or of one," but that the whole tendency and final affirmation of the theory, are as stated.

A theory of evolution which assumes creation and a special interference with the subsequent order in the production of man, may be harmonized with the Bible; at least, antagonism cannot be fully demonstrated. The most devout believer may accept anything which, either by deduction or induction, becomes reasonable to him, provided the contrary is not so essential to the Bible that to accept the one involves the rejection of the other.

Fifty years ago the cry of unbelievers was that the difference between the different races of men were so great that they could not possibly have descended from one pair. The writer began his theological studies the very year that Mr. Darwin's greatest work was published. The books on Ethnology, from the Christian point of view, that were placed in his hands, were all devoted to the support of the proposition that the varieties of the human race could be accounted for by the operation of the three potent factors, "climate, food and manners." But when Mr. Darwin's researches were published a pow-

erful ally to Christian ethnologists appeared. His facts abundantly supported the possibility and demonstrated the fact of modification; and the old ethnological armory, like that in the Tower of London, is interesting chiefly as an object lesson in history.

A theory of evolution which ever assumes an original creative act, and never denies or implies a denial of a special interference with the previous order in the production of the first male and female type of man, cannot, by any exegesis in harmony with the attested theological methods of the Christian era, be demonstrated incompatible with the Bible.

All the *facts* laboriously collated by Darwin as to variations in species may be accepted, and have been of great service to Biblical ethnology.

To conclude:

1. None can deny evolution as the *present* law of nature. Science can neither prove nor disprove the affirmations of Revelation concerning the origin of the universe and man. It has no records and no fossils covering those events. Men proficient in science may speak truly or falsely; but science is silent in the presence of such questions. Unless God had spoken, man must have ever remained ignorant of his origin and of that of the universe.

2. Wisdom for Christians is to accept the *facts* of science, but to accept none of the *inferences* of scientific men which contradict the teachings of God's Word. The extreme of rationalism which rejects creation will make short work with miracle, inspiration, the incarnation, and Christ himself. The Bible contains a revelation, or its statements on matters outside of nature are mere guesses, and its promises fancies. Its proof to the soul is in a realm which natural science does not enter.

3. Scientists and experts in science are authority on matters of fact. Non-experts are able to judge only two things: Do the experts agree, and upon what? When scientists begin to *infer* upon questions which the average man or any man perceives to be beyond the

domain of science, no one can surrender his judgment to any expert. To expect man to surrender his judgment on matters which he can comprehend as well as another, is to demand of men to man what religion requires only of men to God.

4. The discussion of such topics as evolution in its broader relations in the pulpit by ministers, and in Sabbath-school classes, is of all things the most absurd. The minister, unless a specialist, is not an authority on *facts*. If he be a specialist, he cannot make himself intelligible to the people. If he deal with inferences, he will raise questions that he cannot answer to the satisfaction of the skeptical, the ignorant, the inattentive, or the preoccupied. What shall be thought of a minister closing a sermon thus: "My brethren, there is no difficulty in harmonizing Darwin's theories with the Bible. God originally created matter. Matter evolved plants, animals, and finally, man. Man, as an animal, moved about among other animals for an indefinite period, having only the body and mind. At last God introduced a *soul*. The history of man as man dates from that period. Thus you see that science and revelation are at one!" With what lofty scorn would Darwin treat such twaddle!

5. The course pursued by Mr. Beecher is not edifying. This unparalleled orator has the courage of his ideas. He accepts the Darwin theory, repudiates the fall of man and the Scripture account of his special creation, and throws over the atonement and plan of salvation as held by the Christian Church. Of course he is not a specialist in science, nor an authority in theology, but simply an orator dealing with questions that require another method.

A theory of evolution which recognizes a personal God who created the universe and man by special creation, is not incompatible with the Bible. A theory of evolution which denies these, or which finds no place for or need of them, is worthy of attention only as one of the numerous and ever-changing forms of unbelief.

LAY CRITICISM ON THE MINISTRY AND THE METHODS OF CHURCH WORK.

No. VI.

VIEWS OF JOHN SWINTON.

[We give space to this paper, notwithstanding its severe, and, as we think, undeserved, censure upon the clergy as a body, and the whole Christian Church as an organized and active agency in the cause of humanity and religion. Mr. Swinton, who is connected with the daily press of New York city, beyond all question voices the feelings and sentiments of a large class with whom he has identified his efforts, and by whom he is recognized as a leader; and it is desirable that our ministers and church-workers should clearly understand the actual condition of things in the midst of us at the present time. Our object in inviting these criticisms on the ministry and methods of church work, on the part of representative lay gentlemen, speaking from their respective standpoints and in behalf of their own profession or calling or social relations, was to get at the real present popular mind in reference to current modes of preaching and church life—believing that in so doing we were subserving the high ends of the Christian ministry and of the Church of the living God. We think it a good omen that those whose views we sought to obtain on a subject naturally delicate and responsible, have so cheerfully responded to our request, and given to the clergy and the Church the benefit of their enlightened and mature judgments in the matter. While there will be diversity of opinions as to the justice and wisdom of some of the strictures and criticisms submitted, and to some of the reforms advocated in this symposium, yet we are confident that they have all been made in good faith and with great respect for the ministerial office. And we are likewise confident that these criticisms—not volunteered or thrust upon the public, but given at our special request—will receive respectful consideration on the part of those for whom they were intended. We think it but just, however, to our numerous readers, and to the cause of truth and righteousness, that we should give space to the views of a "Veteran Observer," in response to Mr. Swinton's sweeping accusations. He prefers not to give his name, but we assure our readers that his character and position are such as to command the utmost respect and consideration. His paper speaks for itself.—Ed.]

I HAVE had a good deal to do with the masses of this city during the past ten years, in their homes and workshops, at their meetings, in their strikes, during their times of trouble, amid their protests against wrongs—under all the circumstances that constitute critical periods of life. The thing that

strikes me is the utter obliviousness by the clergy of such of the masses as I have had to do with.

For instance, take the great famine year of 1874, when ten per cent. of the population of this city were living by pauperism and beggary, and which resulted in the attempt to hold misery meetings throughout the city. Notwithstanding the extreme pressure of famine, plague and despair here at that time, I never met a clergyman among any of the tens of thousands of people whom I addressed. In 1877, when we made demonstrations of a somewhat formidable kind, to justify the primitive rights of human nature, not a clergyman took part in any of those attempts. So I might go on: from destitution to misery, from the suppression of the right of free speech to the crushing of the most ordinary instincts of human nature, and to the thousand other colossal crimes of the ruling classes, headed by the clergy of this city, and I should have to say that, either in the way of judgment or of mercy, no clergyman was ever to be found. These movements and incidents have not been hidden in a corner, but have been the great well-tides of human life in this Malbolge of New York. If these were not occasions when men who cared for men ought to have been on the field, then what, in the name of all the saints, has the institution of Christianity to do with man's welfare?

Again: New York is in a chronic state of plague, as is shown by the death-rate of the city in its densely crowded districts. In the third ward, for example, the death-rate last year reached 57 in the thousand—more than three times the death-rate of London or of Paris! constituting the most appalling indictment of modern Christianity and civilization that could possibly be made. Reeking and rotten, squalid and death-stricken, this heterogeneous city of the plague has stood here before the clergy. Have they, under these circumstances, lived up to the Gospel of the Galilean? Have they who possess the voice of authority, who hold the springs of power

and speak with the voice of divinity in the cloth of clericalism, done as Jeremiah or as Zechariah did under similar circumstances? It is the very abomination of desolation, in the presence of which the thousand clergymen of this city have stood; but they have preferred to sniff the odors of fortune, and cross their clerical limbs under the banquets of nabobism, rather than do as He whom they pretend to serve did. Let the clergy show themselves possessed of the blood and brawn of the masses, tingling to their sorrows, thrilling under their cries, struggling against their wrongs, standing by their side, battling against their foes, being *one* with the masses—not in any patronizing, supercilious, top-loftical manner, but as man meets man, as pulse-beat to heart-beat. Let them not—like the cowardly press—always take the side of wealth, but inquire whether these groans do not proceed from human suffering, and discover by whom that suffering is inflicted.

Whether they would reach the masses then seems a vain question; for I do not think that one-tenth of the wage-earning classes in New York believe in Christianity at all: but let them try.

First, let the clergy ascertain by some orderly, definitive method, the conditions of life, the conditions of labor, and the conditions of death of these masses. That will inevitably, in course of time, give them some notion of their method of action in the taking of their next step.

Oh, yes, the Church is doing something in the way of philanthropy; but you cannot by this trifling business get at the monstrous disorganization of modern society. The clergy of France a century ago, and the clergy of Italy twenty years ago, did just what the clergy here are doing. They had their benevolent societies, their Dorcas homes, their Cheap John cure-alls, their pimple-cure enterprises; and yet, look at the France of last century, as described by Arthur Young in these sixteen folio volumes: then look at Italy, with lazaronism swarming from the

steps of St. Peter's to the palace of King Bomba; all of Italy covered with institutions of charity, and at the same time festering with evils that showed those institutions to be shams. Look at poor old Spain, with all her charities. As long as the present system of society, through which a few hundred plunderers are allowed to seize the fruits of the work of the community, is tolerated, no giving back of one grain of wheat from the stolen bushel will do any good.

As to any change in the nature of Christianity: Well, if one could for a moment rid his mind of these vast ecclesiasticisms, this mildewed theologism, these traditional conceptions of the architectural church, he would have no difficulty in seeing how the systems of Christianity to-day differ from the sacrificial love preached by its Founder. The other day, throwing aside as far as one could all preconceptions of churchism, theologism, clericalism and what not, I read, with a man's mind, the Gospel of Matthew, to find out if I could actually see Jesus as He lived and as He acted. It was a most wonderful revelation of a life, not to be described by any such paltry word as "perfection," or any other word; but a life through which flowed the uttermost life of the heart and the soul of man; the primal, primitive, final force of one's being—the last analysis of spiritual love. How paltry are the words of our cannibal language; how paltry are the words of the Greek and the Syriac, that originally chronicled this Christ! But in Matthew I saw the primitive Christ and Christianity; and if one could imagine any clergyman, or any man, with those things in him that are there so curiously given as belonging to Christ, then he would see how this huge, rich, pharisaical ecclesiasticism of Mammon and Baal, that has been built up in the name of Christ, differs from the Christ himself. You cannot help seeing the difference between the way of Christ's intercourse with, as they would say in the West, "the ordinary people" of Jerusalem, and the way in which the clerical

and other Pharisees of modern society come in contact with correspondent people now. In Jesus' intercourse there is a sense of equality, of common kinship with these people, that, as Matthew Arnold would say, is "the secret of Jesus."

While retaining the Testament of its Founder, while nominally adhering to its words, Christianity has changed, just as all human *formulae* are apt to change in spirit while leaving form. I remember reading in my school-book, that during the worst periods of the Roman Empire the crowned ruffians of Rome still put their edicts out under the majestic name of the "Republic." How had the old muscular Roman Republic changed in that time of Caligula? Was it not still in the imperial title—*Rei Publicae*? And yet—and yet—and yet! Again: look at the freshness of the Protestant Reformation in its early up-springing; and look at the stiltedness of the great State establishment now called Lutheranism in Germany. Look at the high, lofty laws of Moses, and mark how they had got distorted when our Savior came. He himself told the great rulers of the Church how the law had been twisted and turned upside down. The priests—the ministers of that day—still swore by Moses; still carried out, with great rigor, the ceremonies of original Judaism; still "made broad their phylacteries;" and yet, could there be a greater contrast than that between the powerful regeneration of Moses and the stilted ecclesiasticism of Jerusalem at the time of our Lord? It had not changed in verbal embodiment, yet the gospels show the radical change that had taken place. This same thing has occurred in modern ecclesiasticism, still nominally adhering to the words of Christ, but, alas! where is Christ?

Young men, most of them, take no interest in the Church, because it displays no life. The things that interest young men are the things that have in them the fires of nature, the forces of the soul, the sweeping immensities of time, the things that grapple them and that they can grapple. Money-making

is an absorbing thing; politics, for the time being, is an absorbing thing. The great struggles and aims of life are those that touch the depths of young men or old men or any kind of men; and there seems to be nothing in the modern church of that kind—nothing that appeals to men in that way. The Church seems to be dry-wilted.

Finally, in its efforts at reformation, the Church should deal with the *organic* evils of life, rather than waste its time in specific so-called philanthropic work,

A REPLY TO JOHN SWINTON.

BY A VETERAN OBSERVER.

With all respect for the position and views of Mr. Swinton, so boldly and strongly expressed above, we feel constrained to enter our decided dissent. Notwithstanding he represents a class, and a class of considerable magnitude, active, aggressive and demonstrative, with whom society and religion have to do; and fairly, it may be, expresses their views—we still affirm, and are confident that we can show, that his sweeping accusations against the Clergy of New York City, and against Christianity, as represented in her church life, are groundless, and that the very opposite may be truthfully affirmed. Happily, the question to be settled is not a question of personal veracity or opinion, or a question of theory or dogma; but simply a question of *fact*,—broad fact, patent to public observation, and conclusive and overwhelming in the weight of its testimony.

A glance at the charges, and a brief presentation of the essential facts involved, will be our line of defense and rebuttal. While the arraignment is general, sweeping, and somewhat vague, yet a few definite points are unmistakable. We select four as substantially covering the whole ground of the indictment. 1. That the clergy of New York in years past have shown no consideration or sympathy for the laboring classes, even in their times of greatest trouble, want and suffering. 2. That they have shown utter indifference to the social degradation, poverty and ex-

treme mortality prevalent among the poorer classes. 3. That they, "like the cowardly press, always take the side of wealth," "sniff the odors of fortune," and "cross their clerical limbs under the banquets of nabobism"; rather than do "as He whom they pretend to serve did." 4. That they "head the ruling classes in the thousand other colossal crimes, which aim to oppress the weak, destroy free speech and crush the ordinary instincts of human nature."

This is the charge, and it is hurled against the entire Ministry and Church of the Metropolitan City of the United States. All denominations, Protestant and Catholic, Orthodox and Liberal without an exception, are included in the wholesale condemnation. If true it is indeed (we quote his own words) "the most appalling indictment of modern Christianity and civilization that could possibly be made." Is the sweeping and unqualified charge *well grounded?*

We do not propose a formal refutation of these grave assertions—for they are only assertions, without one particle of evidence to support them, and in the face of ten thousand facts of history, which "are known and read of all men." The most the space at our command will allow us to do, is to group and pass in rapid review column after column in solid array, of facts, histories and achievements which have transpired in this same maligned city, and which shed a lustre on its ministry, its philanthropists, its churches, its charities, its humane, industrial and reformatory agencies and institutions—grand, even Christ-like, and which no detraction can dim or tarnish. We scarcely know where to begin, or what to select. Our material would fill volumes of glorious history, and we have only a few pages to compress it into.

We start with the broad assertion, based on an intimate acquaintance with the subject, that, as a class, "the thousand clergymen of this city," in point of intelligence, culture, piety, consecration to their work, public spirit, patriotism, practical sympathy with man

as man, broad charity and generous philanthropy, will compare favorably with the ministry of any other city in the world, and with any other profession or class of men, anywhere, in city or country. They are the leaders in all reforms, moral, social and religious. They are foremost in all plans and efforts undertaken in behalf of society, in all its multiform interests, and of the Church of God, in all that pertains to moral and religious duty and achievements. They give, in proportion to their incomes, more liberally to advance the welfare of mankind at large, temporal and spiritual, and devote more time, thought and labor to the high and holy ends of their calling, than any other class in the community. With rare exceptions, they discharge their responsible and onerous duties with fidelity towards God, and an earnest desire to promote man's highest welfare, without regard to condition or selfish interest.

In confirmation of this general statement, we point with pride and confidence to the *actual achievements* of the pulpit and the pew, and to the forces and influences of organized Christianity, as they are represented to-day in a thousand existing memorials and monuments in the midst of us, which are more precious than gold or fame, and more enduring than marble.

As the result of Christian Work, we have in New York City more than 300 organized societies for charitable and religious purposes, whose entire strength and resources are devoted to the improvement of all classes—the poor, the friendless, the unfortunate especially—in their physical, social, moral and religious condition. (This does not include the churches.) The *charitable* institutions receive and disburse annually \$4,000,000, and the *religious*, \$6,000,000 or more. There lies before me the "57th Annual Report of the New York City Mission and Tract Society" (50 Bible House), whose 132 ample pages are crowded with the names, the operations and results of all these Societies. No one can master these pages, into which are compressed a world of facts

and statistics, carefully gathered and lucidly arranged by its indefatigable Secretary, L. E. JACKSON, and refrain from an expression of gratitude to God for such abounding charities—charities adapted to every human want, and sufficient, one might suppose, to meet the pressing exigencies of poverty and suffering in every form. We commend this Report to Mr. Swinton's perusal.

In examining this list of societies and institutions to relieve and elevate mankind, one is impressed with its *variety and comprehensiveness*. No class is overlooked. There is no ill to which flesh is heir, for which provision is not made. Ingenuity and tact are exhausted to contrive methods and adapt them to every class and condition and circumstance in life. Here is a grand practical commentary on the Christian precept: "Bear ye one another's burdens." If any of all the needy, the unfortunate, the fallen and suffering, are passed by or left out in the cold, it is their own fault: the *provision is made, and it is ample, and the agencies to administer relief are at the door*. The New York City Mission and Tract Society, the Howard Mission, the House of Industry, and scores of other city missionary and benevolent societies, are constantly searching out the want and suffering of the city, through their army of missionaries and visitors, who also render aid to the extent of their ability. The former society alone has given in the aggregate 1,393 years of missionary labor, made 2,660,453 calls, and expended \$1,377,396, since it began its operations. There are, besides, in the city, 489 churches, chapels and missions, accommodating 375,000 persons, and costing annually \$3,000,000 to sustain; and more than one-third of them are *free churches*. There are 115,826 children gathered in Sabbath-schools, and over 300,000 in the public and private schools of the city. Many of the churches, and different societies, have established industrial schools, in which 10,000 poor girls are taught to sew. There are twenty-seven hospitals, thirty-nine dispensaries, thirteen or-

phan asylums, scores of missions, prison associations, juvenile asylums, a Children's Aid Society,* Young Men's Christian Associations, and a multitude of other institutions of similar kinds, which I have not space even to name.

Now it goes without the saying, that the leading, dominant force and influence in all these organized religious, charitable and reformatory agencies, are the *Christian Ministry* and the *Christian Church*, as taught and administered by divinely appointed authority and instrumentality. Without these moral forces, and religious agencies, they had never come into being. Without their continued advocacy, and active co-operation, and official and personal support, they would speedily decline, and ultimately die out. This is the voice of all history.

Had we space we could make these pages radiant with the recital of pertinent facts which crowd upon our memory. In the very "famine" to which Mr. Swinton refers, churches without number, and private Christians and associations established "soup-houses" all over the city. In response to the cry of "famine," from Ireland, and Persia, and China, and Turkey, and other starving communities, our ministers and churches nobly responded, and ship-loads of bread-stuffs were sent them, and our American missionaries organized relief at various points. In our great Civil War, the pulpit, North and South, sounded the bugle-note and pleaded the cause of patriotism; and forth from Christian altars went the very flower of the Church, to fight and to die for their country. Ministers without number crowded to the front and did their full share of service and bore their full share of responsibility and suffering, in the shock of battle. And the annals of the Sanitary Commission, at the head of which was Rev. Dr. Bel-

* This Society is engaged in rescuing street children and providing homes for them in the West, and in thirty years has gathered in and provided for 67,287 children, and expended \$3,426,038. It has also thirteen industrial schools, with 14,000 scholars on roll, and expends annually for these schools \$86,489.

lows of New York City, who gave his heart and soul and masterful gifts to it, are resplendent with the names and deeds of many of God's servants, heroic men and women, who wrought in that noble field of Christian ministries. "St. Luke's Hospital" is a glorious monument of the faith and love of the saintly Muhlenburg. But for the Christian bankers, James Brown, of New York, and his brother John, of Philadelphia, and a few kindred souls, the great Presbyterian Hospitals (open to all classes, Protestant and Catholic alike) which now adorn both these cities, had never been founded. And who can call over the names of Peter Cooper, James and Robert Lenox, the Astors, the Sturats (R. and L.), Wm. E. Dodge, Prosper M. Wetmore, E. D. Morgan, Frederic Marquand, and Drs. Valentine Mott, Willard Parker, and Alfred C. Post (to name no others); and think of the numerous memorials of their beneficence and skill and work, which they left behind, in libraries, hospitals, unions, dispensaries, lectures, and associations, to instruct and benefit the future generations in this great city, and not feel that modern "Christianity and civilization" are more than a name? If these men, with thousands of others of kindred spirit in humbler spheres, co-operating in works of sweet charity and divine beneficence have "not lived up to the Gospel of the Galilean," the teaching and example of that Heavensent Deliverer of our fallen race have at least taken root among us and yielded some glorious fruit!

The truth is, the *real workers*—not the talkers, the agitators, the critics and croakers—but the actual, active, patient workers in all the fields and departments of charity and religious life in this great and wicked city (as well as everywhere else), are *Christian men and women*, inspired by the love and grace of God, and walking humbly, joyfully in the footsteps of Him "who went about doing good." This army of good Samaritans are busy, day and night, in summer and winter, in public and in private, in all our jails and prisons and

almshouses and hospitals, in all our alleys and tenement-house districts, "reeking with filth," not only gauging the poverty and wretchedness and crime and suffering of the masses, but by a thousand systematic methods, and by ten thousand pitying hearts and liberal hands are administering relief.

If disposed to "carry the war into Africa," we might, with propriety, ask for a *showing on the part of those who are outside the circle of Christian teaching and church life*. What have they done—what are they doing to-day—for the "masses," whose cause Mr. Swinton so earnestly champions? Where and what are the institutions, the societies, the agencies, planted and organized by them and in active service, to relieve want, to minister in sickness and misfortune, to care for the orphan, reform the vicious, elevate the degraded, and administer the teachings and consolations of "the Gospel of the Galilean" to the dying? If his statement be true, that not "one-tenth of the wage-earning class in New York believe in Christianity at all;" that "most of our young men take no interest in the Church because it displays no life;" that "Christianity and civilization here are appalling failures"—then the condition and the future of the class he seeks to help, it must be admitted, are truly dismal, if not hopeless. If they have cut loose from Christianity, both as a system of divine teaching and restraint, and as an organized life in the world, God pity them! For, if the poor man has one true friend on earth, it is the God-fearing man! If there be one institution in human society that has his true welfare at heart and is adapted to elevate and improve his condition, now and hereafter, it is the Church, which Christ planted and makes vital with regenerating power in men's hearts and lives. If there be no virtue left in the Bible, in the Christian ministry, in the Christian's Sabbath, to shield and plead for, and lift up and bless the poor man, then there is absolutely no hope for him, and it is utterly vain for him to struggle against relentless fate! *He is not the poor man's friend, whoever*

he be, or whatsoever he profess, who would prejudice him against and turn him away from the only faith, the only institution, the only instrumentalities and influences that Heaven, in mercy and love, has devised and established on earth for man's well being.

"Freedom and equal rights," has been the battle-cry of Christianity ever since its Divine Founder declared, "I came not to send peace on the earth, but a sword." The history of mental illumination, social elevation, and civil and religious liberty and progress in the world, is but the history of applied Christianity, as taught and exemplified by its divinely appointed expounders, and true and faithful friends. The chief agents of the Reformation under Luther, which disenthralled the world and ushered in the era of free thought, and a free Bible, and a free conscience, were clergymen. The "Covenanters," who filled the Scottish pulpits in the days of King Charles, held in check the tide of moral corruption and religious apostasy which threatened to engulf both Church and State. Macaulay declares that the British Constitution owes all there is of liberty in it to the Puritans of England. Witherspoon, and other eminent divines, were leading forces in bringing about the war of American independence. The sentiment which overthrew American slavery was but the echo of English sentiment under the leadership of such Christian men as Wilberforce and Clarkson. Before the voice of Garrison was lifted up, I heard England's clerical delegate, George Thomson, in the presence of thousands here in New York, denounce the system of American slavery in scathing terms. And one after another, such leading ministers as Joshua Leavitt, Beriah Green, Albert Barnes and Dr. Eliphalet Nott, and a host of others, with Garrison, united Birney, and Johnson, to cry and write it down. It was such stalwart ministers as Lyman Beecher, John Marsh, and Drs. Humphrey, Hitchcock, Nott and James, that first declared war against the bottle, and wrought so gloriously in the cause

of Temperance, Prison Reform, and all the other great reforms which mark the progress of modern society, find their most earnest and effective advocates in the men who man our Christian pulpits. It was Rev. Dr. Wines of this city, who for years led the van in the Christian effort to reform and elevate Prison Life; and he was the recognized leader and master spirit in the World's Congress, which met a few years since to advance this philanthropic cause. The leading men of to-day, who are most active in fighting obscene and flashy literature, and who are striving to furnish cheap and clean reading for the masses, to put down gambling and enforce our excise laws, and suppress brothels, and promote humane treatment of children and dumb animals, and to secure good laws against divorce, the Mormon iniquity, and other crying evils, and in favor of universal free education, are the teachers of the religion of Jesus Christ. Says the late Bishop Simpson: "Nine-tenths of all educational endowments are the gift of Christian men and women."

And last, though not least, in the darkest hour of our national history, when men's hearts failed them through fear; when our country was rent in twain, and rivers of blood flowed on a hundred battlefields; and when the nations of the earth looked on with indifference or hostility, no class among us stood firmer than the clergy. From thousands of pulpits all over the land—notably in such leading pulpits as those of Drs. Storrs, Cuyler, Talmage, and J. P. Thompson—fervent prayers ascended to the God of battles, and strong words went forth on every breeze to cheer and strengthen our gallant soldiers. The late Bishop Simpson's influence was all-potent, whether put forth in powerful addresses, which, at the request of President Lincoln, he delivered to immense audiences all over the middle and western states, or in personal counsel to those in authority, or in that immortal eulogy pronounced beside the casket of the martyred Lincoln. No stronger arm was ever lifted

than that American clergyman's which struck out between the eyes of the British lion, and struck down the defiant spirit of English mobocracy in the cities of Manchester and Liverpool. No louder voice thrilled the land than that which electrified the crowds which gathered in Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, Sabbath after Sabbath. The most logical, comprehensive and masterly defence of the righteousness of our cause which that terrific strife called forth—one which will fill a conspicuous place in the pages of history, and

the echo of which was heard at the time on the other side of the great sea, and rallied to our defence and advocacy such men as John Bright and John Stuart Mill—was written and published by one of New York's clergymen, Prof. Henry B. Smith.

In view of this mass of facts, which we have scarcely begun to draw upon, we leave the readers of THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY to infer whether Mr. Swinton has sufficient grounds upon which to base such severe and sweeping criticisms as he has given to the public.

PREACHERS EXCHANGING VIEWS.

"He is a strong man who can hold down his opinion."—EMERSON.

"He who is master of all opinions can never be the bigot of any."—W. R. ALGER.

Rowland Hill's Drama of the Judgment.

Be so kind as to insert in your MONTHLY this celebrated drama. Many of your readers have seen it, if at all, only in a newspaper, and would like to have it in permanent form. It was written by this noted preacher, and posted up as a play-bill at Richmond, England, June 4, 1774, close to the play-bills of the day, and helped to close the theatre.

CLERGYMAN.

DRAMA AT

THE THEATRE OF THE UNIVERSE!

OR

THE EVE OF TIME

Will be performed

THE GREAT ASSIZE:

OR,

DAY OF JUDGMENT!

The scenery, which is now *actually preparing*, will not only surpass everything that has yet been seen, but will infinitely exceed the utmost stretch of human conception. There will be a just representation of all the Inhabitants of the World, in their various and proper colors; and their customs and manners will be so exactly and so minutely delineated that the most secret thought will be discovered. "For God will bring every work to judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil."—Ecc. xii: 14.

This Theatre will be laid after a new plan, and will consist of Pit and Gallery only; and, contrary to all others, the Gallery is fitted up for the reception of people of high (or heavenly) birth; and the Pit for those of low (or earthly) rank.

N. B.—The Gallery is very spacious, and the Pit without bottom.

To prevent inconvenience, there are separate doors for admitting the company, and they are so different that none can miss them who are not totally blind. The door which opens into the Gallery is very narrow and the steps up to it are somewhat difficult, for which reason there are seldom many people about it. But the door that gives entrance to the Pit is *very wide* and *very commodious*, which causes such numbers to flock to it that it is generally crowded.

PRINCIPAL PERFORMERS:

Judge	.....	The Son of God.
Jurymen	.....	The Saints of the Most High.
Prisoners	.....	{ Drunkards, Swearers, Sabbath-breakers, Lovers of Sinful Pleasures, Fornicators, the Fearful and Unbelieving, and Whosoever loveth and maketh a Lie.
Witnesses	.....	{ Angels, Ministers, Conscience, and THE WORD OF GOD.
Gaoler	.....	Abaddon
Ministers of Vengeance	.....	{ Angels of the Bottomless Pit.

Act First of this Grand and Eternal Performance will be opened by

AN ARCHANGEL with the TRUMP OF GOD.

Act Second will be

A Procession of Saints in White, with Golden Harps,

Accompanied with Shouts of Glory and Songs of Praise.

Act Third will be

An Assembly of all the Unregenerate.

The Music will consist chiefly of CRIES, accompanied with WEEPING, WAILING, MOURNING, LAMENTATIONS AND WOE.

To conclude with an Oration by

THE SON OF GOD.

It is written in the 25th of Matthew, from the 34th verse to the end of the chapter; but for the sake of those who seldom read the Scriptures, I shall here transcribe two verses:

<p>Then shall the King say to them on his right hand: Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.</p>	<p>Then shall he say unto them upon his left hand: Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.</p>
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After which the curtain will drop.

Then, O to tell!

Some rais'd on high, and others doom'd to hell!
These praise the Lamb and sing Redeeming Love,
Lodg'd in His bosom, all His goodness prove;
While those, who trampled under foot His grace,
Are banished now forever from His face,
Divided thus, a gulf is fix'd between,
And closes to Eternity the scene.

Tickets for the Pit at the easy purchase of following the vain pomps and vanities of the fashionable world and the desire and amusements of the flesh; to be had at every flesh-pleasing assembly.

"If ye live after the flesh ye shall die."—Rom. viii: 13.

Tickets for the Gallery at no less rate than being converted and forsaking all, denying self, taking up the Cross and following Christ in the Regeneration; to be had nowhere but in the Word of God and where that Word appoints.

N. B.—No money will be taken at the door; nor will any ticket gain admittance into the Gallery but those sealed by the Holy Ghost with Immanuel's signet.

"Thus will I do unto thee, O Israel, and because I will do so unto thee,

PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD, O ISRAEL!"

Catholic versus Protestant Work.

General Woodford, in his excellent paper on "Lay Criticism" (HOMILETIC MONTHLY, Feb., p. 292), says:

"Protestantism reaches the middling classes and the well-to-do very effectively. It is not doing its original work among the poor of our cities."

The author mistakes in comparing Catholic and Protestant work. Protestantism reaches all classes; but when the lowest classes come under its influences, it elevates them, and they are no longer degraded. Let any per cent. of the lowest Catholic portions of residents of New York be brought under the influence of the Protestant relig-

ion, and the work of reformation begins. Not so the Catholic portion. The distinction is seen in native Irishmen. The Catholic of similar poverty is degraded; the Orangeman, or Protestant, respectable. If Protestantism fails to exalt the vicious classes of the Protestant population, it is because it fails to reach them. Catholicism fails equally to exalt its own vicious classes, though it reach them. Statistics show that where Protestantism reaches the substratum of society, the consequences are revivals, conversions, forsaking of sin, drinking, gaming, profanity, and brutal fights; while Catholicism is not ordinarily attended with any such marked improvement. That the Catholic mendicant crowds to the cathedral with the millionaire, is not wonderful, when it is remembered that he is taught to kneel in his rags on the pavement, or on the open church floor outside of the pews—by which, indeed, his poverty is made conspicuous, and the contrast marked. But were the same poor people to attend stately the rich Protestant church, they would be clothed and provided for, and cease to attract attention as paupers or a degraded class. I insist upon it that all these comparisons, so invidious to Protestant work, are incon siderate, and overlook the elevating influence of the Bible, the great factor in Protestant evangelization—the Bible, which transforms the vicious classes, and presents them as prodigals no more, but accepted and beloved, clad in the best robes, and not bowing as servants, but feasting as sons.

N. SUMMERBELL, D.D.

How to Invigorate the Ministry.

I liked Dr. Gregory's article on this important theme in your July issue; only I think he does not go far enough in the way of suggesting the remedy. It is not enough to choose the right men and train them wisely and thoroughly for their work so long as the Church herself is dead, or governed by a worldly spirit and policy. As a rule, the ministry will not rise above the

general life of the brotherhood. A formal, lifeless, worldly-minded *Church*, a formal, lifeless, worldly-minded *ministry*. Invigorate the pew, and you will invigorate the pulpit. Infuse the Spirit of Christ into the membership, and you elevate and consecrate and make powerful those who minister to them in holy things. What earnest, devoted pastor has not felt the chill and blight arising from a low state of spiritual sentiment and feeling among his peo-

ple? What faithful, plain preacher of God's Word has not been cautioned against offending Mr. A or Mr. B? How few congregations, in this fastidious and cultured age, would bear the scriptural, searching, faithful, tremendous preaching of Edwards, Finney, and Lyman Beecher? Let us have a live, holy, devoted Church, and we shall have a ministry of life and power?

F. L. H.

Sparta, Wis.

SERMONIC CRITICISM.

"He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him."—PROVERBS.

SERMONIC THEMES.—There has been a growing tendency, of late years, on the part of a certain class of preachers, to frame sensational themes for their sermons. And this has been accomplished in too many instances at the sacrifice of the whole drift of the real meaning of the chosen texts.

The theme has had no legitimate connection with the text, and therefore it would have been just as appropriate to have selected a passage from Shakespeare's writings as the one taken from Scripture. This fault may be owing, in part at least, to a desire to produce sensational themes. And it may not be unjust to say the object of using such themes is not attributable to a desire to effect the spiritual good of the hearers so much as it is to draw full houses. While we are not to entertain a harsh judgment against the motives of our ministerial brethren in reference to this matter, yet it cannot be denied that there is a proneness, on the part of not a few, to yield to the temptation to attempt to court popular favor. It is the highest ambition of some to be called popular preachers. There can be no serious objection to this, if one's popularity rests on the fact that his preaching and personal efforts bear a direct relation to the highest spiritual good, and, consequently, the personal conduct of his hearers. But this can never be secured so long as it is apparent that the preacher's aim is to simply entertain his auditors with

brilliant rhetoric and flashy sentiment. We do not inveigh against that sort of sensationalism which rouses men to a pungent sense of their need of knowing the worst of themselves and the best of God. In this respect Christ and Paul were sensational preachers. They labored to lift men out of the dead calm in which they sat and slumbered. They thrilled their audiences with thoughts which were intended to thoroughly revolutionize their modes of thinking and living. But they resorted to no clap-trap methods of accomplishing this. Their themes were legitimate deductions of divine truth. And so should ours be. If we pursue the topical method, our texts and topics ought to be, like the Siamese twins, so vitally united, that one must go with the other.

Then, too, when the theme is a legitimate outgrowth of the text, it is not advisable to make a business of clothing it with stilted phraseology. Pompous titles are incongruous with the sacredness of the day, the place, and the object of preaching. High-sounding themes do not satisfy the demands of a sensible audience, unless the sermons adequately sustain the promises which the themes tacitly hold out. There must be pulpit common-sense to meet the demands of the pew common-sense.

C. H. WETHERBE.

THE CORE OF A SERMON.—A pulpit discourse ought to have a central thought, around which all else in it revolves.

Therefore the core of the sermon is the first thing. This commonly "comes to" the preacher first. A text strikes his mind by force of an idea he has never before seen in it. His mind works the idea over until a theme evolves itself. Up to this time, the best preachers seldom put pen to paper. When the theme gets into clear light before the mind, it is often well to go back and see whether the text is the best text for that theme. No matter how the sermon is to be preached, whether with heads having horns, or without them, it should be worked out from the theme. The rule about a weak sermon is that it has no core; it is all rind and bark. There are also good sermons which are coreless, but not many. The preacher who has gotten hold of a fresh theme will get a good sermon out of it, if he keeps at it, putting his mind against it, and keeping up the contact until he has the main features of it. It is doubtful—experience differs—whether it is best to write at all until the outlines of the theme are tolerably full. We believe it is generally true of strong, robust, effective preachers, that they whack away at the theme without pen-work until they *could* write the sermon at a sitting. A solid core for the discourse may come to one suddenly; usually, however, it is built by mental work. The rhetorical rule requiring unity in a discourse is not met merely by taking a text; and it is a sound rule resting on the nature of the human mind. "What was the sermon about?" is the most natural and proper of questions. Let the young preacher get into a habit of asking himself, "What is this sermon about?" That will help him to grow sermons with solid cores.

THE RHAPSODIC PREACHER.—We pity him, for, as a rule, he has next to nothing to say, and tries to make the most of what he has. We pity his congregation as we would a hungry man who had to make a meal on syllabub and whipped cream. For a thoroughly profitless pastor give us the one who is ever in a rhapsody; who insists upon

making a tabernacle and abiding on the Mount of Transfiguration; who is so rapt with the visions he has seen, that he cannot bear the thought of the valley below, with its sinful throng, the grieving father, and the child vexed by an unclean spirit. What right has a preacher to be ever losing sight of earth and its needs, to contemplate the glories that await him above? He was planted on the earth to do a man's work; the seraphic state is to come after. It is the law of nature that every time an emotion is stimulated without resulting in action, it becomes weakened. A high spiritual plane is never to be reached by the stairway of mere rhapsody. Hear what Emerson says:

"Often it falls that this winged man who will carry me into heaven, whirls me into the clouds; then leaps and frisks about with me from cloud to cloud, still affirming that he is bound heavenward; and I, being myself a novice, am slow to perceive that he does not know the way into the heavens, and is merely bent that I should admire his skill to rise, like a fowl or a flying-fish, a little way from the ground or the water."

CRITICISM OF A SERMON.—"C. C. T." sends us a sketch of a sermon based on Joshua xxiii: 11: "Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the Lord your God." The introduction is upon the needful warning, "take heed." The divisions are: I. The Reasonableness of Supreme Love to God; II. The Characterizations of that Love; III. The Means of its Attainment. Under each of these heads are several sub-divisions. The plan of the sermon is a good one, but a much better text for it would have been Matt. xxii: 37: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," etc. But the subject is altogether too large for a single sermon. Each general division has abundant matter for one or more discourses; and to attempt to cover so much ground in a single discourse makes the treatment necessarily imperfect and superficial. A better treatment of Joshua xxiii: 11 would be: An introduction referring to the circumstances and general purpose of this address of Joshua: theme, *The love of God that in-*

spires obedience to Him is the only security for true prosperity. If C. C. T. will look at the context he will see our point.

THINGS A PREACHER SHOULD REMEMBER.

*** That the average understanding of his hearers is not high, and to aim accordingly.

*** That a marked feature of Christ's teachings was, that He made Himself understood by the "common people," who "heard Him gladly" for this very reason.

*** That the Gospel is not a message to a class, but to universal humanity; to all classes and conditions alike, who equally need its illuminating and regenerating power.

*** That the Great Teacher drew his illus-

trations from common and familiar things in nature or in the life around Him.

*** That He was careful to discriminate in the matter of character, never losing sight of the broad and eternal distinction between right and wrong, the righteous and the wicked, heaven and hell in the future world.

*** That His preaching was not so much to the ear and the understanding, as to the heart and the conscience of His hearers.

*** That the drift and tendency of all His words on all occasions, were to set men to thinking, to make them serious, to impress them with the sense of their individual responsibility to God.

*** That the future life, as a motive to right living here, was kept by Him constantly and prominently in view.

HINTS AT THE MEANING OF TEXTS.

Search for the truth is the noblest occupation of man; its publication a duty.—MADAME DE STAEL.

Christian Culture.

UNSANCTIFIED EDUCATION.

Ever learning, and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth.—2 Tim. iii: 7.

THERE is a right and wrong to everything, and a right and wrong way of looking at everything. As a rule, whatever is most valuable in its use is most harmful in its abuse. The keener the surgeon's knife, the more serviceable it is in skilled hands, but the more dangerous in hands unskilled. Education—learning—is of the utmost value, rightly acquired and rightly used. Misapplied—viewed as an end, not a means—it is a cogent factor of evil.

1. It is unsatisfactory and embittering. As a man who ascend the mountain-side far enough to enter the blinding mists, but not far enough to overlook them, so is the man of godless learning. With the poet he may well cry:

"Give me the early wisdom of the dunce,
Whose simple instincts guessed the heavens
at once."

2. It destroys the humility and child-like simplicity so essential to a knowledge of real truth. "Except ye become as little children," etc. Infidel philosophers and scientists are, generally, proud, arrogant, self-sufficient.

3. It is inefficient to cleanse from sin. All men need this cleansing. Their hearts cry out like the leper, "Unclean!" But science, philosophy, all the learn-

ing of all the schools cannot, without Christ's atonement, regenerate sinful man.

Give us then, education; but let it be full, complete, as far as it goes—moral building up as well as intellectual. Cried Grotius, the eminent historian, on his death-bed: "Ah! I have consumed all my life in a laborious doing of nothing. I would give all my learning and honor for the plain integrity of John Urlick"—a poor man of remarkable piety.

Funeral Service.

THE ONLY TRUE JUDGE.

*** *He that judgeth me is the Lord.*
1 Cor. iv: 4.

I. *Christ, and not man, the judge of human conduct.*

1. Human judges are imperfect in knowledge.

2. They are imperfect in wisdom.

3. They are often unrighteous in their purpose.

4. Their ability to punish or to reward is limited.

II. *Christ's qualifications as a judge.*

1. He is over us all as a master over servants.

2. He is the Lord of the vineyard in which we labor.

3. He is the head of the family to which all Christians belong.

4. He has perfect knowledge of the law by which we are to be judged.

5. He knows all about every one of us.

6. He has absolute power to enforce His decisions.

STRONGER THAN DEATH.

*Neither death nor life * * * shall be able to separate us from the love of God, etc.—*

Rom. viii: 38, 39.

The strength of this promise amazes us, until we remember that it is God's love, not *ours*, that is stronger than death. Even then we might stagger at the promise, if we did not also remember that the power of this love is proved by Christ's life and death for us: "If He spared not his own Son," what will He keep back from those whom He loves? Love like that can have no end. Nothing, *nothing*, **NOTHING** can pluck His beloved out of His hand. His love shall conquer death for us, because it is stronger than death. The promise is easy for faith so soon as we cease to measure love against death, and begin to look only upon the omnipotence of the love of God in Christ.

Communion Service.

AN IMPERFECT OFFERING.

Mal. i: 13. God denounced His ancient people for sacrificing "that which was torn, and the lame and the sick," "Should I accept this of your hand? saith the Lord." If He would not accept an imperfect offering for the Jewish altar, surely He will not for the Christian. A merely outward or formal worship, however proper the form

or imposing the ceremonial, He will turn away from in righteous anger. An offering that springs not from sincere affection, and carries not with it the true and real homage of the soul, He will surely reject. If we enter His sanctuary with uncleansed hearts, with souls soiled with worldly contaminations, with the garments of our holy profession torn and defiled, He will not reveal Himself to us in peace. If we come to the table of the Lord, not spiritually discerning the great Sacrifice, with unholy tempers and unbelieving hearts, burdened with unforgiven sins, and far away from the spirit and life of the Cross, God, from His throne of justice and immaculate purity, will cry out: "Should I accept this of your hand?"

Revival Service.

JUDGMENT TEMPERED WITH MERCY.

And there was a rainbow round about the throne.—Rev. iv: 3.

The inspired seer discloses to us a scene in heaven. The throne is the symbol of government, power and judgment. He that is seated on that throne is the Ruler, the King, the Judge of the universe. The laws of God are inexorable. Man would succumb to the demands of the law; he would be crushed by the judgments of its violation. Inevitable condemnation would be his certain fate. But, behold! there is a rainbow shines resplendent round about the throne. God's omnipotence and justice are bounded by mercy above, below, and on every side.

LIVING ISSUES FOR PULPIT TREATMENT.

"The musician who always plays on the same string is laughed at."—HORACE.

"That is never too often said which is never sufficiently learned."—SENECA.

The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

"We ought never to sport with pain and distress in any of our amusements, or treat even the meanest insect with wanton cruelty."—BLAIR.

With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful.—2 Sam. xxii: 26.

WE know no sublimer description of applied Christianity than the words of Job: "I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the

poor; and the cause which I knew not I searched out." The humane spirit of Christianity extends to animals as well as to mankind. God's law protects the whole animate creation, and we are not to torture the meanest in wantonness, or destroy, except for food or the protection of life. Every lover of humanity must rejoice at the evidences of a growing regard in Christian

communities for the welfare of the brute creation and the enactment of laws to enforce the growing humane sentiment of the age.

"The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals" (Henry Bergh, President) is doing a needful work, the influence of which is felt all over the country. In 1883 it investigated 5,400 cases, prosecuted 768 cases, mercifully destroyed 1,816 animals, and took 1,426 from work. The society's receipts were \$21,644.85. In the United States, Canada, and Nova Scotia there are now 91 societies and branches for the prevention of cruelty to animals, all organized since 1865. The societies issue seven monthly publications. The march of Mercy is onward. Acts of kindness uplift humanity. "Blessed are the merciful."

Similar efforts are making abroad.

The *London World* says of the recent debate in the House of Lords on the bill to prohibit pigeon-shooting matches: "It was abundantly proved in the course of the debate that pigeon-shooting entails the systematic practice of the most execrable cruelties. The physical injuries done to the birds in order that they may baffle the marksmen, or that they may be more difficult to hit, are of the most hideous description. It would be interesting to know whether these details are adequately comprehended by the polite society which they may be held most immediately to concern." The *World* goes on to excuse the seeming inhumanity of this polite society by saying: "But we live in a time when the pace is too good to permit us to stop for any of the conventional platitudes of humanity. . . . It is not that human nature is worse or more callous now than it was formerly. It is simply that we live too quickly and have less time to think."

A singular defence surely! It was not for want of time; for, in the case under notice, a long debate occurred twice, at intervals of several months; the subject was further discussed at length in the daily press and the monthly magazines, and it was certainly not decided as it was for want of time. On the contrary, the champions of the sport in the House of Lords deliberately ignored all the revolting cruelties which are connected with it, and plainly put themselves in the position of being determined to retain the

amusement, utterly regardless of its inhumanity.

If what the *World* says about the upper class of English society is true, there is great need of social reform over there. Agnosticism would appear to have done its work in eliminating the best of the Christian virtues, while the modern spirit has, with all its enterprise, not produced among the upper classes a gentler or loftier mode of life than old Rome in her tottering decrepitude could furnish.

The following facts from *The London Times* we submit to the vivisectionists of this country.

"A return just published, showing the number of experiments performed upon living animals during the year 1883 under the vivisection act, is a remarkable document. It appears that in England and Scotland, of the 44 persons licensed for the purpose, 32 had tried experiments, and 4 in Ireland. Total number of experiments, 569. Of these, 290 were carried out under the restrictions of the license alone, 55 under special certificates dispensing with the use of anesthetics, and 122 under certificates dispensing with the obligation to kill the animal before recovering from anesthesia. Under certificates permitting experiments on cats, dogs, horses, mules, and asses there were 102 operations, but it appears that only four or five were upon cats or dogs, and none at all upon the other animals named. As regards the 290 cases first mentioned, together with a number carried out under certificates proscribing anesthetics, the animals were rendered insensible during the whole of the operations, and were not allowed to regain sensibility. Their sufferings are accordingly quite inappreciable by the most acute sympathizer. The 55 experiments without anesthetics consisted in simple inoculation or hypodermic injection with morbid matter, whose operation it was desired to discover, and the pain inflicted was, at the most, that of ordinary vaccination and its results. Of the 122 experiments in which the animals were allowed to regain sensibility, 114 also consisted principally in inoculation, and were, for the most part, connected with an important inquiry into the nature of tubercular affections. No pain was inflicted save in some 14 or 15 instances, and even in these it was trifling. In the remaining eight cases anesthetics were used, and though the surgical operations amounted to more than a mere puncture, the pain would be only that usually attending the healing of a surgical wound. The experiments upon cats and dogs are classified under the heads already mentioned. The conclusion of the Inspector's report is that "the amount of direct or indirect

suffering from the performance of physiological experiments during the past year was wholly insignificant, and limited to about 14 or 15 animals."

This should satisfy the extremest humanitarian. Men of science are now restricted to very narrow limits in the way of experiments on dumb animals. Sport, fashion, caprice and ignorance, are every day inflicting a larger amount of animal suffering than science, under present restrictions, inflicts for a whole year.

Temperance the next great step in Social Reform.

I will chastise you with scorpions.—

Kings xii: 14.

The *Nation*, of New York city, recently called attention to the rapid growth, not only in this country, but all over the world, of the conviction that the next great step looking to the elevation of the race must be the destruction, or at least the great diminution, of the manufacture and use of intoxicating liquors. The *Nation* has no sympathy with what it calls "fanatical temperance advocates or prohibitionists," and hence its testimony is the more noteworthy. It means that the increased attention which is being given to the problems of crime and poverty and labor, which find expression in attempts to improve the sanitary condition and dwellings of the poor; to make their lives less dreary and wretched, and the future of their children more hopeful; to protect women and children from brutality and fraud; to make prison discipline more wholesome and reformatory, brings the thoughtful, the virtuous, the conscientious and influential members of every community face to face with the undeniable fact that *Rum*, in one form or another, is the main evil and obstacle, and that this evil is of such a nature and potency that nothing short of its actual uprooting can effect deliverance.

So great is the disorder and misery resulting from the recent rapid increase in the consumption of spirits in Switzerland, that there is a loud call for governmental action to suppress it.

In Belgium and Norway, the same question is coming up for the same cause. In Great Britain, things are rapidly tending in the same direction. And here in the United States, this is now the uppermost question, the vital leading issue, everywhere. It is agitated in every centre of thought. It enters into our politics as one of its most potent factors. It is discussed in the pulpit; by the bar and the bench; by the press, and in every social circle, not only by temperance reformers and pronounced prohibitionists, but by the lovers of social order and virtue, by the friends of the poor, and by the political economist and patriot as well. However divided on minor issues, the moral sentiment, the intelligent conviction, of the community is, that the traffic in and consumption of intoxicating drinks is an unmitigated and tremendous evil and curse, which ought not to be longer endured; and that however proper and desirable it may be, as a temporary expedient, to seek to enforce rigidly our Excise laws, so long as they remain on our statute books, yet the ultimate end at which all the friends of temperance and godliness and of the improvement of the poor should aim, is and must be, *the entire suppression by law of the manufacture and sale for drinking usages of that which intoxicates and brutalizes man.* This is the issue, and nothing less than this. And the fight thickens every day. The field of conflict extends year by year. Constantly does the fact loom up in darker hues and more fearful proportions, that *Rum* is man's deadliest foe, and the demon's reign must and shall come to an end! And stronger grow the hands, and more hopeful the hearts, and more in earnest the prayers of the great army arrayed against this foe of God and man, and marching on to its destruction. Yes, the accursed traffic in *Rum* must go. It is doomed. Humanity and religion alike demand it. The practical student of society sees it to be inevitable. God hasten it!

"Cruelty is condemned by every law."—*Calderon.*

AROUND THE EDITOR'S TABLE.

Mental Kinks.

In an article in the July number, our pen, through that strange depravity which seems so provokingly common and knowing in inanimate objects, got the ancient cities of Athens and Rome queerly mixed. No doubt we have readers who were so charitably disposed as to believe that we were slyly attempting to illustrate certain of the principles of "higher criticism" as applied to the interpretation of history. If this were true, it was a case of what Prof. Carpenter, the eminent physiologist, calls "unconscious cerebration."

We make mention of this unimportant matter because it suggests a curious mental phenomenon. Who has not been annoyed and perplexed at times by the disposition of his tongue to mispronounce some most familiar word, or of his pen to misspell it? The strangest part of this freak of the mind is that when once the *lapsus stili* or *lapsus linguae* has been made, the mind seems to develop, like the moth for the candle, a fatal fascination for it. Many of our readers will recall a case in point. Some years ago, a prominent orator was speaking of Washington in sentences that glowed with Fourth of July fervor. When, upon reaching the climax of his glowing eulogy, he wished to mention the name Washington, his tongue played him a trick and uttered the name Clay. The unfortunate speaker did not know until after he had finished his speech why the audience so inopportunately laughed. The singularity is in the sequel: for years afterward, whenever that orator had occasion in a public speech to utter Washington's name, that of Clay was sure to be ready at his tongue's end.

The present writer (and perhaps most of our readers will recall similar personal experiences) was the victim of a kindred experience. During the war, one Sabbath while preaching, he attempted to say Calvary; instead he uttered cavalry. He never had any trouble before with the word; but

never after, even to this day, in the pulpit, has he wholly escaped trouble when he had need of the word's service.

How Dr. Talmage Stopped Smoking.

—"No, sir, I do not smoke, nor use tobacco in any of its forms. I once was the slave of the cigar. It ended almost my work and my life. During the first few years I was in the ministry I felt that a cigar was a necessity to me. I could not study, read or write without one in my mouth. Never did a man give himself up more wholly to a debasing habit than did I."

"What was the effect upon your brain and nerves?"

"Most harmful in every way. I became a dyspeptic, a poor sleeper, and so nervous that the creak of the stair as I went up or down would cause me to start. It was killing me. I had smoked myself into eternity, long before this, had I kept on."

—"I stopped in this wise: When twenty-eight years of age I was called to a pulpit in a large city. I went to see and be seen. On Monday one of the prominent members of the church, who was engaged in the tobacco business, told me that if I would accept the charge he would supply me, free of cost, with all the cigars I wished to smoke. I thought this thing over, and, on the cars going home, I figured out the expense of the habit, and I thought over the harm it was doing me, and, through my example, the harm it was doing others; then I said, 'God helping me, I will never smoke another cigar,' and I haven't."

"Didn't the abrupt breaking off of the habit affect you seriously?"

"O yes; for some weeks I was in much distress, and went South to visit old friends. I wasn't able to preach; but by and by the effect wore off, and I became a new man. From that day to the present, a period of over twenty years, I have been kept out of my pulpit but twice on account of sickness."

QUERIES AND ANSWERS.*

"E. C."—Will you name some standard work on the Lord's prayer? A.: See *HOMILETIC MONTHLY* (July, p. 607) for an admirable one. Dr. W. R. Williams' "Lectures" are also very excellent.

"I. A. P." in April No., asked where President Edwards' great sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," could be had? I. M. C. answers: It is published as a Tract (No. 24), by the Presbyterian Board of Publication, Philadelphia.

"J. C. E."—(1) For what is "f" and "ff" an abbreviation? (2) How is the name of the commentator "Delitzsch" pronounced? A.: (1) "F" stands for "following" where but one page, verse, etc., is referred to; and "ff" where more than one is alluded to. (2) As if written "*Day-litch*."

"I. D. F."—Can you name any work which exposes spiritualism? A.: "The Confessions of a Medium," an English work, is very good, though there is nothing satisfactory on the subject. Spiritualism has shifted its ground of late, and the earlier exposures are hardly applicable now.

"W. F. R." in June No., asked for a standard work on the Ten Commandments. We named Dale, but doubted if it had been republished in this country. No less than three of our readers write that this standard English work is republished by the Congregational Sunday-school Society, Boston. Another correspondent names another excellent book on the same subject by the late Dr. William Plummer, published by the Presbyterian Board of Publication, Philadelphia.

"Y."—Would it be legitimate to preach a sermon from a text which expresses a falsehood? For example, "The King's business required haste." A.: Yes. But state the fact and use the text as a motto or a lesson. There are many untruths and false sentiments recorded in the Bible, as there are the sins of God's people. *They* are not inspired,

but God saw fit to have them go into the record for purposes of discipline and instruction.

"H. C. L." in May No., asks what is the best work on Meekness? Rev. L. Richter answers: There is no royal road to the attainment of meekness. Books cannot help us. There is but one way: "And he said unto them all, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." Luke ix: 23. See also Mat xi: 29. It is a fruit of the Spirit coupled with self-control. Gal. v: 23. It is not inconsistent with righteous indignation against injustice and every other form of sin.

"E. B. B."—(1) Do the teachings of the New Testament justify a church in holding fairs, festivals, entertainments, etc., for its support, a custom so prevalent in our day? (2) What course should a pastor take whose church derives much of its income in this way? A.: (1) We do not deem such things *sin per se*, and yet, as usually conducted, we believe their tendency is more than doubtful. (2) Calmly, yet firmly, set your face against them; at least, express your disapproval of them, and use your influence quietly to have them given up, or their most objectionable features reformed.

"A Subscriber."—Did the divine part of Christ suffer on the cross? A.: No. It were as impossible for the Deity to suffer and die in the person of the Son as in the person of the Father. Jesus was "very God and very man." As *God*, He was infinitely above weakness, change, temptation, suffering (in our sense); while as *Man* he came under the law of the creature and of death. The two natures were each perfect in itself; but there was no blending of the two. Two distinct natures in one person. Behold the mystery! We can adore, but we cannot explain. The close union of the divine with the human imparted dignity and emphasis and worth to the sacrifice, but in the nature of

*Books noticed or mentioned in *THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY* will be sent on receipt of the price.

things could not impart or transfer the qualities of the divine nature, or be subject to any of the conditions of the human part.

"P. C. A."—Many of my people have an unfortunate habit of rising and leaving the church during the service, especially during the sermon. It is very annoying. Can you suggest a remedy?—A.: One remedy, always a safe one to endeavor to apply, is to make your service more interesting. Artemus Ward used to print on his programmes, "Persons who think that they will enjoy themselves by leaving the hall early in the evening are re-

quested to do so with as little noise as possible." Of course, it is not always the fault of the preacher, if people enjoy themselves more outside than inside the church. The preacher should seek in every legitimate way to deepen the interest of the people who are already sufficiently interested to come inside the church. Another good plan would be to single out several of the more prominent offenders, and in private talk earnestly to them about the evil of this habit, and its annoyance to you and to others. Use tact; very little good is done by a "pulpit broadside" toward correcting an evil of this kind.

THEMES AND TEXTS OF RECENT LEADING SERMONS.

1. Garrison Duty. "As his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff; they shall part alike."—1 Sam. xxx: 24. T. De Witt Talmage, D.D., Brooklyn.
2. Reflective Criticism the Spirit of the Age. "And God gave Solomon . . . largeness of heart."—1 Kings iv: 29. President Noah Porter, D.D., at Dartmouth, N. H.
3. Esther's Exaltation: or, Who Knoweth? "Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther," etc.—Esther iv: 13, 14. Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, London, England.
4. God in Creation. "I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever," etc.—Ecd. iii: 14. President Carter, of Williams College, Williamstown, Mass.
5. The Story of a Poor Wise Man. "Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city," etc.—Ecd. ix: 15-16. G. C. Lorimer, D.D., Louisville, Ky.
6. Life the Test of Character. "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?"—Matt. vii: 16. Rev. J. C. Zimmerman, Brooklyn.
7. Fidelity in Small Things. "He that is faithful in that which is least," etc.—Luke xvi: 10. C. D. W. Bridgman, D.D., of New York, in Plymouth Church, Brooklyn.
8. Learning and Life. "To this end was I born," etc.—John xviii: 37. "As thou hast sent me into the world," etc.—John xvii: 18. Rev. Phillips Brooks, at Harvard College.
9. What Paul leaves Behind. "For I shrank not from declaring unto you the whole counsel of God. Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock. . . . I know that after my departing," etc.—Acts xx: 27-29. Joseph Parker, D.D., London.
10. Spiritual and Intellectual Light. "Having the understanding darkened," etc.—Eph. iv: 18. Bishop F. D. Huntington, D.D., at Ithaca, N. Y.
11. The Fourfold Coming of the Gospel. "For our Gospel came not unto you in word only," etc.—1 Thess. i: 5. T. D. Witherspoon, D.D., Louisville, Ky.
12. The Social Duties of Religion. "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly," etc.—1 Thess. v: 14. Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, Brooklyn.
13. Reform and Reformers. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation," etc.—1 Tim. i: 15. J. P. Newman, D.D., New York City.
14. Demas the Deserter. "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world,"—2 Tim. iv: 10. T. L. Cuyler, D.D., Brooklyn, N. Y.
15. The Supreme Test of Truth. "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious . . . though it be tried with fire," etc.—1 Peter i: 7. George H. Gould, D.D., Worcester, Mass.

SUGGESTIVE THEMES.

1. Guilt Causing Fearful Panic. ("The Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians . . . so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel,"—Ex. xiv: 24, 25.)
2. God's Bidding too much for Unbelief. ("Have not I sent thee? [Gideon] . . . Surely I will be with thee," etc.—Judges vi: 14-16.)
3. The Way of Wickedness is Madness. ("As David and his men went by the way, Shimei . . . cur-sed as he went, and threw stones at him, and cast dust,"—2 Sam. xvi: 13.)
4. The Divine Simplicity of the Gospel a Snare to Some. ("Naaman was wroth, and went away and said, Behold, I thought he will surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over me and cast dust, and recover the leper," etc.—2 Kings v: 11, 12.)
5. "God's Hidden Methods." ("Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him, etc."—Job xliii: 8, 9.)
6. The Arts of the Wicked. ("He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet he teacheth with his fingers," etc.—Prov. vi: 13, 14.)
7. Traffic in the Inner Kingdom. ("Buy the truth and sell it not; also wisdom and instruction and understanding,"—Prov. xxiii: 23.)
8. Opportunity to be Sought After. ("And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues," etc.—Matt. iv: 23.)
9. Insolvency Confessed. (" . . . Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all," etc.—Matt. xviii: 29.)
10. The Mercilessness of Sin. ("And he would not [forgive him on confession]; but went

- and cast him into prison till he should pay the debt."—Matt. xviii: 30.)
11. Guilt Accumulative. "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth," etc.—Matt. xxiii: 35.)
12. We the Heirs of the Past. ("For whatso-

ever things were written aforetime were written for our learning."—Rom. xv: 4.)

13. Sentiment a Potent Element in the World. ("Joseph . . . gave commandment concerning his bones."—Heb. xi: 22.)

GERMS OF ILLUSTRATION.

BY EDWARD JEWITT WHEELER, A. M.

The spiritual man sees spiritual things, and the natural man sees natural things, according to his own character.—SWEDENBORG.

"In remembrance of me," is Christ's touching appeal to all His disciples. Over the battle ground of Waterloo, it is said, there spring in summer myriads of little blue flowers, that render the once bloody plain a charm to the eye. The flowers are forget-me-nots.

Sectarian strife often results in obscuring the light of the Gospel. It has been demonstrated that there may be such a ratio in the size of the waves in two different rays of light, that one ray will exactly neutralize the other and darkness result. A similar result may take place with heat-waves or with sound-waves.

Sympathy with the masses in their strifes and struggles does not come from observation afar off. Christ "laid his hands" on the poor and needy—came into personal contact with them. From the top of the lofty towers of the East River bridge one can tell nothing of the size of the billows that roll beneath. The surface of the water appears nearly flat.

Confidence in Christ gives the believer confidence in himself. The Alpine guides unite themselves by a rope to those accompanying them, as much for the sake of the confidence thus inspired as for the assistance rendered. "Now," said Bennen, as he united himself to Prof. Tyndall for the descent of the Finsteraarhorn, "have no fear; no matter how you may throw yourself, I will hold you."

The salvation of souls is the one work of supreme importance. Professor John Stuart Blackie, the renowned scholar, gave up his chair in Edinburgh University not long ago, resolved thenceforth to devote himself to work in behalf of the order of Highland peasantry. In that work he is now engaged. He is credited with saying: "Let Greek die, let Hebrew die, let learning go to the dogs, if need be; but let human beings live, and let human brotherhood and charity live!"

Tidings of salvation are well illustrated in the following, told by Gibbon: In ancient Thule, or Scandinavia, the natives lost the light of the sun at the winter and summer solstice for a period of forty days. The long night was the season of distress and anxiety, until the messengers sent to the mountain tops descried the first rays of the returning sun, and proclaimed to the plain below the festival of his resurrection. (How beautiful upon the mountains are

the feet of him that bringeth good tidings.—Isa. lii: 7.)

Active Christianity is necessary, not only to the progress of the Christian life, but to its very existence. There is a class of parasites called saprophytes, which live on decaying plants. They attach themselves to the healthy plant, but as long as the vitality of the plant is well maintained the parasite gains but a slight hold and does little or no injury. But if, by accident or otherwise, the vitality be decreased below a certain limit, the saprophyte obtains control, and the plant is soon destroyed. There are parasites of doubt and passion in the Christian that can be rendered harmless only by active work for Christ's cause.

"Little deeds of kindness" are, after all, what make life lovely, and develop the flowers of affection and sympathy. It would be a dreary world with nothing but mountains in it, and a dreary life with nothing but heroic actions springing from it. Grant Allen, the English naturalist, says there is strong probability that all the variety of color to be found in our landscapes is due to the insects, such as bees, wasps and butterflies. By always choosing for their fertilizing visits such blossoms as displayed the brightest tints, they have developed a world of variegated vegetation from the mosses, lichens and fungi of ages ago.

The grace of God will reach His followers, no matter to what post duty may call them. There are timid souls who cling to some particular pastor, or formality, or even to some old church building, as if they feared God's blessings could not reach them in any other place or by any other means. A little girl was with her father in a row-boat one dark evening. As they rounded a point of land, a bright beacon light came suddenly into view. "Stop the boat, papa! Stop the boat, quick!" she cried. In alarm he obeyed her, and as he turned to see the cause of her outcry, she pointed to the long line of light dancing over the waves from the beacon to the boat. "See!" she cried again, "it comes straight this way; let us stay still and watch it." The father smiled, and as he sent the boat forward with a few strong strokes, the little maiden was overjoyed to find that the line of light followed, and, no matter in which direction they moved, still danced over the water directly to their boat.

HELPFUL DATA IN CURRENT LITERATURE.

By J. M. SHERWOOD, D.D.

Books.

A. D. F. Randolph & Co. "Resurrection in Nature and in Revelation: an Argument and a Meditation," by D. W. Faunce, D.D. Price \$1.50. As an "argument," there is nothing new or striking in this book—no originality in the form, or substance, or arrangement of the argument. In this particular it is disappointing. As a "meditation" it is somewhat better. The work was prepared in the shadow of a great personal bereavement, and this fact is the keynote to it. As a general meditation on the theme of the resurrection, though a little too sentimental, it is sweet and consoling, especially to the bereaved heart; but as a whole, the book adds nothing of value to the grand subject of which it treats.—"The Pulpit Commentary—Deuteronomy." Exposition, by Rev. W. L. Alexander, D.D.; Homiletics, by Rev. C. Clemons, D.D.; Homilies, by various authors.—The same publishers. This excellent Commentary, under the general editorship of Canon Spence and Rev. Joseph S. Exell, is rapidly progressing, no less than 14 volumes having already been published in England, and reissued here by Randolph, from duplicate stereotype plates, and at about one-half the price of the English edition. As we have before had occasion to note, this work is unique in character. It can scarcely be called a "commentary," in the usual acceptance of the word, as the exposition of the text is brief, and a subordinate feature of the work. It is mainly homiletical in form of treatment, and in its purpose. The numerous "homilies" are by various authors, and possess, of course, different degrees of merit. Some of them are truly excellent. As a whole, if used with discretion—in the way of suggesting themes and texts and the best modes of handling them—the work may be highly useful to the "pulpit." But we would advise the lazy-man, who is given to appropriate the study and thought of others, rather than to be at the pains of thinking and planning for himself to let it alone.

Congregational Sunday-School. "Fuss-budget's Folks," by Anna F. Burnham. Price \$1. A lively story, with a good moral. It will interest the young, and is worthy of a place in the Sunday-school library, and the Children's Home library.

Funk & Wagnalls. "Meyer on the Gospel of John." With a Preface and Supplementary Notes to the American edition by Prof. A. C. Kendrick, Greek Professor in the University of Rochester. It were superfluous in us to commend this series of commentaries. The verdict of the best critics of Europe and America places it in the very first rank. The Gospel of John stands pre-eminent among the Gospels, as does Paul's Epistle to the Romans among the New Testament epistles. Infidelity has not been slow to discover in this gospel the battle-ground

of Christian Apologetics, and hence has assailed its genuineness with peculiar virulence, asserting that the Christ of John is irreconcilable with the Christ of the other gospels. Meyer has some special qualifications for expounding this gospel. To his wide learning, his philological exactness, his exegetical tact and acuteness, his independence and candor, he adds a hearty and loving sympathy with his author that is among the surest aids to a right understanding of him. He has a thorough conviction of its authenticity and complete apostolic authority, and such a sympathy with the "beloved disciple" and his Master, as could only flow from deep communion with that Master's person and teaching. He fully recognizes the essential agreement of the Johannine and Pauline Christology. Prof. Kendrick has done the work assigned him with care, and, for the most part, with sound judgment. It might have been still more improved by additional labor bestowed upon it. He availed himself, to a limited extent, of Dr. Weiss' recent edition of this volume in Germany, which is marked by great freedom and ability.—"Thirty Thousand Thoughts." Edited by Canon Spence, Rev. Joseph S. Exell, and Rev. Charles Neill. Vol. II. The same publishers. This volume embraces the following topics: Man's Nature and Constitution; The Law by which Man is Conditioned; The Epistles to the Seven Churches of Asia; The Sayings on the Cross; Virtues, including Excellencies. We have already expressed our high appreciation of this work as a valuable aid to students and preachers, in connection with the first volume. An examination of the present volume confirms that opinion. A portion of it covers a field of special interest, viz.: the philosophy and science of man, embracing evolution, materialism, etc. While advanced thought and modern criticism have free scope, the fundamental truths of Christian science are respected. The Christian student and preacher need not shirk modern research and criticism. He has still the vantage-ground, and ought boldly to occupy it. Man's nature, with its boundless capacities, Godlike powers, and longing after immortality, is a problem which baffles the mere religion of humanity. The one solution of the enigma of man, as well as the one hope of mankind, is the Christ of the gospels. Jesus is, in every sphere of human thought and interest, "the Light of the world."—"Apostolic Life as Revealed in the Acts of the Apostles." By Joseph Parker, D.D. Vol. II. The same publishers. Next to Mr. Spurgeon, there is no religious writer in England at present who attracts more attention than Dr. Parker. And we have not far to look for the reason. He is a fitting representative of the spirit of the age. Broad Church in his views, and yet essentially evangelical; intensely in earnest and practical; bold and uncompromis-

ing; fresh, original and graphic in style and descriptive power; a severe student and hard worker, with popular parts which have commanded a large audience at midday in the heart of London for a dozen years past—it is not surprising that he finds numerous readers and admirers abroad as well as at home. His books are not *boot is!* at all—simply reproductions of his pulpit efforts; and hence are living themes, inspired with his personal magnetism, and possessing all the qualities of his popular and effective ministrations. This is the second of his series of discourses on "The Acts of the Apostles," and is quite equal in interest to the first.

Periodicals.

RECENT EVANGELISTIC MOVEMENTS IN GREAT BRITAIN AND ON THE CONTINENT. By Professor Samuel Ives Curtiss. *Bibliotheca Sacra* (April), 20 pp. This is an age of great cities. The chief cities of the world are growing in population, magnificence and influence at a rate that is really startling. The masses are deserting the country and pressing to the cities. What, in a moral and spiritual sense, is to be the condition of these thronging multitudes? The moral tendency in these cities is downward, so far as the ordinary and historical agencies of Christianity are concerned. London, Paris, Berlin, and other cities, are slumbering over volcanoes. These evangelistic movements have not begun a moment too soon. Prof. Curtiss has done a good service in giving to the public such a trustworthy array of facts, statistics, and historical data bearing on the present condition of various European cities and the efforts being made to reach the masses in them with the Gospel. We wish every pastor and Christian in the land might read this article and that its effect might be to impress upon the American Church the necessity of evangelizing our own cities, if we would save this republic from fatal corruption and a speedy overthrow.

SOCIOLOGICAL FALLACIES. By Professor W. G. Sumner. *North American Review* (June), 6 pp. This brief paper has the true ring. It cuts like a Damascus blade. Pity the "poor" man, the "laboring" man, the man who is forever berating capital, organizations, machinery, the upper classes, etc., could not read it and learn a lesson. Take a specimen: "The achievements of the human race have been accomplished by the élite of the race. There is no ground at all in history for the notion that the masses of mankind have provided the wisdom and done the work. There is, in this whole region of thought, a vast mass of dogmas and superstitions which will have to be corrected either by hard thinking or great suffering. A man is good for something only so far as he thinks, knows, tries, or works. If we put a great many men together, those of them who carry on the society will be those who use reflection and forethought, and exercise industry and self-control. Hence the dogma that all men are equal is the most flagrant falsehood and the

most immoral doctrine which men have ever believed."

HOW ENGLAND IS DEALING WITH ILLITERACY. By Henry W. Hulbert. *Audover Review* (July), 13 pp. Now that the problem of illiteracy is at last receiving attention in the halls of Congress, and by the public press, it is important to learn how the subject is viewed and what is being done in relation to it by other nations and governments. This admirable paper gives us an intelligent view of the manner in which the English people are treating what is looked upon as a question of the utmost moment. He traces the history of the discussion in Parliament in reference to educational reforms in England. He shows that the battle-ground has been the question of religious instruction in the elementary schools; notices the several classes of schools; the power of the educational department; the features of the compulsory law, and the most noticeable features of the pupil-teacher and training-college systems, of which we know nothing. As a resultant, he shows the wonderful progress of elementary education in England, and from the success of her efforts to escape the imminent danger of illiteracy, he draws a forcible and pertinent lesson for us.

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE. By Justice Noah Davis. *North American Review* (July), 12 pp. We rejoice to see the fundamental principles involved in the Family question—a question rapidly assuming fresh interest and importance in our day—discussed by so able a jurist. There is no man at the bar or on the bench in this country whose opinions are entitled to greater respect. He argues that the subject of marriage is so deeply involved with the public interest that the State, whatever its form of government, must, as a matter of self-preservation, take the institution into its charge by provision of laws enacted for its control and protection. In the matter of divorce, he is outspoken and emphatic, and in view of the prevalent free-and-easy way of getting a divorce, urges more stringent laws, recognizing infidelity as the only sufficient ground for it, and insisting that uniformity in the law should exist throughout all the States. He decidedly favors, as the only effective way to secure uniformity, a national law, and affirms that it is only necessary to add *two words* to the Constitution of the United States to establish such a law, and thereby authorize our Courts to adjudicate according to a well-defined and uniform principle.

DISHONESTY IN COMMERCE AND POLITICS. Editorial in *Century* (July). This brief paper suggests the true remedy: An increase of the genuine religious spirit; the cultivation among business men of the true business ideal; not the mere accumulation of wealth, but with a sincere devotion to the interests of society, and the cultivation of the intellectual interests of humanity, so as to raise men above sordid pursuits and the temptations that attend them.