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THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY.

A MAGAZINE

DEVOTED TO THE PUBLICATION OF SERMONS AND OTHER
MATTER OF HOMILETIC INTEREST.

VOL. VIII.—OCTOBER, 1883.—NO. 1.

SERMONIC.

LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES OF REJECT- ING CHRISTIANITY.

By J. M. BUCKLEY, D.D., IN THE HANSON
PLACE METHODIST CHURCH, BROOKLYN.

*And if Christ be not raised, your faith is
vain; ye are yet in your sins.—1 Cor.
xv: 17.*

THERE are, in general, two kinds of doubters: those who wish to doubt, and seek materials to strengthen their unbelief; and those who would be glad to believe, but are perplexed with doubts that they do not cherish. It is impossible to assist the first of these. Their difficulty is not with the head, but with the heart; and Jesus Himself instructs His followers to pay them no attention, saying: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." So that whoever, professing to be a Christian, endeavors to convince a person who really does not wish to be convinced, does so without any authority whatever from the Lord Jesus Christ, whom he professes to represent. And, in fact, if we attempt to assist those who wish to believe, those who wish to disbelieve will

often distort, as they can do without the slightest difficulty, what we say to assist honest inquirers, to their own destruction.

There are many Christians who have waves of doubt sweep over their minds, especially when some person who has been supposed to be a man of unquestionable piety is exposed as one capable of the blackest sin and the foulest practices; especially, again, when some person who has seemed to furnish every evidence of the strongest faith begins to waver, and then makes a public recantation or change, and declares that, through his whole life, he had been under a delusion as to his supposed religious experience. It is no proof that a man has not faith that he doubts, though that seems to be a contradiction. The heart may be true to Christ and Christianity, while the head is disturbed. Many persons never doubt, because they never think. Some never doubt because—and this is the best of reasons—they have enjoyed deep religious experience, and have been busy in Christian activity. But it would not be logical to say that a man is very good *merely* because he never doubted, nor that he is not good *merely* because he

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

acknowledges that he has been troubled by doubts.

It is my purpose to-night to pursue a line of thought adapted to assist the honest doubter, and to strengthen any Christian who, from time to time, may feel that doubts come—he cannot tell how or whence—which disturb his thoughts and his prayers, and trouble him in his works and in his Bible searchings.

I believe that the Gospel itself is the strongest evidence of its truth. The processes of logic are valuable, and we all employ them; but we are obliged to employ them in defending the Gospel by piecemeal. We have to take up here a point, and there another, and argue either in the way of answering an objection, explaining a difficulty, or substantiating a proof. There is a better way, but it is very difficult: and what I shall endeavor to do to-night is to pursue that more excellent way and make, first myself and then you to see the Gospel exactly as it is, and to hold up before the mind the consequences of assuming this truth on the one hand, or of denying it on the other. And I hope, if I shall succeed in evolving my own thought, that I shall make a symmetrical presentation, which will have, not the kind of force that is produced by a process of argument, but that which results from a moral conviction which bears down upon the heart and conscience, and the understanding at the same time.

The question that I raise is the one of the text, which begins, not with an affirmation, but with a question; and is in, not the indicative, which declares, but the subjunctive, which doubts: "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." Our question is this: What will inevitably follow from the assumption that the Gospel of Christ is untrue? It cannot be assumed to be partly true and partly false in the supernatural sense. Of course, it can be assumed to be partly true and partly false in the human sense, just as we say that Gibbon's "History of the Decline and Fall of the

Roman Empire" is partly true and partly false. Probably there is not a book in the world, unless it be a book of pure mathematics, that is not partly true and partly false. But the question I raise is this: if the Gospel be untrue in this sense—that it has not a supernatural origin? If it be answered in the affirmative—that it *is* untrue in that sense—then, of course, the book that contains the record must be put down by the side of "Appleton's Cyclopædia," or the "Cyclopædia Britannica," or any other book that is offered to the acceptance of men. Please to consider that it is not the truth of particular parts of the Bible that we have before us, but the question whether it be a voice from God to man, a supernatural voice, a voice that did not come in the way of natural cause and effect; a voice that did not come as this sermon comes; not a voice on theology, or history, or politics. Now let us adhere to this, and not flinch. Thousands of persons enjoy benefits without any proper reflection upon their source, and there are many persons who suppose that they are doubters who never yet have had the moral courage, or the intellectual perception, to doubt. They are mistaken with regard to doubt. They do not understand it; for when the doubt would assume a form in which it could be clearly identified, they dismiss it.

1. In the first place, if the Gospel be untrue, does it not follow that God has never, in any supernatural way, spoken to man? Is there any way to avoid that conclusion? Is there any other religion that can be put into competition for a moment with the Gospel as having claims to a supernatural origin? By which I mean, that if you deny the supernatural origin of the Gospel, is it possible for you to admit the supernatural origin of any other religion? I suppose it cannot be necessary to argue that point. Of course, Judaism you would reject, unless you are a Jew, if you reject Christianity; and you cannot accept Mohammedanism, which is a mixture of Judaism, Christianity,

and heathenism, in about equal proportions. Probably there is not one person in this assemblage who would for a moment believe in the supernatural origin of any religion at all, if he rejected Christianity as such. The only point I wish to show clearly is, that if we affirm the Gospel is untrue, we cut up by the roots all supernatural religion, and affirm that we are without a voice from God.

2. We come, in the next place, to systems of philosophy. They are contradictory, and without the possibility of positive proof. A man thinks out a system of philosophy, and it is clear to him. He adopts it. The evidence of its truth to him depends upon the faith which he reposes in the premises which he employs, the confidence he has in the correctness of his reasoning, and in the conclusions which he draws. But another man, studying his system of philosophy, departs from him in several essential particulars, and is as well persuaded that he is wrong in these particulars as the former is that he is right. Hence it has come to pass that very rarely in the history of the world has the disciple of any philosopher agreed with him all the way through, or even in substance. Of course this is a proposition that can be disputed, but I only suggest one or two points to show that it is true.

According to the best ancient history we have, Socrates was the teacher of Plato; but Plato differed from Socrates in a great variety of modes. And what was the relation of Aristotle to Plato? But, not to go back to those ancient periods—what is the condition of affairs to-day in the world of philosophy? I have a friend who has been reading nothing but philosophy for twenty years. He has not read a book upon any other subject in all that time; and, so far as I know, and so far as he knows, there has not been a book on philosophy published that he has not purchased and read. Now he testifies to me, that he has not in all his library, embracing the publications of the last thirty years, two works on philosophy

which substantially agree. There are works that agree in many points, but they differ in others, and differ fundamentally. It is perfectly clear that no two systems of philosophy agree substantially. But, upon the assumption that they do, how can they be authenticated beyond the power of the human mind to test the matter in the present state? Can a system of philosophy span the river that separates us from the future state? Is it possible for a system of philosophy, without instruction from God, to interpret properly the plans of God, involving the whole course of human life and the final adjustments of eternity? And there will be nothing supernatural in it. Now, let us look at it for a moment upon the basis of Nature. Walking in Fulton Street one day, I met a gentleman of considerable learning, who has no sympathy with any branch of the Christian Church. I asked him to prove to me the being of a God from Nature. After a little effort, he gave it up—as every man must who has no other proof than the deductions he undertakes to draw from what he sees around him. He cannot prove it if anybody doubts it. Then I asked him, upon the assumption that there is a God, to prove that He is good. Well, he fell into a beautiful passage about the starry heavens and about the beautiful flowers that spring up, and turned on me and said, that any man who could doubt the goodness of God, when he was surrounded by beauty and wisdom on every side, was an unwise man. I was obliged to ask him to explain the pestilence, the famine, the earthquake, the law of death, the law of hereditary insanity and idiocy, and all the evils that affect mankind. I asked him if he would explain how it was that in the order of nature, or of God, the great majority of the human race, from the creation of man down to this age, have suffered under the terrible curses of ignorance, poverty, and disease. He could not explain it; and when I asked him if the dark things of nature, without an explanation, did not as really

prove God *not* to be good as the bright things of which he spoke proved Him to be good, he could not deny it. John Stuart Mill logically argued that matter, and he said that Nature is a contradictory witness. Look at her on one side and she seems to say, "The Being who made us is good." Look at her on the other side and she seems to say, "He is *not* good." The man who is well and strong, and who has accomplished all he desires, if he be of a religious turn, is grateful to a good God; but how is it with the man who has nothing but what he can see to support his faith? Doubts and difficulties arise. Job's wife understood the case when she turned upon him in the midst of his terrible afflictions and said, "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God and die!" That was logic. Job had an inward faith that did not rest upon the external natural phenomena, or he would never have been able to say to her in reply, "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" In all this, Job held fast to his integrity.

Now look that point over and over. If the Gospel be untrue, there is no voice from God to man.

3. Again, if the Gospel be untrue, the most elevating precepts we have are without a divine sanction. Take, for example, the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as ye would have them do unto you." Some undertake to teach us that it can be found outside of the Bible, and I don't feel called upon to undertake a denial of it; but, if it can be found outside of the Bible, it is found upon the assumption that the Bible is not true; it is found without a divine sanction. "And Jesus answered him: 'The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.'" No man, according to the

Scriptures, can love his neighbor as himself unless he first loves God and recognizes the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. So that, if you could bring me an ancient Chinese book, or an ancient Indian manuscript, and prove it older than the New Testament; or if you could bring to me an Egyptian inscription, and prove it older than the New Testament, and it had the Golden Rule in it, it would still not have the divine sanction, and such relation to God as would give man power to carry it out and reduce it to practice.

Now take the specific applications of the Golden Rule. The Sermon on the Mount undoubtedly convinced John Adams, when nothing else would, that Christ was a mysterious Being, with something more than human discrimination; but further than that he did not go. But if the Gospel be not true, the Sermon on the Mount is a purely human production—nothing more nor less than such productions as have been given to the world by orators, philosophers, and poets. Therefore, all those sublime statements, which are contrary to what we see, rest only on the authority of a man. "Blessed are the poor in spirit." Why? "For theirs is the kingdom of heaven," and there is *no* kingdom of heaven if the Gospel be not true. Cut that off, then, and say, "Blessed are the poor in spirit"—a poverty not of outward circumstances, but of spirit, as the passage requires, to prove that men are blessed; for the word "blessed" means, unspeakably happy. "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." If that is only a human statement you may take off the last part in many cases, which will destroy the first. It has no right to remain there. "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are ye when men shall persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake, for great is your reward in heaven." Cut off the last part, and you find a Jewish peasant making promises that he never could fulfill. As for the beatitude, "Blessed

are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," if the Gospel be not true there never was an utterance in an insane asylum wilder or further from truth than that.

In the next place, if the Gospel be not true, the noblest examples are fictitious. Of the Book of Job it was said, by a critic who had no especial interest in it as a book of religion, that it was impossible to read it without tears; and yet the Book of Job must take its place by the side of Shelley's "Queen Mab," or any other poem that you can suggest, if the Gospel be not a supernatural religion—a mere creation of human imagination or fancy. The indescribably beautiful character of Jesus Christ, with His actions so mysteriously in harmony with all that He thought and felt and said, that every miracle, according to the record, is an illustration of infinite beneficence—all this is but a rhapsody, and the only difference between the ideal Christ and an ordinary writer of fiction is in the amount and kind of appeal, and not in substance of truth. Take the character of Paul, one of the most remarkable in history: a transition inexplicable; an endurance that cannot be explained upon any ordinary assumption; a man charged with insanity by his enemies, who were not as zealous as he, and with hypocrisy by those whom he had left; who calmly stood before Agrippa and Felix and answered both charges so as to compel assent to his sanity and integrity. His character is entirely inexplicable if the Gospel be not true. Nor shall I shrink from speaking of Peter, whose very inconsistency, as recorded, taken in connection with his bravery, and his penitence, and his subsequent career, illustrates human nature in a wonderful manner, yet showing a triumph over its infirmities. Even Peter must be set down as a myth if the Gospel be not true.

4. I proceed to the subject of pardon. If the Gospel be not true, it is folly to think of pardon for sin. In nature there is no proof, of any kind, of forgiveness. There is partial and limited

reparation. Louis Canaro, the famous Italian and nobleman, who lived to be nearly one hundred years old, and wrote a book when ninety-six, which declared he would live to be a hundred (though he died at ninety-eight), was dissipated to a degree that has never been surpassed, and when he was forty years of age he was so reduced that his physicians gathered about him and told him he must adopt a diet as abstemious as that of an anchorite or he could not live. Canaro did so, and for the rest of his life ate less and drank less than an ordinary child. Nature in that case allowed him to repair a shattered constitution, but there was nothing analogous to pardon in it. It was simply an economy of what was left. But pardon, where there is a sense of guilt, is a totally different thing. Two men may become intoxicated—one strong, the other weak. One may be attacked by delirium tremens and may commit suicide; the other may be about his business the next morning. Whence the difference? The debauch was the same, but operating under law, under law that never touches morals, the man strong enough escaped, the man too weak to bear it succumbed. Let this serve to illustrate the distinction between repairing, in the way of cause and effect, and being forgiven. There is not a solitary hint of forgiveness in all nature, and no writer or philosopher, so far as I ever heard, has undertaken to show that there is. Bishop Butler, in his Analogy, used the illustration of repair to show that God might pardon even as He allowed men to repair; but he confessed it was a very imperfect and unsatisfactory analogy. But a man will say, "If the Gospel is not true, a man cannot incur guilt, and therefore all he has to do is to dismiss the idea that he is guilty. If his conscience says he is, he can say to it, 'You are a presumptuous usurper. There is no law, and I cannot be guilty.'" How do you know what will be held to be guilty under an administration that has revealed no law? We are assuming that there is a God, and power, and justice.

Now, if He has never spoken, under any circumstances, so as to give us a true test of absolute justice, how do we know that we are not at this moment incurring great guilt? And, moreover, if we affirm it is impossible for us to incur great guilt, we cannot silence the voice of conscience without killing it. Joseph Barker, one of the most eminent men that ever advocated infidelity in Europe or America, testified, after he was sixty years of age, that he had made this sad discovery, that when he had refused to acknowledge the obligations of conscience towards God, he found the obligations of conscience towards men torn up by the roots. So that there would seem to be no hope, and the man who has a sense of guilt, if the Gospel be not true, has no power, under any circumstances, to secure the obliteration of that sense of guilt, however painful, from his conscience.

5. I now pass to speak of a regenerative influence. When a man for twenty-five years has tried to keep good resolutions, and has broken them, and has to acknowledge at the end of that time that he has made little progress in purifying his heart, though he may retain considerable self-control in regard to external actions, he will do one of two things, according to his temperament: he will sadly relinquish the effort to obtain moral purity, or he will continue on without hope or any inward peace. The Gospel of Christ declares that there is a regenerative influence that operates upon the human soul, that the true light lighteth every man that cometh into the world. Now, it requires no argument to show, if the Gospel be untrue, there is no such spiritual influence as it describes; consequently, to doubt the Gospel is to doubt whether there be anything which can possibly purify the heart and make it what all right-minded human beings aspire to be—pure and good.

6. I now wish to speak on the subject of comfort in trouble. It has been said by a French writer that philosophy conquers past and future evils; that is, a man can, by his philosophy, with-

out any help from any other source, reconcile himself to past things, whatever they were in their time, and he can live in comparative freedom from fear with regard to future things; but the same writer proceeds to say that philosophy is conquered by present evils. Dr. Johnson illustrates this when he represents Rasselas as going to hear a philosopher speak, and he was delighted with his philosophy. He taught him how to subdue his passions and to conquer trials without any difficulty. The next day, however, when Rasselas, charmed with his teacher, again sought the philosopher, he was at first refused admission. After a while he was admitted to the philosopher's presence, and found him tearing his hair and walking up and down in great agony. "Why this grief?" asked Rasselas. "Oh!" said the philosopher, "my only daughter, the light of my home and the comfort of my old age, is dead!" "But, certainly," said Rasselas, "the philosophy which you so eloquently descanted on yesterday comforts you now?" "Oh, no," cried the philosopher, wringing his hands; "what can philosophy say to me now, except to show me that my condition is inevitable and incurable?" Rasselas went to Imlac and told him what he had heard, and he replied: "They preach like angels, but they live like men." Voltaire, and many others—I do not need to name them all—have shown that their philosophy had no power whatever against a present and a sore evil. The Gospel does offer comfort to every class of afflicted persons, and Tom Moore only told the truth when he said, "Earth hath no sorrow that heaven cannot heal." As I am arguing and not quoting poetry, I may paraphrase that, and say, earth has no sorrow that the Gospel does not offer to heal. But, if the Gospel be untrue, all these offers of consolation, from beginning to end, are false and baseless as a dream.

7. We come now to take up the subject of strength in temptation. A man need not ask himself whether there be

an evil spirit, called "Devil," or not. That is a matter that cannot be settled outside of God's Book, and perhaps cannot be settled to the satisfaction of every mind by the study of God's Book. That is a question that we need not consider, because there never lived a man who had not the power to engender temptations enough to ruin him. His appetites and passions that war against the soul, his ambition, his strange evil propensities—we see them in the little children, they are strengthened in the youth, they are found in terrific volume in the strong man, though prudence often leads him to conceal what imprudence would expose, and what youth would exhibit from a want of self-control. How is a man to subdue these passions and propensities? Probably four-fifths of the persons who reject the Gospel have sophisticated themselves into the belief that what is natural cannot be wrong. But there are men who reject the Gospel that never have done that, and they keep on through life struggling and failing, and struggling and failing again. Now the Gospel offers to the man contending against these temptations seven or eight distinct kinds of helps. First, it gives him the commands of Almighty God, and there is nothing to strengthen a man against temptation like that. You may take all the promises and put them together, and they are not as strong a reinforcement against temptation as a command of God, provided a man feels that there is a God, and that God commands him. But the Gospel is filled with such commands. Then the Gospel gives us promises for every situation of trial and difficulty. Further, it gives us holy examples of men of like passions with ourselves, and when we would be discouraged and say, "This was a class of men far above us, and it is folly for us to attempt to imitate, much less to emulate, them," the Gospel tells us of the sins and villainies of David and Jacob; it speaks to us of the fall of Peter; and finally, just at the time our faith would fail, it bids us consider the case of

Elias, who was a man of like passion with us. The Gospel grants unto a man the privilege of taking these commands and promises, and of strengthening his faith by them at the very Throne of Grace. But, if the Gospel be untrue, every promise and command in the Bible may be thrown aside as a matter without any foundation in fact.

8. I will now speak a moment or two on the subject of prayer, and only a moment, because this is a subject which is to be handled from the supernatural point of view or given up at once. I believe that no man can even raise a presumption that prayer is answered, if he denies the truth of the Gospel; because, as a matter of course, presumptions are supposed to be drawn from miraculous deliverances. A. is in trouble and prays to get out, and because he does get out he thinks God answered him. A sailor in a storm calls upon God, and there is a great calm, and he concludes from that circumstance that God answered his prayer. I admit the conclusion may be valid, provided you admit there is a God who will hear and answer. But suppose that is denied? Now I answer the man who says he was in trouble and prayed to God, in the following manner: I tell him, first, of the man that prayed and got no help, and I tell him of every man in the world in my experience who has been sick and unhappy, and whom prayer would not cure. In the next place, I go further and tell him that God's own people have gone down under trouble, so far as the external state and act were concerned; and then, finally, I bring to him all the false religions and superstitions there are in the world, and show him that they have their cases of prayer and following deliverance from trouble, just as the Christian system has its cases; and I say I have overthrown his presumptions ten to one—one hundred to one. The story goes that a traveler saw a scenic representation of the gifts that had been given by those who had prayed to the gods and had been delivered; and he asked if some one would point out to him the

inscriptions and other mementoes of those who had prayed and had *not* been delivered. Of course, they were not there.

I am not arguing against prayer. I am only undertaking to show that, if you cannot prove to me that God is willing and able to answer prayer, you cannot find any satisfactory evidence that prayer ever was answered. That coincidence where prayer was earnest and unanswered answers all the natural presumptions arising from the man's deliverance after prayer. So I hold that the man who denies that the Gospel is a supernatural communication, is wise and logical in ceasing to pray, and this accounts for the fact that you do not find any record of theists who have rejected the Gospel *in toto*, as we are discussing it, and declared it had no supernatural origin, who pray, unless they are Jews. A distinguished citizen of New Hampshire, who was once a rationalistic preacher, and a very powerful logician, ceased to preach, and a friend asked him why he stopped. Said he, "I liked the preaching, and could have got along with it very well as long as I lived; but there was one thing I could not get along with at all, and that was prayer. I did not expect my prayers would be answered, and never believed they would, and to stand up before the congregation and address the Deity as if I really believed that prayer produced a result, seemed to me too much like hypocrisy." No man will long pray who has not a specific promise upon which to rest.

9. I now have to speak very briefly about a few things that are not generally supposed to rest upon Christianity. As regards the Sabbath, of course the Sabbath goes, if Christianity be false. There is no reason why a man should keep one day in seven as a *holy* day, though there may be reasons why he should keep it as a *holiday*. He must give it up as a day specifically consecrated, if he repudiates Christianity; and if it be given up generally as such a day, then, of course, it is left merely to the self-interest of men, the effect of

which is that the majority of mankind would be divided into two classes—those who would work on Sunday, because they could make it pay, and those who would play and dissipate, because they would prefer to do that rather than make what they could.

Now the institution of Marriage—one husband and one wife—cannot be sustained without a religious sanction, and never was in the history of this world. In the early history of Rome it survived for a considerable period of time, and the first man that divorced his wife in the Roman empire was treated with the utmost contempt; but the operations of human nature were such that in a very short time the whole Roman Empire virtually repudiated monogamy to such an extent that the leaders were obliged to beseech the people to marry upon some such absurd principle as this: that, while it was a great misfortune to have wives, the State could not possibly be kept up without children, and the only way to have children was to marry, and therefore they besought them to marry for the sake of the State. The heaviest strain on human nature is chastity, and it cannot be sustained unless the obligation rests upon a solemn accountability to God, and the human race cannot sustain it without religious sanction after marriage, and never have, even among the Jews. They disregarded monogamy, and Jesus, according to the New Testament, stated that Moses, for the hardness of their hearts, suffered them to put away their wives. But the fact is, the Jewish people, acting under the influence of wholly unsanctified human nature, gave loose rein to their passions, and all over the world that thing exists. Taking human society as a whole, in the absence of general belief in Christianity, it would not stand a twelvemonth. Polygamy, on the one hand, as a species of fanaticism, and either spiritual or carnal or free love on the other, would certainly spring up, as they have done, to run riot all over the world.

Moreover, denying the spiritual power

of Christianity, of course you uproot the whole idea of future accountability, and the question of whether a man will live or die becomes a question of logic. Some persons, if you undertake to speak on the subject of suicide, will hardly listen to you; but it is a vitally important topic. I cannot tell if there is not now some one before me contemplating suicide. I have been obliged to visit the friends of several who have committed suicide since I became the pastor of this church. I know of men who have gone straight from the house of God, and within forty-eight hours attempted suicide. The papers are full of recitals of this crime. The crime increases in this country without parallel, and it will go on increasing. It will have to be discussed and handled from a point of view totally different from those ordinarily selected, to prevent it. Now, what reason is there why a man utterly dissatisfied with life, should not commit suicide? Prove that he ought to hold on. Make it clear, if you can. Suppose the case of a man who has lost all his friends, his property, and his reputation. He is too old to begin again. Prove that he ought not to commit suicide. I cannot, unless you give me the Gospel. When a man rejects the Gospel the most trifling trouble in the world may make him commit suicide. I admit that many professed Christians do it—some because insane, and some because they do not know anything about *applying* the Gospel. I have known men who have been familiar with the Gospel twenty years, and then did not know how to apply it on the question of suicide. You cannot find an instance of a sane, devoted, intelligent Christian committing suicide; but you can produce a hundred instances of irreligious men not insane committing suicide. It had become a passion among the Roman matrons, and the only way the evil was cured was by an edict that the body of the woman who took her own life should be dragged after death through the streets, exposed to the rabble. The reason men

are committing suicide, and making such a trifling thing of it—I won't say *the* reason, but one of the reasons—is the spread of infidelity, the spread of doubts as to future accountability.

And now I have come to my last point, which is this: That if the Gospel be not true, everything that there is in the Bible with regard to a future state of happiness must be remanded to the realm of conjecture. No man can prove a future state in any proper sense of the term. Of course, most men think it is the easiest thing in the world; but I am not preaching to them. I am preaching to the man who has thought, and been troubled with doubts about the Bible. That man knows you cannot prove a future state, and he knows further, that if you could show it to be probable, you could not determine the mode of existence, or the relation between the future and present life, or get any means whatever to do so. Then, if the Gospel be not true, let us face the issue and strike out, "In my Father's house are many mansions." Let us stand by the side of the dead, in the presence of weeping relatives, and, when some one shall say: "I heard a Voice from heaven, saying unto me, 'Write, blessed are the dead who die in the Lord,'" silence him, and tell him it is falsehood, and that he is endeavoring to comfort the bereaved by that which has no foundation in fact. Every word in the Bible relating to a future state of bliss is remanded to the realm of conjecture.

Is it rational to believe that God has given no voice to man? Is it rational to believe that the noblest precepts are without a divine sanction?—that the purest examples are rhapsodies?—that there is no voice of pardon, no regenerating influence, no comforting words for tribulation, no sense of future accountability, no sense of the supremacy of conscience, and no well-established hope beyond the grave? Is it reasonable to believe that God, as a father, never made himself known to his children, but cast them out into a wilderness to wander and tremble and die?

It is not! Rather than believe that, I would go one step further, and say—not as the fool, who says it in his heart, but as the sad and hopeless man who would believe better if he could, "There is no God!" But because I cannot say there is no God, I must say that He has spoken to man, and because I must say that, I must believe that the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ has a supernatural origin.

THE LOGIC OF LAW.

BY JOSEPH PARKER, D.D., IN THE CITY TEMPLE, LONDON.

Thou shalt not oppress a stranger; for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.—Exodus xxiii: 9.

MARK the logic of the text. This is not a sentiment only; it is a piece of reasoning, and a piece of reasoning founded upon the rock of history. Why shall we not oppress a stranger? The answer is in logical terms—"for," or because, "ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt." There is a whole philosophy of life in that one brief commandment; there is a whole theology in it also. The argument is that our conduct is to spring out of our experience; we are to go back upon our own history and consciousness for the law that shall guide us in the treatment of our fellow-men. Why, could we do so, no more should we hear the rasping voice of rancor, hostile criticism, mean remark, or severe demand. In this injunction is the germ of the completing commandment called the second: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The Scripture is thus full of common sense and profound philosophy. It lifts us to a new level and inspires us with a new spirit. Thou shalt not oppress the struggling man, for thou thyself hast had thy struggle. You are apt to forget your own often-baffled and abortive endeavors in the flush of your success and in the temptation of your prosperity. Once you stumbled in speech; have pity upon

the young speaker who is just fleshing his sword. He has had a hard time of it in private; he is full of fear; he is more nervous than he dare tell his own mother. Do not sit there in the lordliness of your own self-consciousness, easy and in the assurance of all but unlimited resources; but remember your own Egyptian servitude, and how you bungled, and stumbled, and went home one great red blush, unable to tell your own friends what fools you have made of yourselves. Remember your own Egypts, your own experiences, and out of the depths of many pathetic and gracious recollections bring the inspiration that shall guide your conduct in reference to other men. But this would make the world new in less than six days; it would create new heavens and a new earth, and all subsequent lifetime would be one long, long, sunny Sabbath day. Yet we are severe upon one another, and sometimes we get into moods that we call "critical," and imagine that criticism is a kind of heaven. Truly, it is the only heaven to which some men are likely to attain! Do not be hard upon those who are going up hill. You call them "mean" sometimes, but they are not mean in reality. They are pinching a little here and a little there, and the genius of economy is so ruling them as to give them quite a false aspect in the eyes of an unsympathetic world. You do not know what they are doing. All these pinchings are to be so many oblations laid upon the altar of affection. A few coins here and a few there, some copper and some silver—the very least of their kind shall bulk up into quite a surprising offering of love somewhere. Better take the nobler view; do not call them "mean," or "greedy," or "covetous;" it is not for us to judge with such severity of judgment. It may be that the men are struggling with an invisible opponent, whose name they hardly know; and others could enlighten the whole horizon if they might speak one little sentence, but they cannot. You wonder at their roughness, at their want of

completeness; you say how very nearly they come up to the measure of the stature of perfect men. Why that default—not more than one inch long? They could tell you the story of early childhood and early disadvantage and struggle, which has gone with them, staining all their ascent. But they cannot; they need not. Who are we, that we should be honored with such tales of secret conflict, and rather not be satisfied with such evidences of social and public triumph?

Thou shalt not oppress a doubting man, for thou thyself hast had thy doubts, if thou art more than half a man. We do not always know what doubt is. Doubt takes the color of the mind in which it operates. Some doubts are little and others mass themselves up into a kind of spiritual tragedy. You must understand the psychological differences of mind. All things are not equally plain to all observers. The man may only be doubting *my view*. The man need not be doubting the solar system because he doubts my interpretation of it. I may be making his doubt vital when it is only accidental. It is possible to believe in revelation and yet not to believe any one preacher of it, but to doubt the whole tribe ministerial. It is possible to live in God and yet to be outside the stone church which is built for His accommodation. The doubt of some men may be but the larger faith. I cannot tell—I will not judge; there is One who knoweth. He will deal righteously with us all, so I leave myself and others in His gentle hands. Do not suppose that words can tell everything, any more than any musical instrument can express the whole apocalypse of music. Suppose we formed a society that shall speak only words of one syllable. That is our orthodoxy—a man who speaks a dissyllable is a heretic; the man who speaks a polysyllable is a blasphemer. Who could submit to such humiliation? Yet that is what is done in effect in relation to many speculative and profound questions. If men do not

believe my words—one syllable or many syllables—how prone I am to regard them as publicans, and heathen men, and outsiders, and rebels! I will remember my own doubts. I was in darkness that gathered upon me so heavily that for a long period I had no day; life was one long night, troubled with serious dreaming that had in it all shapes and voices and sore vexations; but the light came—white in the east, and up came the sun in all the reality of day, and I had liberty and joy not to be spoken. It shall be so with my brother; he will not die in the night of doubt and unrest; he will be brought through to the land of morning, and there he will build a temple that shall never be thrown down!

Now the text has a meaning in reference to ourselves as well as to others. Thou shalt not renew old fears, for all thy fears have been round, black, blatant liars. What liars they have been! And yet to-day we still open the door and take them in, believing that now at last they are telling the truth. They cannot tell the truth; they are not *liars* only, they are *lies*. Their little measurable personality is lost in the infiniteness of incurable falsehood. How foolish we are and slow of heart in this matter, by allowing all our old fears to talk to us like old friends! In six troubles you have been delivered, and I charge you now with talking to the seventh as if he were an old friend or a truth-speaker. How dare you? Where is your faith? Where is your Christ? Where is the Holy Ghost? Remember the case: Six fears have been with you, have lied to you, have made you play the fool in all the higher relations and issues of life, and yet I detect you this morning talking in the corner to a member of the same false family! Why do you not throw it from you, or order it behind you, or mock it with the jibing of perfect rest in God? You are baptized Atheists, you are Church-going idolaters, and if the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness?

These are the words of truth and wis-

dom and soberness, which I find thrust in upon myself, and it is rather a monologue I am now delivering than a sermon. I am preaching. The shadow is still as if it were reluctantly welcome; the old shadow that followed me like a cloud, that fell upon me on all sides, that put out the household fire, that hid the old arm-chair in impenetrable darkness, that gloomed upon the altar, until the prayer of faith became an impossibility. It has been blown away by the wind of heaven, pierced by shafts of sunlight, and yet, when it returns, I accost it as if it had some right to my soul! So faithless am I, so little has my baptism into Christ done for me, I say "God," but I do not mean it. It is the Church that must be converted, not the "masses." I am not yearning about the "masses" and building canvas tents for them, and sounding bassoons over their revelries and madneses. The Church, the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, has gone wrong! You must convert the scepticism of the Church, the pedantry and selfishness of the pulpit; you must re-convert the converted, otherwise the Church is the greatest mischief-doer among all the institutions of men. Oh, that the Lord would send amongst us some burning prophet, that went up nightly in a chariot of fire unto heaven, and wanted not money, not patronage, nor help of man; but could seize the age, and live for it, and die for it, and rise again for it! Three years would kill him, but with Christ he would live forever.

"Thou shalt not—, because—." That is the logic of the text. The illustrations I have given might, as you will see, be infinitely multiplied; but they would all be germane to the philosophy of the text; they would all find their vindication in this divine injunction. Now, what must *He* be who gave such laws? In the character of the laws, find the character of the legislator. Will you debate about God in terms philosophical, scholastic, literary? Your debate will end where it began. I will try to find out God little by lit-

tle, along the line of the words which He is said to have spoken. I will worship the God that spake these words. I do not know always the God of the theologian. He is a ganglion of metaphysical terms and contradictions and sovereignties and covenants and bargainings and transactions—endless and vexatious. The God of the Bible I can in part understand; not see through the lightnings, not understand the thunderings and the noise of the trumpet, not walk upon the smoking mountain—there I stand back in veneration and amazement, having no more to say than the little child who never spoke. But when the laws themselves come afterwards, out of that apocalypse, I can look at them, weigh them, and follow them somewhat into their practical applications in daily life. This is an instance in point. God must be tender: He takes care of strangers. Why should He, who inhabits eternity, take care of a stranger—*one* stranger? When He was upon the mountain, amid all the noise and thunder, amid all the dazzling splendor and mysterious incense, I did not know Him; but when all the accident has passed away like a pageant, living but for a moment, this word is left behind "Thou shalt not oppress a stranger." He who said that has a big heart, a tender spirit, a father's royal love. I want to know more about Him. He touches my sympathy. Not only so, He must be aware of human history in all its changes and processes. He knows about the strangers who were in the land of Egypt; He knows about their deliverance; He knows that strangers are a tribe that must be on the earth from age to age; He knows us altogether. He speaks a word for the stranger. Oh, man, friendless, lonely man, you should love God. Oh, woman, mother, sister—sinning woman, you should love Christ. Oh, little children—frail flowers that may wither in a moment, you should put out your little hands, if in but dumb prayer, and long to touch the Son of God. Oh, working man, led away by the demagogue, made to scoff where you ought to

pray, the Bible has done more for you than any other book ever attempted to do; this is a human book, a book for the nursery, the family, the marketplace—the Parliament, the Universe!

All this is wayside talk. We loiter here to pluck a few flowers, and it is interesting and pleasant to do so; but we are on the road. Presently we read, "Thou shalt not disturb a bird's nest that is on the ground"; "Thou shalt not seethe the kid in his mother's milk"; "Thou shalt not cut down a fruit-tree." All the way through, the spirit of care-taking and love, conservatism and preservation, a word spoken on behalf of the weak, and the lonely, and the defenceless, and him that hath no friend. I wonder what it means; it means something. I will read this romance a page at a glance; all through the same spirit: the answer will come presently. And on and on we read until we see a great Cross set up, and hear a rude voice saying, "He saved others"—aye, that's what He has been doing. "He saved others"—I know it; I have seen Him. "Himself He cannot save"—no, He cannot. It is the "cannot" of omnipotence, the impossibility of almightiness. That is the meaning of it all—the CROSS! God has been taking care of strangers—aye, and of birds, and of oxen, and of young lambs in the flock—all the way through; and now the sum-total of it is—"The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost."

If you had gone up to the Cross right away along the historical line, mile by mile, you would have found it the natural culmination of a series of interventions, which expositions and which interventions give a new significance and a keener accent to the tragedy and mystery of the Cross.

"In meditation, those who begin heavenly thoughts and prosecute them not, are like those who kindle a fire under green wood and leave it as soon as it begins to blaze."—*Hall*.

"PRAYER is the key of heaven, and faith is the hand that turns it."—*Watson*.

THE ECONOMICS OF CHRISTIANITY.

By REUBEN JEFFERY, D.D., IN THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, DENVER, COLORADO.

To what purpose is this waste?—Matthew xxvi: 8.

A LOVING woman, as an expression of her devotion to Jesus, anointed His feet with a box of costly ointment. This service was criticised by Judas on the twofold ground that it was a wasteful expenditure and a diversion of so much money from the care of the poor. This censure was just such a criticism as we would expect a man like Judas to make. The few incidents given of his character prepare us to believe that his soul was never stirred by lofty sentiments. He was too groveling ever to rise to the love of the beautiful and the sublime, either in nature, or in art, or in religion. He was too selfish and penurious ever to have given a penny to promote an aesthetic or benevolent enterprise. So base was he, that he even robbed the funds entrusted to him by his brethren for the poor, and appropriated their contributions to the gratification of his own sordid proclivities. Society has always been afflicted with a class of carpers like Judas. If the poor had no better friend, they would be left to die of starvation, and if virtue had no nobler promoters, vice and crime would be perpetually epidemic.

Among the several attempts to give concrete expressions to grand ideals, those associated with Christianity have been pre-eminently subjected to these kinds of assaults. Its ideals have been denounced as superstitions, its institutions as wasteful expenditures, and its agencies as so many abstractions from eleemosynary contributions.

Now these criticisms would lodge with much greater force if it could be shown that the evils of society would be lessened if Christianity were obliterated, or if facts demonstrated that the opposers of Christian enterprises were themselves moved with superior inspirations to organize and carry on agencies of beneficence. Nay, we could listen to these censurers with more patience if

it were not too true, alas! that the men who make them are, to a large extent, the abettors and promoters of the very evils they affect to deplore. History proves, however, that apart from Christianity, no age has ever presented the spectacle of any permanently organized movements to alleviate distress, or minimize the evils that have cursed mankind. True, within the present century a few godless efforts in this direction have been undertaken, but they have been, at the best, only spasms of philanthropy, and in their results have proven, like Fourierism, for example, Utopian in conception, and fraught with practical evils even greater than those they sought to correct. But, even granting to such enterprises a benevolent impulse, it would not be difficult to show that they have never been undertaken, except in lands where Christianity had already inculcated the spirit of beneficence. Nor are such philanthropic movements free from the suspicion that their animus has not been a genuine sympathy with suffering, but rather a hostile attempt to throw discredit on the beneficent character claimed by Christian people for Christian principles.

I grant you that there have been periods when historic Christianity has presented sad defections from the sublime ideals of beneficence which its theories inculcated; but the explanation of these phases is not to be found in the falsity of the principles themselves, but in the fact that the Church has been loaded down with the superstitions imposed upon it by the idolatries of preceding generations, or cursed by leaders who were utterly and shamelessly destitute of the spirit of Christianity itself. And the marvel is that Christianity has survived these terrible combinations of corruption within and assault from without.

Christianity, however, has demonstrated its inherent vitality by its ability to survive and surmount these drafts upon its energies. Especially have this survival and reinvigoration asserted themselves during the present century. Never as to-day were the ac-

tivities of Christian beneficence so numerous and so vigorous; never was the power of Christian principles to permeate and bless society so potent and apparent; and that, too, despite the taunt that Christianity was proving a failure, and destined to disappear before the oncoming era of social well-being. That such a grand era is coming we doubt not; but in the day when its consummation shall be reached, mankind will have learned that the result is a fulfillment of that song of peace and good-will that the angels sung at the birth of the Babe of Bethlehem. In that day the hitherto discordant notes of censure and denunciation of the religion of the Nazarene will, like the voices of many waters, join in the grand acclaim of blessing, and honor to the name of that Jesus whose mission it was to lift up humanity from its degradation and to bequeath the blessings of universal brotherhood.

Thus far in the history of our race the forces that have worked for evil have dominated, and their activities are still exerting malevolent power. Who can depict the woes that have followed in the wake of intemperance, fraud and lust? Who can estimate the waste of life, of happiness, and of money, occasioned by the baser passions of our natures? With what energies have the enemies of Christianity appropriated even the forces of our civilization in order to work the ruin of their fellows? On the other hand, who does not know that Christian principles make for economy and thrift; for the purity of morals; for the spread of education; for the ennobling of taste, and the culture of our tenderest sensibilities? And, while we do not disparage the helpfulness derived from the agencies of science and literature, yet it cannot be denied that these very agencies are being seized upon by the vampires of society in order to give intensity to their power for evil.

And let the enemies of Christianity say what they will against the truth of its dogmas or the methods of its oper-

ations, yet the fact remains beyond the possibility of dispute, that the only aggressive force that is engaged in stemming the tide of corruption, and is seeking to pour into every avenue of society the healing streams of salvation, is that which centers in and radiates from the churches of Jesus Christ; and every day the activities of Christian beneficence are multiplying in number and power. The last hundred years have witnessed a marvelous revival of spiritual life. The churches have awakened from the slumber of ages, and have armed themselves for a contest with the powers of evil. Time would fail me to give statistics of the forces that have been organized, and victories that have been achieved. Christian people are beginning to learn as never before that the form of service which is most acceptable to God is that which is most beneficial to man. Under the leadership of William Carey the Baptists awoke Christendom to the work of carrying the Gospel to heathen lands, and to-day all over the distant portions of the globe, the soldiers of the cross are carrying the banners of salvation. Heathen temples are crumbling into dust. The cruelties of heathen rites are disappearing, and the nations sunken in the degradation of heathenism are being blessed by the light and health of Christian civilization. The preaching of Wesley and Whitfield in England and of Edwards and Tenney in America has resulted in starting into operation thousands of activities that are conspiring to regenerate society.

In every considerable city or village of the United States the members of Christian churches, by every conceivable method, are inaugurating movements for the repression of vice, for the reclamation of the lost, for the relief of the poor, for the care of destitute children, for the reforming of drunkards, for the bringing back of fallen women to purity and peace. Think of the thousands of men and women going down in the slums of degradation, visiting the prisons, climb-

ing into garrets, descending into cellars, in order to give bread to the hungry, clothing to the naked, comfort to the sorrowing, ministry to the sick, the dying and the dead.

And now tell me, who are these people engaged in these missions of mercy? Are they the men and women who spend their lives in luxury and dissipation? Are they the men and women who support the dens of infamy? Are they the men and women who denounce the Church and boast of their non-attendance upon its services? Nay, verily. Rather, they are the men and women who kneel at the altars of the living God, who trust in Jesus Christ for the pardon of their sins, and their hope of heaven, and whose souls have been touched by the fire of His divine compassion.

And, again, let me ask, who are the best friends of the higher forms of education?

Let statistics answer: In 1878 there were in the United States 376 collegiate institutions; of these, 64 were non-denominational and 312 were supported by the various Christian denominations of the land. In the founding and endowing of these institutions of learning, the churches of the country have given not less than \$68,000,000.

It is not our purpose to-night to discuss the question, whether the Bible is of divine inspiration or of human device; whether its teachings concerning God and Jesus Christ and a future life are true or false. So far as my present argument is concerned, infidelity and atheism may have the truth on their side; but what I assert is this: outside of Christianity, history proves that human nature is destitute of any power of self-regeneration, and that the vitalizing agencies for the promotion of the humanities of society have centered in Christian churches, and been disseminated by men and women who have believed in the truths of the Christian religion. And what I ask is this: How is it that the opposers of Christianity have either been lukewarm and indifferent in regard to humanitarian move-

ments, or proven the most active agents in sustaining institutions that give increase to vice, crime, wretchedness and despair?

The impression seems to prevail that a belief in God engenders an indifference to man; that love for Christ evaporates into vague and senseless sentimentalities, and that the rapture of faith in the unseen realities of the life to come, lifts its votaries above all concern for the woes and wants of the life that now is.

And our proposition is that Christianity is unique in this singular and exceptional respect: that it inspires men with the ideals of spiritual life whose effects express themselves in forms of practical sympathy with the material, social and æsthetic conditions of the present life. It proves itself to be a force that lifts up humanity to higher planes of terrestrial well-being in the proportion in which it inspires them with conceptions of the realities and glories of the unseen world. And for this reason, and by this process, it proves itself to be the only power that is earnest and active in relieving the distresses of pauperism; in reducing the force and number of the evils that lead to pauperism; in giving the highest forms of beauty to art, whether as expressed in marble or on canvas; in tuning music and poetry to their loftiest strains; in pervading jurisprudence with the commingled temper of justice and mercy; in imparting purity and stability to the family relation; in inciting to righteousness in the reciprocities of trade; in adorning social intercourse with amenities and grace; in lifting manhood into self-respect and nerving individual character to struggles after the attainment of all those traits that make for peace of mind and kindness of feeling as the permanent factors of personal experience. Surely, whatever may be our various theories concerning the abstract propositions of theology, every noble and generous-minded man will acknowledge that money spent in the support of institutions consecrated to these beneficent

ends, is not a waste. And surely appeals to such for aid to carry on these enterprises will find a sympathetic and practical response in the heart of every lover of his race.

Christianity as a beneficent force differs essentially from the two forces that are set to oppose its progress. Superstition has demanded and secured costily outlays in the erection of magnificent temples and the maintenance of gorgeous ceremonial; but it appeals only to the sensuous and selfish fears of its votaries. It has exhibited a contemptuous indifference to their sufferings and degradations, and has taught them to believe that contributions to its appointments purchased an immunity from retribution, and a liberty of indulgence in the orgies of debauchery and crime. Naturalism assumes the ability and disposition of human nature to improve itself. It proclaims the sufficiency of reason, enlightened by education and polished by culture, to quicken men into noble aspirations and into generous sympathies. But the experiment of the ages has demonstrated the fallacy of the pretense and the powerlessness of the undertaking.

Rome, in her palmy days, extended her military empire over the nations of the earth, and by her extortions from the conquered provinces she built those magnificent palaces, theatres and viaducts which made her capital the admiration of the world. She sought to amuse the masses by spectacular exhibitions of obscenity, and theatrical displays in which unarmed slaves and prisoners were compelled to fight for their lives with beasts of prey. Her palaces were fitted up with every device that could give zest to unchastity and expenditure in every extravagance of luxurious indulgence, while her toiling masses were denied the rights that are now accorded to the beasts of the field, and were left to perish under the stress of poverty, and rot in the stench of their degradation.

Greece has furnished to the race men who have given the highest specimens of philosophy, poetry and art which

the human mind, unaided by inspiration, has ever been able to attain. But her philosophies have been only sublime guesses and fraught with no utilitarian advantages. Her art has only given beauteous expression to lustful conceptions, and her poetry has only celebrated the glories of war and the attractions and intrigues of passion. In fact, the philosophers of human nature have been in every instance destitute of inspirations to beneficent and disinterested actions.

Naturalism talks of bettering the condition of society, but fails every time. The reason is that its only basis of appeal to the benevolent emotions is the reflex advantage to human selfishness. It calls upon you to be good and to be beneficent, simply because experience shows that the prevalence of vice and crime gives insecurity to life, property and rights. Its only standard of duty is self-interest, and its only inspiration to beneficence is self-protection.

Christianity, on the other hand, kindles the passion of disinterested benevolence. It awakens a sense of universal brotherhood. It reveals the transcendent secret that they only find the true life who lose their selfish lives in the love of doing good for its own sake. It constrains men not to count their own possessions or their own lives dear unto themselves, if so be they can give supply to the needy; if so be they impart consolation to the sorrowing or relief to those who are in distress; if so be they can save men from pathways of ruin and displace the agencies that work wretchedness to homes, dangers to society, and guilt to individual consciences, and in their stead inaugurate conditions of happy families, social well-being, and personal self-respect, peace and hope. And all these things it leads men to undertake with no expectation of reward or even gratitude; nay, despite reproaches and cursings from the recipients of their overtures of kindness and sympathy, and solely because their own hearts have been kindled into

sympathy with the spirit of that divine Master who went about doing good, and gave His life for His enemies. Naturalism, which is only another name for godlessness, can furnish no such inspiration and no such exemplar.

Christianity claims to be more than a revelation of dogma. It is an inspiration of life acting upon human nature from without, coming down from a supersensuous realm, and transforming character by an energy that is divine. Revealing the personality of a God infinite in every perfection, it makes His will the authoritative standard of moral conduct. It tells us that the nature of God is essentially love, manifesting His passion in the bounteousness of His provisions for the sustenance of the race; in His tenderness toward the suffering and His mercy toward the guilty. It calls men to reformation by offering pardon to guilt, and to nobler lives by the example of a divine incarnation. It offers help to feebleness by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It opens the gates of immortality and holds out crowns of glory hereafter to those who realize in this world characters assimilated to the spirit of its heaven-born enkindlings. In a word, Christianity is from above. It is the life of divine love coming down from heaven, dwelling among men and transforming a sin-cursed world into the paradise of God.

Ages long, long ago this planet swung through space a cold and desolate globe, black in Cimmerian darkness. To-day it is enswathed in the warmth and light of a genial atmosphere. Its surface is covered with verdure, herbage and fruit, and teems with myriad forms of life. And what has wrought this marvelous change? I answer, no process of atheistic evolution has melted its icy seas; no such process of evolution has turned its darkness into effulgence; no such process of evolution has caused the earth to bring forth its variety of product; no such process of evolution has painted its skies with gorgeous tints of beauty; no such process of evolution has peopled it with

life; but once upon a time a Divine Voice spake the fiat, "Let there be light; and light was." That light was from without, traveling through the density of the dark and cheerless gloom. In the lapse of eras it melted the icy seas into floods; it drank up the floods into clouds; it gilded the heavens with splendor; it carpeted the earth with verdure; it warmed the latent possibilities into active energies of seed and fruit and fitted up this world to be the residence of man.

And so in later ages a spiritual sun arose "with healing in its beams," and as its life and health-giving power permeates society, mankind is emerging out of mental darkness and moral night. The old economy of desolation and death is yielding its supremacy to the sway of a new heavens and a new earth—wherein aught that will harm or destroy shall find no place, and wherein all the people of all lands shall rejoice in the blessings of universal righteousness, peace and joy. Already society is throbbing with the pulsations of this new born life—and Christian toilers are beginning to count the days when the glad shout shall go up from the mountains and valleys of all lands, "Hallelujah, Hallelujah. The Lord God omnipotent reigneth, and the whole earth is full of His glory."

Now what we insist upon is this: The spirit of beneficent action has ever been the characteristic of the religion of the Bible. Those whose lives have been the most fully brought under the power of its truths have been seized with the passion of self-sacrifice on the altar of the temporal as well as the eternal well-being of their race. The Hebrew people were distinguished from their contemporaries by their consecration to the claims of humanity. The seasons of their greatest piety were marked by their zeal in the cause of philanthropy. Their provisions for the poor and the stranger, their jurisprudence and their moral enactments were pervaded by those lessons of justice and mercy, of righteousness and truth, which they gathered from the spirit

of their worship. "In every age," says the infidel Renan, "Judaism was noted for its careful attention to the poor and the fraternal charity which it inspired."

Jesus of Nazareth gave the sanction of His divine claims to these ministries of love. He identified Himself with the poor, the suffering and the oppressed. He proved the divinity of His mission by His deep, compassionate regard for the temporal as well as the eternal well-being of mankind. He concentrated the marvelous energies of His miraculous power to the special service of feeding the hungry, of healing the sick, of pardoning the guilty, and of bringing comfort to the bereaved by calling their dead back to life. He inculcated the sublime lessons of self-sacrifice, and crowned His mission by the giving up of His own life to the good of mankind. He inspired His immediate followers with the spirit that animated Himself. Says Renan, "It is certain that the vital thoughts of Jesus filled the souls of His disciples, and directed all their acts. Justice demands, indeed, that to Jesus should be reierred the honor of the great deeds of His apostles. It is probable that during His life He laid the foundations of those establishments which were successfully developed so soon after His death."

The first concern of the infant church at Jerusalem was the organization of a vast and all-pervading system of charity, and the New Testament is freighted with injunctions to the exhibition of love and good will in every phase and variety of social conditions.

Renan regards these early communistic phases as showing a "surprising resemblance to certain Utopian experiments of modern times, but," he adds, "with the important difference that Christian communism rested on a religious basis, which is not the case with modern socialism. It is evident that an association whose dividends were declared, not in proportion to the capital subscribed, but in proportion to individual needs, must rest only upon a sentiment of exalted abnegation and an

ardent faith in a religious idea." Such a confession from such a source is an invaluable acknowledgment of the transcendent power of Christian faith in the ideals of the unseen world to inspire men with lofty and self-sacrificing sympathy with the woes and wants of mankind.

If my limits permitted, how easy it would be to show the wondrous contrast, in this respect, of the spirit of early Christianity from that of the surrounding heathenism? The poor died of starvation, the suffering rotted with disease, the wretched languished in despair, and the immoral sunk still lower and lower in the filth of their degradation; and not until the humble servants of the Nazarene went forth on their errands of mercy was ever a hand stretched out to help, or a word of cheer whispered in the ear of despair. In the language of the French infidel already quoted, "it is when we look upon the Roman world that we are the most astonished at the miracles of charity performed by the Church. Never did a profane society, recognizing only right for its basis, produce such admirable effects. The law of every profane, or, if I may say so, every philosophic system of society, is liberty—sometimes equality, but never fraternity. To charity, viewed as a right, it acknowledges no obligation; it pays only attention to individuals; it finds charity inconvenient, and often neglects it."

Time fails me to speak of the beneficent effects of Christianity in the various relations of human life. I cannot pause to tell the changes it has wrought and is still working in jurisprudence, domestic life, and political economy. I am tempted, however, to make one more quotation from Renan, regarding the influence of Christianity upon woman. He says: "The wise men of that day considered woman as a scourge to humanity; as the first cause of baseness and shame; as an evil genius, whose only part in life was to impair whatever there was good in the opposite sex. Christianity changed all this." Again he remarks: "The moral liberty

of woman began when the Church gave her, in Jesus, a friend and guide who advised and consoled her, and always listened to her grievances. Woman never had a religious conscience, or a moral individuality, or an opinion of her own previous to Christianity."

Now, Christian edifices are erected where men may learn those truths that fit them to become factors in this grand work of the world's regeneration, and where they may receive inspiration by their devotions to engage in the service, and where they may organize measures to make their work practical and efficient. And I submit that, when we consider the purposes to which they are devoted, will you denounce the expenditure as a waste, and withhold your contributions to erect and sustain them?

This question is one of moment and importance to the people of Colorado. This vast State is destined to teem with a busy, active, and intelligent population. This city is a wondrous attestation of the energy of her people, and a prophecy of the material prosperity that shall reward the industries of the State. And, gentlemen of Colorado, can you wisely afford to disregard and despise those moral agencies which lie at the basis of all true social prosperity, and which only Christian enterprise is qualified to afford? Look at the character of our population throughout the State. Remember that in many of our counties there is not even the semblance of a Christian organization, and note the result. In every town, village, and hamlet on our plains and in our mountains, unnumbered agencies of evil are flaunting their attractions of vice, and are reaping their heritage of violence, crime, and infamy. The sanctities of domestic life are violated, and the principles of integrity are being undermined. The toilers in departments of Christian effort are few, and their organizations are only feebly sustained. Shall these things go on, with no attempt to restrain and reform? The answer must depend largely on the citizens of Denver. I bless God that so many activities are here at work; and

the erection of this edifice which we open to-night is a contribution of Christian zeal to the moral and spiritual regeneration of the present and coming population of the State. In dedicating this building to the service of God, we consecrate it to the highest and holiest interests of man. We give it to the citizens of Denver and the people of Colorado. We invite within its doors the rich and the poor, and promise to preach from its pulpit that gospel of humanity which shall woo our youths from the haunts of dissipation; which shall inculcate to our men of business lessons of commercial integrity; which shall encourage co-operation in all measures which shall relieve pauperism, repress vice, maintain municipal order, and make Denver a city that shall be as glorious in every moral and virtuous attainment as it is now distinguished for the beauty of its situation, the comfort of its homes, the grandeur of its common schools, and magnificence of its public institutions. Above all—moved by an unswerving faith in the realities and blessings of that life to come, which the Gospel alone brings to light—we offer this building as an asylum in which the poor, the distressed, and the suffering shall find consolation and hope; where the guilty shall find pardon for sin, and the earth-born shall be started on their way to the blessedness of the life to come.

Citizens of Denver, accept the gift, and join hands with us in giving success to a noble and disinterested undertaking.

And now, O Lord! "Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants and Thy glory unto their children, and let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us; and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it."

THOUGHTS PROPERLY ARRAYED.—The greatest thoughts are wronged, if not linked with beauty; and they win their way most surely and deeply into the soul when arrayed in their own natural and fit attire.—*Channing.*

THE CHRISTIAN'S FUTURE.

By H. A. BUTTZ, D.D., PRESIDENT OF
DREW THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, IN
THE HANSON PLACE M. E. CHURCH,
BROOKLYN.

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us, etc.—Rom. viii: 18-24.

1. THESE words which I have read may be fitly called a picture of the Christian's future. They constitute a part of that great song of triumph in which the apostle Paul sets forth the final glorification of the people of God. This song includes in its scope the whole range of human history, from the fall of man to his restoration to God. It has been expounded thousands of times, yet must ever remain of the deepest interest and the most practical significance. The apostle, in writing these words, had not done so after coming to a hasty conclusion, but after giving them careful consideration. He did not deem the sufferings through which the early Church was passing, light; he knew how they were persecuted and beaten, but he says these severe sufferings shall not be worthy of consideration when compared with the glory which shall be revealed in them. The glory of the Christian is hidden in this world; that of the sinner is seen. The advantages of the ungodly are known of all men, while those of the Christian are unnoticed and not thoroughly known by themselves; and so it will be until the final manifestation in the other world.

2. The earnest expectation of the creature referred to in the text refers to looking forward eagerly, like a person with head bent forward, to catch the meaning of a distant sound. The word creature primarily means a created being. You will find two special meanings assigned to it in the Scripture—one where it refers to all created beings, and the other where it speaks of preaching the Gospel to every creature, where it must mean human, intelligent beings. The word must have limitations defined by its connections. I think the proper

view is that it represents all created beings, rational and irrational. The apostle represents man, and that part of the world which he inhabits, as groaning for deliverance from the bondage of corruption to the glorious liberty of the children of God. The tendency of man is to sin, and to be unwilling to bear the penalty; but, by the rule of Him who created us, penalty is brought upon sin, and suffering upon transgression. But this subjection is not final, for there is the hope that we shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption.

3. This text takes into consideration the whole economy of human redemption. First, the wreck of the whole rational and material world by Adam's sin. No one believes this world was always as it now is. All admit that it has passed through great convulsions and changes since its beginning. In the Word of God we find that man was made faultless. Some believe that man began in a low state, and has since worked up to his present condition. I believe the truer philosophy, the truer thought, is that man has become degraded from that he was at first. If you will turn to the Scriptures, you will learn that man was made perfect. His mind was clear, and his mental and moral powers were absolutely perfect and complete. He was without sin.

4. "What relation can possibly exist between man's sin and the natural world?" I cannot tell you, excepting it is simply a divine order relating to this world, through which man and his environment sin together. Man becomes degraded: his environment becomes degraded. Man becomes lifted up: his surroundings become lifted up. I do not inquire the cause; I only tell you God has so ordered it. Turn to history, and you will find in such proportion as man rises up, nature rises with him; as he sinks down, the world sinks down with him. This fact we also know: that a man connects himself with his surroundings. Take an artist; go into his house: you will find every part filled with beautiful pictures.

Take the scholar: you will find those books in his library which indicate the tendency of the man's mind. Take the business man: you will find him surrounded with those things which show his thoughts and mode of thinking. These reveal the fact that there is something in man in harmony with his surroundings—something which reveals the relation between his moral and mental condition, and the things he enjoys. All the great thinkers and poets have thought that in the history of the past there is a great chasm that has been brought about by something. My text says it was brought about by one transgression. Thereby the whole world fell, and is now looking for final restoration.

5. Christianity is full of hope. The heathen have always been hoping for restoration from the condition in which they have found themselves placed. Men have always been desiring to be something better. No matter where you find man, under what religion, or without it, you will find him aspiring for something better, and trying to rise to a higher condition. This wonderful chapter in which my text is found is one of the most marvelous expressions of the human heart found in literature. The greatest men have been those who longed the most. It is a restored and glorified manhood for which men are longing. They are striving to break the bonds of sin; to be restored to the image of God. No one wants to be an angel. No one wants to be of another class of beings. We do not wish to change with the angels, but we wish for that which the Word of God promises us—a pure soul, dwelling in a pure body. We shall be restored to primitive purity. This is the doctrine of the Christian faith.

6. This gives certainty to our hopes. Uncertainty was the weakness of paganism. I do not know of any theory advanced to-day in the world of so-called modern thought, that has any more hope or certainty attached to it, looking to the future, than paganism had. Go to nature, geology, philosophy, and ask what is in store for you, and there is no

answer. The growing flowers and grass in the spring time are analogies, but not proofs. But there is the great stone at the sepulchre—He shall roll it away. Now all is darkness—He shall give me hope. There is One who arose; I shall arise. He lives; I shall live. On that great fact in the world's history we take our stand, and firmly stand as on the eternal rock. The whole hope and aspiration of His people are full of certainty, because Christ has demonstrated this fact, that we shall rise again. It is this hope that makes men endure present trials and sufferings. A modern divine has said that the decadence of modern life is due to the tendency of men to devote themselves to that which is low rather than to that which is high. The result is that the standard of moral character is lowered. You cannot make a grand life out of a person with low ideas. The measure of life is largely the measure of its hopes and aspirations. Such hopes as are in my text would elevate any life. The Christian religion is made up of everything that will inspire the mind of man. Its hopes are so grand that the Christian should be grand, holy, noble, pure, and good. Alas! that so many people never lift their hopes above their business. An old German poet represents all races of men—past, present, and future—as standing between two black curtains. No voice comes out of the darkness, and naught is heard but a hollow echo. German poet, thou knowest nothing about it. There is no darkness on either side. The past is revealed in God's Word; the future is opened by the life and death of Christ.

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VICTORY IN DEFEAT.—Sincere devotion to his studies and an unswerving love of truth ought to furnish the true scholar with an armor impermeable to flattery or abuse, and with a vigor that shuts out no ray of light, from whatever quarter it may come. More light, more truth, more facts, more combination of facts—these are his quest. And if in that quest he fails, he knows that in the search for truth failures are sometimes the condition of victory.—*Max Muller.*

THE BLESSING OF MERCIFULNESS.

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

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.—Matt. v: 7.

I. WHAT IS THE CHARACTER OF THIS MERCIFULNESS?

It is a quality exercised between man and man, independent of written law, and which is not so much certain acts of forgiveness as a temper of the soul.

To be merciful is not to do an act of mercy here and there; to be swept away, on impulse, into forgiveness of a wrong; to be pitiful on Monday and hard on Tuesday; to forget you have been injured, and then, in moments of irritation, to remember it again and re-impose the penalty or speak again the bitter word. That is not to be merciful; though those who do these sudden acts are called, for the time, merciful people. No; to be truly merciful is to have the temper all through life, from morning to night, which is pitiful of wrong and forgiving of injury; which, having once pitied the wrong-doer, begins to love him; which, having once forgiven the injury, wholly forgets it. It is a temper which makes him who has it, not so much sorry that he has been injured, but first and most naturally sorry that the injurer should have the heart to be capable of doing the wrong. The sense of injury is wholly lost in pity for the sin, in passionate desire that the injured should be freed from the misery of his wrongfulness. That was the mercifulness of Jesus, when He cried: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." All sense of the cruelty inflicted on Him was lost in utter longing that they who nailed Him to the cross might be saved from the possession of a heart that could be cruel. This, then, is the temper of mercy; and, of course, where mercy is thus attended with love all memory of the wrong done perishes, and with it, also, all memory of the merciful act of forgiveness. It is never gone back upon. The injurer is never reminded that he has

been guilty and has been forgiven; reminded till he feels—so bitter is the obligation made—that he had rather not have been forgiven. And, indeed, that is not forgiveness at all. Mercy is not mercy when it remembers that it has been merciful. Many phrases of the prophets dwell on this, as part of the essence of God's mercy. "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us."

Mercifulness, then, is a quality of the whole nature; a certain soft, sweet, tender, gentle, gracious atmosphere in which the whole man lives and breathes; in which he continually acts toward injury and wrong; and under its warm and sunny rays injury and wrong melt away day by day, like icebergs that come floating down into the tropical stream. And those are blest who have it. They live in soft sunshine of their own making, and in it all the simple charities of life, which are like the common flowers that adorn and make sweet the woods and fields, flourish until the whole world rejoices in the life of those who live by mercy. And their speech is delightful as the songs of birds, and their daily acts like the soft murmur of such streams as gently flow through meadows. In all this inward beauty of soul they are blest indeed, for mercy blesses him who gives it.

II. THE REWARD.

"For they shall obtain mercy." "What!" men say, "am I to be merciful in order that I may obtain mercy? Do I want a reward for doing good? Then it is a selfish effort, after all, and Christ puts it on a selfish ground!" It is almost fashionable now to make this accusation against the teaching of Christ; and no accusation can be more foolish. It is an accusation which partly arises from the use of the word "reward," which is taken to mean something given as a favor, not necessarily connected with the work done. The proper word would be fruit—at least until we allot to the word "reward" its true meaning in the spiritual life—the exact result of the work done. Such is the

meaning Christ would have given to it. If ever there was a spirit and an intellect on earth that had a reverence for law, it was Jesus Christ, and He laid down the laws of the spiritual world—that is, He declared in words things that were constant in that world. He was the preacher of a strict Science of Religion. And He did not mean here that a man was to be merciful for the sake of obtaining mercy from God, but that, if he were merciful, he would, as a necessary result, obtain mercy; and that he would be blessed because he was merciful, and because he obtained it. Each tree of goodness produces its own fruit, after its own kind. What a man sowed within he reaped within, and as certainly as, in the outward world, wheat produced wheat, and hemlock hemlock. A special grace practised produced its own special state of spirit, and that was its reward—its fruit, as I should call it; but the reward was necessarily and lawfully connected with it. And mercy was the reward of mercy. Those who gave mercy got mercy.

And now, to enforce this further: Do the unmerciful obtain mercy from God? No; and I strengthen the law that the merciful obtain mercy by showing that the unmerciful cannot obtain it. Cursed are the unmerciful, for they shall obtain unmercifulness, is a law just as true as the other.

And if you call it selfish to live in mercy, to pursue it with the purpose of obtaining more mercy inwardly, with the desire to be more at one with the everlasting mercy of God—if that, in your eyes, can be called a selfish effort—why, then, Heaven have mercy on your intellect!

THE GLAD FAREWELLS.—There is yet time for all of us to make many hearts glad. Among all the farewells that are sad, let us scatter a few with glad hearts. Let us say good-by to selfishness, to unkindness, to bitter words, to evil thoughts, and let us welcome, with never a farewell, the dawn and day of charity and love.—*Anoa.*

THE SPIRIT GLORIFYING JESUS.

BY C. E. W. DOBBS, D.D., IN THE VINE STREET BAPTIST CHURCH, MADISON, INDIANA.

He shall glorify Me.—John xvi: 14.

OUR text presents, very tersely, the mission of the Holy Spirit: "He shall glorify Me." So in chapter xv: 26: "He shall testify of Me." This is the grand purpose of the coming of the promised One. Dying under the ban of his countrymen; dying as a condemned evil-doer; "numbered with the transgressors;" to unbelieving Jew and mocking Gentile the name of Jesus was the synonym of imposture and "foolishness." But the coming Spirit of truth would so testify to His veracity and worth that He would be vindicated and glorified.

I. *The Spirit glorified Jesus by guiding the disciples into the fullness of the truth concerning His divinity.* In revealing truth, God has ever adapted His method and substance to the capacity and necessity of His people. Even the great Teacher taught as the disciples were "able to bear it." Ever has there been a "progress of doctrine" in the school of heaven. The promised Spirit was to "guide into all truth." While our Lord was with them they knew Him not in the fullness of His divinity. They, indeed, "beheld His glory." They hailed Him as the "Son of God," wonderfully endued with power from on high; yet they never fully grasped the grand truth of His essential divinity. He must be "glorified" before all the beauty of the Lord could flash into their hearts. The Spirit must come to glorify Him by guiding them into the fullness of doctrine concerning the Son of God. They were as those entering upon an unknown territory. They know not its scenes of historic interest, its landscapes of exquisite beauty. Some competent guide must direct. The disciples had but crossed the border of the territory of divine truth.

In this guidance our Lord promised: "He shall take of mine and shall declare it unto you. All things whatso-

ever the Father hath are mine." How little did they yet know of the mystery of these words! But, taught by the Spirit, they came to know the glory of their Lord, and to worship Him in the fullness of His eternal fellowship with His Father, as "God over all, blessed forever."

II. *The Spirit glorified our Lord in the work of the apostles.* Never was so glorious a mission given unto men as that to which the disciples were called. How sublime the words of the risen Savior: "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ye shall be my witnesses, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts i: 8.) Witnesses to the glory of Jesus! Everywhere they were to tell men about Jesus; everywhere they were to proclaim His "sufferings, and the glory that should follow." So we find them ever, under the Spirit's guidance, fulfilling their mission, glorifying their Lord. On the first day of Pentecost, after they were filled with the Spirit, the burden of their testimony was the glory of Jesus. When, at the gate Beautiful, the lame man was made to leap in the vigor of his divinely-given strength, Peter and John took the crown of applause tendered them by the admiring multitude, and placed it on the head of Jesus. So, before the council: "Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, * * * be it known unto you all, that in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even in Him doth this man stand here before you whole." (Acts iv: 8-10.) Thus, everywhere, the Spirit glorified Jesus in the ministry of the apostles.

III. *The Spirit glorified Jesus by ever guiding the penitent to Him as the one only Savior.* The "baptism in the Holy Spirit"—that special and extraordinary inspiration whereby the soul was miraculously endowed—was peculiar to the apostles and the apostolic age. We may not claim that now; but the convicting, regenerating, and sanctifying

mission of the Spirit is continuous and continuous with the Christian dispensation. And in His blessed agency the Spirit yet glorifies our Lord. In regeneration He humbles the soul by convicting of sin; shows to the awakened conscience the sinner's carnal depravity and guilt; reveals his wretchedness and helplessness as lost. When these lessons, honestly received in the heart, have awakened genuine penitence, the Spirit guides to the cross, casts the soul at the feet of Jesus, and reveals Him as the sinner's Friend—glorifies Him as the Prince and Savior who giveth remission of sins.

IV. *The Spirit glorifies Jesus by ever presenting Him as the model and inspiration of the Christian life.* The Spirit sanctifies the believer, as well as regenerates the sinner. In carrying forward that process of sanctification, He ever holds before the eye of the child of grace the holy life of our Lord. Paul assures us (Rom. viii: 29) that the glorious end of God's predestinating grace is that all who love Him may be "conformed to the image of His Son." "We all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory by the Spirit." (2 Cor. iii: 18.) So Peter sets before us the two parallel lines along which our sanctification proceeds: "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever." (2 Peter iii: 18.)

In this last discourse our Lord said to His disciples: "Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." Even so do we glorify our Master when we bring forth the fruits of the Spirit—"love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance." (Gal. v: 22.)

BEAUTIES HIDDEN IN TEXTS.—Texts have been compared to those flints which, when struck open by the hammer, reveal a Drusic cavity full of crystals of the color of amethyst—"purple with such a dawn as never was on land or sea."—*Canon Farrar*

EARNEST EXPOSTULATION.

BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON, IN THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, LONDON.

Or despise thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?—Rom. ii: 4.

I WILL give nothing for that preaching that is like the sheet-lightning, flaming over a broad expanse, but altogether harmless. The apostle fixes his eye on a single person who had condemned others for transgressions in which he himself indulged; one who did not place his candle on his table to light his own room, but held it out at the door, to inspect therewith his neighbors who passed by. He thinks he shall escape in the future, and so despises the present goodness and long-suffering of the Most High.

Let me speak to thee, unregenerate man, of—

I. THE GOODNESS OF GOD WHICH THOU HAST EXPERIENCED.

1. *In temporal things.* You have, perhaps, been prospered above your fellows. God has granted you wealth and health. You are happy in your wife and children. A thousand evils have been kept from you.

2. *In spiritual things.* You are in the very focus of Christian light. The Word of God is on your table; you hear the earnest preaching of the Gospel. A tender conscience makes your road to perdition peculiarly hard. The Spirit has so striven with you that you were at times almost ready to drop into the Savior's arms.

3. He has been *forbearing and long-suffering for your sins.* Forbearance has to do with the magnitude of sin; long-suffering, with the multiplicity of it. Many have been snatched from vice only to return to its deep ditch of filthiness. They have trembled on the brink of death, yet God has permitted them to recover strength. They slight His love, yet He perseveres in it. How many years you have been heaping up the loads of transgression! Yet here

you are still, on praying ground and pleading terms with God.

Think, also, who and what God is, who displays this long-suffering. Think of His *goodness*: why should you provoke Him? Think of His *omniscience*: every transgression is committed in His very presence. Think of how *powerful* He is: your wicked heart would cease to beat if He should withdraw His power. Think of His *purity*: sin is much more intolerable to Him than to us.

II. THE SIN OF WHICH THOU ART SUSPECTED.

Some despise God's goodness, forbearance, and long-suffering, because—

1. *They never even gave a thought to it.* God has given you life, and indulged you with kindness; yet it has never occurred to you that this patience is worthy of the smallest thanks. You have been of no service to your Maker, nor even thought of being of service to Him. Others have, perhaps, thought of it, but *never meditated thereon.*

2. *Because they imagine God does not take any great account of what they do.* So long as they avoid gross and open sin, they think it of light consequence not to love God.

3. *They think the threatenings of God will never be fulfilled.* They think, because the blow is long delayed, it never will come.

III. THE KNOWLEDGE OF WHICH THOU ART FORGETFUL.

The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance—

1. *By giving opportunity to repent.* All these years have been given you, that you might turn to God: yet you are spared only to multiply your transgressions.

2. *By suggestions to repent.* Life and death, heaven and hell, call upon you so to do. Every page of the Bible, every sermon, calls you to repent. Nature is full of voices warning you.

3. *By leading to repentance.* His mercies lead you. If they fail, He turns you by admonition. He leads you; hence He will help you, and will accept your repentance.

THE MEDIATORSHIP OF CHRIST.

By REV. A. HUELSTER, PH.D., EVANGELICAL CHURCH, JOLIET, ILL.

For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave Himself a ransom for all.—1 Tim. ii: 5, 6.

I. *The mediatorship of Christ is conditioned upon the unity of God.*

1. "There is one God." The great error of the pagan world is its polytheism. If there be a God at all, He can be but one. A plurality of gods would imply a diversity, an antagonism of governorship; there would be hostility, war, among them. But, "a house divided against itself cannot stand." There could not possibly be any unity of action regarding the whole human race.

2. It is certainly marvelous, in view of this fact, that men are so prone to make unto themselves many gods. Heathen nations number their deities by the hundred and thousand. The besetting sin, even of Israel, was idol-worship—a "going after strange gods." And how many there are to-day who set their affections upon a thousand other things, thus making idols of them, but not on God, to whom alone they owe supreme obedience and love!

II. *It is conditioned upon the unity of the human race.*

1. If there were many gods there would be many races. The nations of antiquity had each their *national* gods, in contradistinction to those of others. (See 2 Kings, 18.) Each nation would have to obtain special terms of agreement with its peculiar deities. There could be no atonement of universal significance.

2. Therefore, the great stress to be laid upon the generic unity of mankind from a Biblical standpoint. (See, *e. g.*, Rom. v: 12; Acts xvii: 24.) There is one God, and all men are His offspring. Consequently, as sin and death entered by one man, so the free gift of grace and life from God can extend to all by Jesus Christ.

However depraved pagan nations may be, even the most degraded Bushmen

of Africa are members with us of the same human family. As regards the light thrown upon this question at least, we welcome the theory of evolution. All are circumscribed by the love of God, and included in the plan of redemption. What an incentive to missionary endeavor, Christian activity to rescue the perishing!

THE LORD'S SUPPER: A EUCHARIST.

By THE REV. DAVID GREGG, IN THIRD REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (SCOTCH COVENANTER), NEW YORK.

Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it.

** * * And He took the cup, and when*

He had given thanks, He gave it to them.

—Mark xiv: 22, 23.

THE blessing of the bread and the giving of thanks over the cup, in the Lord's Supper, are similar acts. This is evident from the words of Paul. In 1 Corinthians x: 16, he calls the cup over which thanksgiving is offered, "the cup of blessing": "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?" If this be true, then Jesus offered two thanksgivings at the institution of the Lord's Supper—one over the bread and one over the cup. In using the Passover wine, which stood as the index of the productiveness of the land, the Hebrews were vehement and prolonged in their expressions of gratitude and thanksgiving to God. Jesus, in building up the Lord's Supper out of the Passover, carried the thanksgiving of the old ordinance into the new. Because of His emphatic twofold thanksgiving, the Lord's Supper was known to the early Church by the name of the Eucharist—i. e., "the Thanksgiving." The term Eucharist, which means "thanksgiving," is the Greek word Anglicized. As the Lord's Supper was a vast advance upon the Passover, the thanksgiving of Christ was a great remove beyond the thanksgiving of the Hebrews. He saw higher things; He saw grander purposes of God. They saw Canaan, He saw heaven. They saw the past, He saw the future. Let us

not forget that Christ gives character to the ordinances which He institutes, and through which He communicates to His people His thoughts, His grace, His hopes, His feelings, His spirit—Himself. Was the Lord's Supper a thanksgiving to Him? Then it must be a thanksgiving to His people who sit down with Him in this ordinance and receive of His fullness.

We want to look at the Lord's Supper as an ordinance of thanksgiving, that we may have greater desire and pleasure and profit in its celebration. God unfolds to us the different attributes of this beautiful ordinance, that we may be attracted to it. He means every attribute to be a persuasive argument enforcing obedience to the command: "This do in remembrance of Me."

I. IT MUST BE A THANKSGIVING ORDINANCE IN ORDER TO REPRESENT ARIGHT THE FEAST WHICH IT SUPERSEDES.

It supersedes the Passover. Why? Not because it is in contrast with the Passover: not for the reason that one man is made to supersede another in office, because his predecessor was wrong and an opposite policy must be followed. The Lord's Supper supersedes the Passover because it is in the same line and is an advance in the same direction. It comes in under the necessity of growth, just as the fruit follows the blossom. It is not without design that the Passover cup and bread are made the cup and bread of the Lord's Supper. There is a unity in the two ordinances. They are both social in character, and emblematical, in a large measure, of the same doctrines. They are both commemorative. The advance in the execution of God's great purposes, and the entrance of man upon the grander realities of an accomplished redemption, require an enlargement of the ordinance, and demand that the typo-symbolical Passover give place to the purely symbolical Lord's Supper. It is evident that the spirit of the old ordinance must be carried into the new, developed and intensified.

What was the reigning spirit of the Passover? Joy and thanksgiving. We

are accustomed to look upon the old Jewish religion as a yoke, and we have Scripture for this. But let us not lose sight of this fact: It was a yoke that drew after it a great load of blessings and of prospects. It was a religion of feasts, and carried with it only one divinely-appointed fast-day—the day of atonement. The sacred times were joy times; and these returned and left, came and went, until the Year of Jubilee was reached. Then there was a fresh start to the jubilees beyond. The services demanded by this religion were many; but the spirit which God meant to reign in all was the spirit of the feast-day. Look at the Sabbath of the Jews, which is so discounted by modern public opinion: it is regarded as severe, and grinding, and enslaving. If one judged the Jewish Sabbath by popular estimation, he must conclude that God meant to afflict the Hebrews when He put them under the Sabbath ordinance. Bad as the Sabbath was for the Jew, we must conclude that it was awful for the stranger within the gates, who was compelled to honor the Sabbath law. But what saith the Word? It gives the true reason of the Sabbath: "Six days shalt thou work, and on the seventh thou shalt rest, that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and *the stranger may be refreshed.*" In God's sight, the Sabbath meant refreshment; and hence He told His people to call it "a delight." The Passover was not an exception among the religious appointments of the Jews. It was full of thanksgiving memories. It recalled the safety of the Hebrews from the death-angel, who turned Egypt into a house of mourning; it spoke of the omnipotent arm made bare; it lifted to view the origin of the nation and the source of national blessings; and it spoke of the Abrahamic covenant. For fifteen centuries it made the Israelites feel that God's goodness to their fathers was God's goodness to them. To them it made the difference between slavery and freedom, ignorance and knowledge, Egypt and Canaan. When I read the history of the Passover I do not wonder that it

was the one occasion of the sacred year in which the people of God sung the grand Hallel of the Scripture psalter. It was a praise season, and it was fitting that the praise psalms should be used.

II. THE LORD'S SUPPER MUST BE A THANKSGIVING ORDINANCE BECAUSE OF ITS GROUPING OF GREAT FACTS.

Men often take the facts which it exalts, and look at them, and place them out of the relations in which the Lord's Supper has placed them. The result is, the whole nature of the institution is changed, and this changed their feelings and moods and expectations. They substitute for joy and thanksgiving the spirit of fear, superstition, legalism. They claim to be Scriptural, because the facts with which they deal are the very facts exalted by the Lord's Supper. We grant that the facts with which they deal are the very facts exalted by this ordinance; but we make this emphatic: they have been wrung from their proper relations as grouped and arranged by the Lord's Supper. A fact taken out of its Scripture grouping and wrongly placed, is like the safety beacon taken from the harbor pier and run up over the rock that wrecks the ship. Truth, out of God's appointed place, is deceptive. The human face, as God has made it, possesses a wonderful charm. It is a thing of beauty, and a joy. It courts study and scrutiny. No one tires of looking into a beautiful face. The reason for this is, God has given to every feature and organ its proper place, and the setting of all is mutually helpful. Separate the face into parts, and look at it in a dissected state. Take the human eye, severed from the countenance, and look at it. Dissection is its dishonourment. Its fascinating power has gone: it is a dull, dead, repulsive thing. To appreciate the human eye you must see it reigning in the midst of the beauty of the human face. Like the features of the human face, the facts exalted by the Lord's Supper must be viewed in their divinely-appointed associations.

Let us remember that the Lord's Supper is an ordinance given to the friends of Jesus Christ who have en-

tered upon the saved life, and that it is intended to help them realize their privileges. The Lord's Supper takes the most terrible facts of history and experience, and groups them with the grandest of realities in such a way that our souls break forth into hallelujahs.

There are no more terrible facts than these—the existence of sin; its hold upon the human heart; man's deadness by nature in trespasses and in sins; the awful wrath of God against sin. These facts, looked at alone, standing by themselves, fill with fear and gloom and despair. They separate us from God as far as hell is separated from heaven. Now all these facts are exalted by the Lord's Supper, but they are not exalted alone. This is what a great many people overlook. These facts are linked to the grandest and most glorious realities in the spiritual realm. The terrible fact of the existence of sin is linked with the fact of a Savior and a completed redemption. Have we not in this ordinance bread and wine? And are not these bloodless emblems? The bloody emblems of the former economy spake of a sacrificial death to be accomplished; but these bloodless emblems of the present dispensation speak to us of that death as accomplished. They repeat the victorious shout of the dying Christ, "It is finished." The terrible fact of our sentence of death under the law is linked with Christ's substitution and His suffering in our low place—"*This is my body broken for you.*" The terrible fact of our deadness by nature is linked with the fact that we "take and eat," and thus allow Christ to enter into us and live in us. This is the grouping of facts as we have them in the Lord's Supper. The terrible things are linked to glorious things, and the glorious things are first. It is first Jesus, then the sinner. This is the order in which we are to read the facts: *The Savior*, who has delivered us from our sins; *the Savior*, who has suffered for us; *the Savior*, who has completed forever our redemption; *the Savior* sustaining us in the saved life and living in us. It is your privilege to lift the

voice of thanksgiving and shout, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus."

Turn to the grouping of other facts in the Lord's Supper, and learn the same lesson, viz.: that the facts, as presented by the Lord's Supper, make it a thanksgiving ordinance. It presents the fact of Christ crucified, but it does not leave this sad fact to stand alone: it joins it with the fact of Christ risen. We not only see the cross, but we see the empty tomb, and the empty tomb means that the crucifixion has accomplished its purpose. The Lord's Supper brings before us the personal absence of Jesus from the world. It recalls the separation at Olivet. As we walk with Jesus and His disciples, we see in the distance a brightness like a burning star. It draws nearer, and the splendor enlarges until it fills the whole dome with a glory beyond the noon-day sun. What is this wonder? It is the majesty of the holy angels whom the Father has sent to take Christ to His reward. Encircling Jesus, they bear Him up through the clear atmosphere and away from His disciples. This personal absence of Jesus, whom we keep in remembrance by the Lord's Supper, is exalted before us by this ordinance; but it is exalted in connection with His personal coming again. "Ye do show the Lord's death till He come." There is no weightier fact than His coming again. It carries in it the prepared mansions, the fulfillment of prophecy, the kingdom of glory, the meeting of departed friends, and the glorious reign as kings and priests unto God. The grouping of these facts can mean nothing else but joy and thanksgiving to those who are in Christ Jesus.

III. THE LORD'S SUPPER MUST BE A THANKSGIVING ORDINANCE BECAUSE OF ITS RELATION TO THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

It is a seal of the covenant of grace. Christ's words are, "This cup is the new testament [or covenant] in My blood." These words are a parallel with those He utters when He puts the bread into our hands, "This is My

body broken for you;" *i. e.*, this bread is a symbol speaking to you and assuring you that My body was broken for you. This cup is the seal, the evidence, the assurance of the covenant ratified and made effectual by My blood.

What are we to understand by the New Covenant? Christ represents His people and undertakes for them. He does this because, having violated the covenant of works, they are covenant-breakers and debtors to God, and can no longer enter into covenant upon their own responsibility. Christ, in putting the cup into our hands, tells us that He is our covenant, and that true covenanting at His table is the taking of Him and the hiding of our life with Christ in God. Hence the only acts which He prescribes in the Lord's Supper for us; in our relations to Him, are these: "Take and eat;" "Take and drink." These actions indicate that at the Lord's table we are to be receptive. The covenant-making and the covenant-fulfilling, these Jesus does Himself. He asks us only to accept of Him and His work. This view brings before us and keeps before us the teaching of the Gospel—that God can do nothing but give, and we can do nothing but take; that salvation is altogether of grace. This view strikes a killing blow at that spirit of legalism and self-sufficiency which would make this feast of grace a place of bargaining with God and a medium of offering Him good works at a premium.

Let us awaken to the truth that the Lord's Supper is a seal of the covenant of grace. The use of a seal is to confirm, to attest the truth and value and reliability of that to which it is affixed. That cancelled mortgage which the Father keeps and shows to His children is a seal, a witness of His past sacrifice and labor by which He purchased the home for His loved ones. It assures them of His forethought for them. It is an assurance that all the debt is paid. Like it, the Lord's Supper speaks to us of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, by which He paid the price of our redemption. With the Euchar-

istic character of the Lord's Supper before us,

1. *Let us celebrate it in the exercise of faith.* It is "by faith that we are made partakers of the body and blood of Christ." Faith corresponds to the bodily acts of eating and drinking. Through eating and drinking, food, which is foreign to us, becomes part of us. It beams in the eye, quivers in the lip, throbs in the heart, enters into the mysterious chambers of the brain, and becomes thought and life. Through our faith, Christ, with His thoughts and purposes and spirit, passes into our souls and lives by and in us. Our cause for thanksgiving is, Christ in us the hope of glory.

2. *Let us celebrate it in the exercise of joy.* The apostle teaches us that there is "joy and peace in believing." We have joy when we dwell under the arch of the rainbow, and feel our safety as we look out upon the retreating storm and hear the mutterings of the distant thunders. We recognize the bow as the token of God's protecting covenant, and without fear and hesitancy we go out to enjoy it. Like freedom from fear should characterize our dealings with the Lord's Supper. It is the bow of the New Covenant.

CULTIVATING THE CONFORMITIES.—I grant the possibility of an over-austere practice, that may fitly be softened; but this study of conformity is a wonderfully delicate matter, which none but a man of inflexible tenacity should ever dare to indulge; nor even he, save as he is high enough lifted by his faith in God to suffer no bent downward, but in social recognitions, or Christian pity and tears. Cultivating the conformities is only a plausible way of being mired in them. Buying off the world by taking its manners, shows, fashions and pleasures, turns out, almost certainly, to be a selling off to the world and joining it. A conversation above is the same thing as living above; and whoever undertakes to grade and gauge a smoothly-fascinating, ground-surface road, will, of course, be moving on the ground, and not ascending into faith at all.—BUSHNELL.

PRAYER-MEETING SERVICE.

BY REV. LEWIS O. THOMPSON.

OCTOBER 10.—EJACULATORY PRAYER.
(Neh. ii: 4.)

This kind is a short petition, hurled like a dart at its mark.

I. When? In critical junctures.

1. Before choice. (Nehemiah before the King.)

2. Before sudden action.

3. In danger. (The sinking Peter.)

II. Why?

1. Because critical junctures admit of no other kind.

2. Because it leads to wisdom. (Prov. iii: 6.)

3. Because it tranquilizes the mind.

4. Because it would prevent sudden action. Bryant inflicted personal chastisement upon an adversary, who had given him the lie direct, on the spur of the moment, as they passed each other on the street, and regretted it ever after. (Godwin's Life of Bryant, Vol. I., page 258. D. Appleton & Co.)

III. How?

1. Do we pray at all?

2. Do we cultivate the spirit of prayer? (1. Thess. v: 17.)

3. Do occasions arise for ejaculatory prayer? I had a classmate, now departed, who was always getting into trouble from a hot temper. While in the ministry he had frequent removals, and I think from this very cause—yet withal a brilliant and generous fellow.

4. Would it help us when buying or selling, when making calls and tempted to gossip or tell "white lies"?

OCTOBER 17.—HEZEKIAH. (2 Chron. xxxii: 30.)

The account of his life is found in 2 Kings xvi: 20, and xviii-xx; 2 Chron. xxix-xxxiii; Is. xxxvi-xxxix.

I. Private character.

1. A man of faith. His conversion due to Micah. (Jer. xxvi: 18, 19; Mic. iii: 1-4.)

2. A reformer.

3. A man of prayer. (2 Kings xix: 15; 2 Chron. xxxii: 20, 24.)

4. A whole-hearted man. (2 Chron. xxxi: 21.)

II. Public policy.

1. To rule with justice. (2 Chron. xxxi: 20.)

2. To unify his people.

3. To secure the autonomy of his Kingdom. (2 Chron. xxxii: 22, 23.)

III. Progress of his people.

1. The Levites co-operate with him in the national reformation.

2. The people acquiesce in the overthrow of idolatry and accept the restored religion. (2 Chron. xxix: 35, 36; *ib.* xxx: 26; *ib.* xxxi: 1.)

IV. Prominent events during his reign.

1. The revolt against Shalmaneser, the Assyrian King. (2 Kings, xvi: 7; *ib.* xviii: 7-12.)

2. The payment of tribute to Sennacherib. (2 Kings xviii: 14-16.)

3. Sennacherib's invasion of Judah. (2 Kings xviii: 17.)

4. The destruction of Sennacherib.

5. The Babylonian embassy to congratulate Hezekiah on his restoration to health, and to inquire into the astronomical wonder.

V. Practical remarks.

1. What was his sin? (2 Chron. xxxii: 25*.)

2. A great blessing to live with men of insight and wisdom, of truth and courage—earth has no greater blessing.

* HEZEKIAH DESERTED:

I. The person here spoken of. 1. His personal character. 2. His peculiar necessities.

II. The dispensation here described. 1. The suspension of grace. 2. The withdrawal of comfort.

III. The purpose of that dispensation. 1. To discover sin, with a view to its cure. 2. To conduct to greater happiness and honor.

IV. The issue of the trial—he sinned. 1. Wherein was the sin? He neglected an opportunity of proclaiming the true God, and indulged in a vain self-seeking. 2. How small in comparison with the sins of others—of ourselves. 3. How soon repented of. 4. How severely visited.—J. C. GRAY.

(Hezekiah, Isaiah, Micah, etc., were contemporaries.)

3. Unless men have a certain degree of soul, as Ben Jonson says, salt will not save their bodies—neither of men nor of nations.

OCTOBER 24. — GOD OUR REFUGE.
(Dent. xxxiii: 27.)

The last recorded words of Moses congratulate the people of God upon their supreme happiness (Jeshurun) in having Jehovah for their God and hope.

I. We need a refuge for the greater ills of this life—a refuge that shall never fail.

1. In thought, from doubt.
2. In work, from infirmity.
3. In trial, from falling.
4. In distress, from despair.
5. In sickness, from helplessness.
6. In old age, from desertion.
7. In death, from hopelessness.

II. We need a home in the world to come*—a home that shall be eternal.

1. It is a new country.
2. We have never been there before.
3. We shall need a welcome there.

“Will some one be waiting and watching for me?”

III. Are we prepared for this home?

1. Promise: “The eternal God is thy refuge.” To whom is this given?

2. Command: “Let us labor, therefore, to enter into that rest.” (Heb. iv: 1-11.)

3. Fulfillment: “I will come again

* GOD OUR HOME.—That word “refuge” may be translated “mansion” or “abiding-place,” which gives the thought that God is our abode, our home. There is a great sweetness in this metaphor, for very dear to our hearts is our home.

I. It is at home that we feel safe; we shut out the world and dwell in quiet security. So with God, “we fear no evil.”

II. At home we take our rest. So our hearts find rest in God.

III. At home, also, we let our hearts loose; we are not afraid of being misunderstood. So may we freely commune with God.

IV. Home is the place of our truest and purest happiness. It is in God that our hearts find their deepest delight.

V. It is for home that we work and labor. So must we work for God.—REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

and receive you unto myself.” (John xiv: 1-3.)

OCTOBER 31.—VARIOUS EXHORTATIONS.
(Phil. iv: 4-9.)

The epistle verges to its close with several particular admonitions.

I. Rejoice in the Lord alway. This is the key-note of the epistle. Some rejoice only when they make money, have their own way, etc.

1. The nature of this joy.

2. How obtainable.

II. Be moderate before all men. Have sweetness and reasonableness.

1. Be meek under injuries.

2. Use all things as not abusing them.

3. Be master of yourself.

III. Let prayer with thanksgiving be the antidote to corroding care, and so the peace of God shall be yours. “This is care’s cure.”

1. “Ask for everything.”

2. “Be careful for anything.”

3. “Care for nothing.”

IV. Cherish whatsoever things are good, true, and beautiful; for these things belong to the Gospel, and have in them the peace of God. Dr. J. Edmond outlines this into “A bracelet and rings of gold:”

1. The gold ring of sweet temper, gentleness, and sweetness.

2. The gold ring of readiness to obey.

3. The ring of unselfishness.

4. The ring of tender-heartedness.

5. The last ring of industry.

6. Lastly, the jewelled bracelet of grace.

If you have this bracelet, it will produce all the rings by itself.

NOVEMBER 7.—VICTORY IS CERTAIN.
(Is. lii: 10.)

The Church in the prosecution of mission work is engaged in no chimerical scheme.

I. The kind of victory.

1. Moral. This includes the spread of the cardinal virtues.

2. Spiritual. This includes the pre-dominance of faith, hope, and love as essential to salvation.

II. The means of accomplishment.

1. The proclamation of the truth.
2. The favor of Almighty God, whose power is pledged to support His truth and holiness.

III. When shall this be secured?

1. In the fullness of the times.
2. When God's people are wholly in earnest and fully given to this work.

IV. Reflections.

1. To be the bearer of glad tidings is a beautiful commission.*
2. We labor with greater confidence when we know that the issue will be glorious and eternal.
3. In the conflict with heathenism, and all forms of error, defeat is only temporary.

COMMENTARY ON THE EPISTLE OF JAMES.

No. VII.

BY WILLIAM ORMISTON, D.D., LL.D.

ALL GOOD GIFTS FROM GOD.

Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of His creatures.—Jas. i: 16-18.

DIFFERENT READINGS: V. 17. The Greek from *πάσα* to *τέλειον* forms a hexameter verse, and may be a quotation from some unknown source. (See Winer). Compare 1 Cor. xv: 33, Titus i: 12, and Heb. xii: 13. *Καταβαίνων* is found for *καταβαίνον*; for *ἐνι, ἐστίν*. It is a contraction for *ἐνεστί, ἐνέστι*, "there is in Him;" for *ἀποκρίσιμα, ἀποκρίσιματος*—obumbration-*is*. V. 18, for *αὐτοῦ, ἐαυτοῦ*, is placed in the margin by Westcott.

OTHER RENDERINGS: For "Do not err." Be not deceived, as the same words are elsewhere translated: 1 Cor. vi: 9, xv: 33; Gal. vi: 7. "This formula

* "The lovely harmony brought about in the Church by the glad tidings of Christ:

"1. In the messengers who start it;
 "2. In the doctrines that continue its sound;
 "3. In the hearts that re-echo it."—LAUX-
 MANN'S OUTLINE OF THE CONTEXT.

is used in Scripture and by ancient Fathers, in order to introduce cautions against, and refutations of, some popular error, as here."—Wordsworth.

The word gift, which is repeated in v. 17, is a translation of two words *δόδῆσι* and *δώρημα* which in the revised version are rendered *gift* and *boon*; literally the first word expresses the act of giving, donatio, and the second the gift bestowed, donum. Both are used, however, to designate a gift, and there is probably a kind of climax in the words, the last denoting the strictly gratuitous element in the gift. (Alford.) A similar gradation may be noticed in the adjectives employed.

"*Ἀνοθέν ἐστι κατὰ...* appear to go together in construction, if we may judge from the similar case in iii: 15. But the participle and substantive verb are not exactly equivalent to *καταβαίνει*. The participle brings out a quality of the gifts spoken of, and has almost the force of such as cometh." (Johnson.)

For "with whom, etc.," the Revised Version reads, with whom that can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning; and for "begat he us with," it reads, brought us forth by. The word rendered *begat* or *brought forth* is a remarkable word. In N. T. found only in v. 15 and here. Used in 15 probably in the sense of *parere*, here as *generare*. Bengel says: "*Deus nobis Ipse Patris et Matris loco est.*"

Tertullian on this word writes: "*Christus primogenitus et unigenitus Dei proprie de vulva cordis ipsius.*"

COMMENTARY: The apostle having shown negatively that God, from His very nature, as infinitely good, cannot in any sense be the author or source of evil or sin, now proceeds positively to affirm that all good, and only good, comes from God, in consistency with His immaculate and immutable holiness. He not only repels with indignation the idea that evil, or any incentive to it, can originate with God, but he emphatically declares that from Him alone comes down whatever is opposed to evil and destructive of it, alike in its origin and operation. In this passage

he tacitly refers to the language of the Master, "One there is who is God;" "How much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him." He introduces a further illustration of the subject by a solemn and affectionate warning—

"Do not err, my beloved brethren."

This expression occurs elsewhere in Scripture, and has always a reference to what has preceded, and at the same time introduces a new and impressive aspect of the truth declared, or an argument in support of it. It further intimate the grave importance of the matter under consideration, as one which should be clear as an axiom to Christian consciousness, and yet in which error is not only most pernicious, but even probable. Error is ever a source of sin and self-destruction; truth alone makes free and sanctifies and saves the soul. The logical connection of the passage is clear. Not only, as already evinced, is it impossible for God to tempt any one to what is evil, but His nature is love, and His disposition toward men is one of boundless benevolence. He is the source of light, and all holy life, and of whatever tends to strengthen and perfect it. It must, therefore, be not only foolish in the extreme, but heinously blasphemous to charge the origin of sin to Him, who is the only source of spiritual life and purity, and who is and must be ever consistent with Himself, since He changes not. There is also a very striking verbal connection which cannot fail to be observed, and which accounts for the somewhat singular phraseology employed. In the previous verse the origin of sin is vividly described as a generation and birth; hence God is spoken of as a Father, and His people as begotten of Him.

17: "Every good, every perfect gift." The two words rendered gift are scarcely synonymous. Yet they mainly emphasize the same idea, that all gifts, everything which influences the soul of man for good, are from God. The gifts of the giving God are not only excellent in themselves, but perfectly suited to

those on whom they are bestowed. It is not necessary, nor is it correct, to refer the *first* term used to natural gifts and blessings for the present life, and the *second* to spiritual graces and the blessedness of the future state. As a giver, God is good, and His gifts are perfect; they never fail either in quality or quantity. Plato says: "For the advantage of what the gods bestow is evident to every one, for there is no perfect gift which they do not bestow."

"Is from above." Heavenly in its origin, divine in its source. The antithesis is clear. Evil in all its forms—its genesis and growth, its flower and fruition—is of the earth, and springs from the nature and will of man; but good in all its forms—its source and supply, its continuance and consummation—is from heaven, from the nature and will of God.

"The Father of lights." The Creator of the lights, the great luminaries, which by day and night shed light and gladness on the earth. The term *lights*, φωστέρων, being used by metonymy for light-bearers, φωστηρών. We do not think the term is here to be metaphorically interpreted as signifying spiritual light—as knowledge, purity and joy; nor as referring to the series of revelations God has given of Himself; nor as alluding in any way to the Urim and Thummim of the old economy.

"With whom is no variability." It is not at all probable that James here uses the language of astronomy, or even alludes to any scientific theory, but simply to the recognized facts of ordinary observation. Indeed I know not that the terms were used in any technical sense at that time, though the terms *tropics* and *parallax* are so used now. The idea is that, while these lights, glorious as they are, are subject to obvious variations and frequent obscuration, God himself cannot be affected by either change or shadow. God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.

V. 18. This verse not merely presents the highest illustration of the truth advanced, that all good and perfect gifts come from God, but also introduces a

special thought of the highest moment—the regeneration of the human soul, so that it may cease to be the unclean fountain of evil, and become perfect and mature as a consecrated offering unto God. The statement in this verse is not a mere confirmation of the preceding statement, but a special inference from the general principle there laid down.

“*Of His own will.*”—“*Proprio motu,*” because he willed it. This is not expressed as opposed to the merit of human works, or to the self-righteousness of the Jew, but it is designated to present prominently the thought that the regeneration of the soul of man is wholly the work of God, and rests on His free and sovereign will, unconstrained by necessity and unaffected by any external influence whatever. It is no mere random impulse, but a deliberate purpose, based on His pure benevolence, His spontaneous good-pleasure.

“*Begat He us.*” This peculiar phrase is carried forward from the preceding verse, in accordance with the style of the writer. The idea is not unfrequently presented in the Scriptures. Our Lord says, “Except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.” (Compare 1 Pet. i: 3; 1 John, v: 1.)

“*By the word of truth.*” The Gospel of salvation, “the ingrafted word.” Peter states the same thing, as does also Paul: “Born again * * * by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.” (1 Pet. i: 23. Compare Eph. i: 13; Col. i: 5, and Eph. v: 26; Titus iii: 5.) Some ancient expositors interpret the passage as referring to the Eternal Word who became incarnate. That the word *logos* was understood by James and his readers as often signifying a divine person, is not to be doubted; but it may be questioned whether it has such a reference here. It teaches us rather that the Word of God, which is the sword of the Spirit, is the divine instrument usually employed in the work of regeneration. While, with Tertullian, we can heartily

say, “*Adoro Scripturæ plenitudinem,*” and rejoice in the fullness of meaning contained in the words of inspiration, yet it is best to determine, as nearly as possible, the exact sense in which the words are used by the writer in the passage where they are found.

“*A kind of first fruits.*” The word *kind* indicates that the expression is figurative. The allusion is to the ceremonial law of the Jews, according to which the first fruits of the ground were to be presented as an offering to God. (Lev. xxiii: 10; Deut. xxvi: 1-10.) The ideas implied in the metaphor are those of special consecration, dignity and preciousness. The term may be applied with peculiar appropriateness to the early believers in apostolic times, as the word seems to be used in a limited sense in Rom. xvi: 5. But we cannot think that James limited the application of the term either to the first Jewish believers or to the first Christians generally, but used it of all Christians in every land and age. “It appears to me altogether unnatural to regard the ‘*we*’ as having any other sense than believers in Christ generally.” (Johnson.) The figure suggests also the full harvest which is to follow, and the terms may have even a wider reference; the entire ransomed Church being the first fruits of all creatures. (Rom. viii: 19-29.) The figure had special significance in the first age of the Church, is full of hope still, and will be till the consummation of all things.

HOMILETICAL.—We are here taught, generally, that all good things are the gift of God; and, specially, that regeneration is the work of God.

I. ALL GOOD THINGS ARE THE GIFT OF GOD.

In a previous passage God is spoken of as “the giving God;” in this, His *giving* is declared to be good, and His *gifts* perfect. It is His nature to give “according to the good pleasure of His will,” and His gifts are all designed as boons and blessings. His benevolence is as boundless as His resources are exhaustless. He stretches forth His hand and satisfieth the wants of everything

that lives. He "giveth food to all flesh; for His mercy endureth forever." In the highest sense, God is the only true giver. All creatures—even the noblest and most unselfish—can only transmit His gifts. He bestows; they only convey, or deliver His benefactions. He is also pre-eminent in His mode of giving. As the giving God, He giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not; as the Father of Lights, unchangeable and undimmed, His gifts are continuous and undiminished, without stint or defect, and adequate to the accomplishment of the purpose intended; and, unless abused, will work out alike the good of the recipient and the glory of the munificent donor. However diversified in kind, or through whatever channel they may reach us, our gifts have all a celestial origin. Mediate or immediately they are from God. Whether temporal or spiritual, under the reign of natural law or according to the dispensation of grace, from the most common mercy of our daily lives to the highest joy of a complete salvation; whether procured by the diligent use of our own faculties or received through the love and kindness of others; whether the product of personal skill and industry, or the result of the affection and bounty of others; the labor of our own hands, or the love of another's heart—everything we have or enjoy bears the impress of the Father of Lights, and is a token of the paternal benignity and royal munificence of Him, the outgoings of whose loving kindness, like the radiance of the sun, stream forth from heaven on earth, to brighten, gladden and enrich the lives of needy, but undeserving, men. In the highly figurative and symbolic language of the East, *light* is a favorite image of every desirable blessing, of knowledge, holiness, and gladness; of all excellencies of mind and heart; of all that is estimable, enjoyable, and elevating in life. (Ps. iv: 6; xvii: 1; xevii: 11; Isa. ix: 2.) Every other source of light and help may vary or fail; our best human friends may change; even the orbs in the sky become obscured; but our Father in

heaven is perfect. His majestic purity and immutability is ever unclouded. "God is always in the meridian."

II. REGENERATION IS THE ACT OF GOD.

The greatest and most perfect of all God's gifts to man is spiritual life. He alone originates life in the soul. He is the quickener of every saved soul. (Eph. ii: 5.) The regeneration of the soul is of God alone: "Of His own will;" "the good pleasure of His goodness." This free, spontaneous act of God testifies most emphatically to His goodness, and refutes most conclusively the allegation that He could tempt man to evil.

Among men, the impulse to deeds of self-sacrifice and beneficence often comes from others: from their timely suggestion, cogent argument, or the strong claims of the object on account of its merits. But it is not so with God. "According to His mercy He saves us, by the washing of regeneration." "After the kindness and love of God toward man, appeared;" "According to His abundant mercy He hath begotten us again;" "He hath chosen us before the foundation of the world;" "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." (Tit. iii: 4-7; 1 Pet. i: 3; Eph. i: 3-6; John iii: 16.) The work of Christ even was not the inciting cause, but the wondrous expression of the Father's love—the divinely devised means by which His redemptive and regenerative work might be carried out. Mark the *nature*, the *means*, the *design* of this divine work on the soul of man.

1. *The nature.* "He begat us." This word denotes the change which is wrought in the heart of a sinner when he is brought out of darkness into light; and becomes a child of God. This change consists in no mere external rite, religious principle, or increase of Scriptural knowledge. It is an inward and radical change of feelings, affections, desires, and purposes. It is likened to our birth, because by it we are introduced to an entirely new state of being; we are created anew, and made "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. i: 4), and sustain different relations to God. Formerly, aliens from the

commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise: now, the sons of God and heirs of the covenant of grace. Once at enmity with God, and following after the imaginations of their own wicked hearts, the regenerate are now reconciled to God, renewed in the spirit of their minds, conformed to the image of Christ, and follow after holiness and righteousness. New principles are awakened within them, which control their lives and mould their character. A living faith which looks on the unseen, rests on Christ, realizes the future, purifies the heart and overcomes the world; a sincere love to both God and man—strong, ardent, self-sacrificing and consistent; a lively, well-founded hope enters within the veil and lays hold on everlasting life. In the experience of the renewed man, the conscience is awakened and cleansed, the understanding is enlightened and strengthened, the will is emancipated and subdued, the affections are purified and elevated. Christ becomes to him the central object of attraction, and the guidance of the Spirit an earnest and constant desire. This work is not a reformation, but a renovation; not an amendment, but a renewal. In it man is the subject, not the agent. In its very nature it is divine. (Ezek. xxxvi: 26, 27; Eph. ii: 5; Col. ii: 13.) The production and maintenance of religion in the soul is God's own peculiar work. The glory of our second creation, as of our first, belongs wholly to Him. Our redemption originated in the love of God, was devised by His wisdom, and executed by His power. "O the depth of the riches of the wisdom of God!" (Rom. xi: 33; Ps. cxv: 1.)

2. *The means.* "By the word of truth"—the Gospel of Christ—the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. This designation is frequently given the glad tidings of salvation. (2 Cor. vi: 7; Col. i: 5.) The Gospel is styled emphatically *the word of truth*, as well on account of its inherent dignity, intrinsic excellence, and sublime grandeur, a revelation from God, the Fountain of eternal truth, as on account of the ab-

solute certainty of its promises, the infallibility of its doctrines and its entire harmony with the nature of things. It is the truth, to which all that is opposed is falsehood and imposture, and compared with which all else is relatively trivial and insignificant. This word of truth is the sword of the Spirit, by which the mind of man is awakened and renewed. This word read, or heard and received, is the grand instrumentality employed for the conversion of men. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. The word of God is quick and powerful. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation. "Is not my word like a fire, saith the Lord of Hosts, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" Jesus says: "The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit and are life." (John vi: 63.) The word of truth introduced into the heart reveals alike its own great need and Christ's all-satisfying fullness. It humbles, convinces, convicts and points the soul to Christ for light, for life, for all, and thus it is begotten again into eternal life. It is when the word of truth, as a heavenly dew, falls not beside, or around, or merely upon the heart, but into it, that it awakens a new life of beauty and gladness and fruitfulness. And God has ever borne ample testimony to the word of His grace, by the Spirit's power accompanying its proclamation. Everywhere have men been constrained to confess that by the foolishness of preaching, the wisdom and power of God have been manifest in the salvation alike of Jew and Greek. Nor does the efficacy of the word depend on the ability or acquirements of the preacher. Whether the seed be sown by a skillful or unskillful hand, it is still the seed of the word. Nay, suppose the very worst, that the hand which scatters it is foul, yet does the seed contract no pollution, and God may bless it for His own word's sake. May the word come to-day with power and with demonstration of the Spirit!

3. *The design.* "That we should be a kind of first fruits of His creatures."

This is a direct and beautiful allusion to a requirement of the Jewish law, which in many of its services was a shadow of the Gospel, an adumbration of the better things therein to be revealed. The term "first fruits" may have a primary reference to the converted Jews to whom this epistle was addressed, as the first fruits of the immense harvest which will be gathered when the fullness of the Gentiles shall be brought in. But the *we* has doubtless a reference to all believers, even to the innumerable multitude of the completed, ransomed Church; and the term *κτίσιν*, *creatures*, has a wider application than human nature, and may include what Paul speaks of as *κτίσις*, and *πάντα ἢ κτίσις*, the creation, the whole creation. (Rom. viii: 19-22.) And thus regenerated men, presented by God to himself, become, as it were, the first fruits of all the creatures of God. The ultimate reference is to the restitution of all things at "the manifestation of the sons of God," when all nature, freed from the curse, shall be reinvested with beauty, repronounced all good, and filled to the measure of its capacity with sympathetic joy.

In the new creation the *Only Begotten* is the First fruits, man in Christ is the *wave-sheaf* of the consummated harvest-home in its utmost fullness. This marks the work of Christ with distinguished honor, and gives to His bride, the Church, a place of high pre-eminence. The recreated placed before the created. "The first fruits unto God and the Lamb." (Rev. xiv: 4.) The term applied to believers suggests the ideas of an honorable position—a hearty, complete consecration—a grateful and loyal service—and an assurance of a glorious result. As yet only sheaves are gathered, but the abundant harvest shall be brought home.

(1) Let us recognize the hand of the Giver in every blessing which crowns our daily lives.

(2) Let us prize and study the word of truth, which is able to make us wise unto salvation.

(3) Let us consecrate our lives and

services unto the Lord. We are not our own. Walk worthy of your high vocation—worthy of the Lord; created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Labor to hasten and increase the coming harvest.

SELECTED OUTLINES. DIVINE GOODNESS IN HUMAN HISTORY (James i: 16-17).

1. *All the goodness in human history comes from God.*

2. *The divine goodness in human history comes in separate gifts and differs in degree.*

This subject serves several important purposes:

(1) Sheds new light on the good of human life and reveals its sacredness.

(2) Fixed as a habit is favorable to the culture of religious sentiment.

(3) Reveals the stewardship of humanity.

(4) Discloses the wickedness of a selfish life.—(R. A. D.)

REGENERATION (James i: 18).

(1) *Its nature.*—The origination of a new life.

(2) *Its instrumentality.*—The Gospel of Jesus Christ.

(3) *Its author.*—"The Father of Lights."

(4) *Its ultimate cause.*—"Of His own will."

(5) *Its purpose.*—Subordinate, "first-fruits;" ultimate, "the praise of His glory."

See the conclusiveness and irresistible force of the apostle's argument.—(Robert Johnstone.)

WATCH THE SYMPTOMS.—We are to be jealous of every inclination of declining piety, and watch over its alternations of feeling with more interest than the physician watches the changing countenance of his patient, and notes the beating of the pulse. If the heart throbs faintly—if its action is so weak and sluggish and irregular that it can hardly force the blood to the extremities—then life is in jeopardy. And if the soul is so feeble in its spiritual pulsations that it has no relish for unseen things, then spiritual death will speedily ensue.—COCHRANE.

LIGHT ON IMPORTANT TEXTS.

No. XXVII.

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

JOSHUA x: 12-14. — "Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the Valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man; for the Lord fought for Israel."

Infidels have made much noise about this narrative of Scripture, and their jeers have principally been directed against Joshua's want of scientific knowledge. For Joshua to say, "Sun, stand still," shows that he knew nothing of astronomy and made a nonsensical order. It is doubtless true that Joshua knew very little of astronomy, and that he actually thought the sun went around the earth. But suppose he had known all about astronomy and had scientifically said, "Earth, stand still," what Israelite would have known what he meant or would have doubted that he was mad? Again suppose that you and I, who know astronomy, had been there and had wanted to do what Joshua did. Wouldn't we have used the very same language, "Sun, stand still," notwithstanding our scientific knowledge? So the principal point of attack by the infidel is seen to be impregnable.

Timid, weak-kneed believers also try to explain away the miracle. They hold to the manna, and the pillar of cloud, and the crossing of the Jordan, but here they hesitate, and in deference to infidelity they relegate this story to the sphere of poetry. If they do this, they must logically go with Ewald and

deny all supernatural events. This of the sun's standing still is just as well founded as any other in Scripture. They must all stand or fall together. The poetry of the book of Jasher will not help our weak-kneed friends. For the quotation from that book certainly ends with the words, "Is not this written in the book of Jasher?" and the narrative goes on and indorses what the poetry says!

A word as to the object of the miracle. It is generally thought that it was to *prolong* the day that the enemy might be longer pursued. But this is an error. The battle was fought between Gibeon and Ajalon, on the west of Gibeon. The sun was over Gibeon about 8 o'clock in the morning. Hence the miracle was wrought early in the day. Then why? In order to let Israel see that God was with them. Joshua had doubtless caused all Israel to watch and see the sun standing still in the heavens for (say) three or four hours. This prodigy would encourage them in the pursuit of the enemy. Probably through the laws of refraction, miraculously administered, the sun and moon were made apparently to remain in the same position, and then, after a few hours, resumed their natural places. The day was no longer than any other day.

The last clause of verse 13 is misleading. It should read, "So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven and *hasted not to go as a complete day.*" That is, it did not move on regularly as on an ordinary day.

PARROT-LIKE READING.—Of all books that are publicly read for the edification of the people, none ordinarily is so badly read as the Bible. It is not merely that public readers fail to give to words the fullness of power and beauty that is in them. It is not merely that the reading lacks rhetorical elegance and finish, and that Holy Writ, as uttered by such persons, ceases to charm and captivate. The Scriptures are often read as one would read a formula in an unknown tongue, whose alphabet and pronunciation he had mastered, but without having the slightest idea what the words meant, or whether they had any meaning.—*Dr. J. S. Hart.*

**SOME GREAT PREACHERS WHOM I
HAVE KNOWN.**

No. II.

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

WILBUR FISK, D.D.

IN August, 1835, I found myself one of a company of candidates for matriculation at Wesleyan University, the then recently established Methodist college at Middletown, Conn., of which Rev. Wilbur Fisk, D.D., was the presiding officer. The name and fame of the president I had not then to begin to learn, but till then I had never seen the man. At the end of the two years next following—by virtue of entering somewhat in advance, and also by bringing up arrears by extra studies—I received at his hands the diploma of a Bachelor of Arts—the most valued, as it was, indeed, the most valuable, of the several kindred documents that, for some cause or causes, have fallen to my lot. During these years I had ample opportunity to observe the college president and to become acquainted with him, both as a man and a preacher, which I endeavored to do understandingly, though not improbably my estimation was somewhat influenced by the glamour with which my youthful imagination clothed him.

Dr. Fisk was a phenomenal character in American Methodism. He was born near Brattleboro, Vt., August 31, 1792, of Puritan parents, and was brought up among the influences of that system. He received a classical education, and was graduated as Bachelor of Arts by Vermont University in 1815. Three years later he appears as a traveling minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church; there being, probably, at that time, less than half a dozen college graduates in the ministry. Both his learning and his evident piety united to secure for him the esteem of his associates, which was greatly heightened and intensified by his remarkable abilities as a preacher. As an educated man, he was naturally a zealous advocate of learning; and, of course, he

united heartily with those of his brethren who were at that time moving in favor of founding educational institutions under the patronage of his denomination. Under this impulse the Wesleyan University had been established a few years before the date first given above, and, almost as a matter of necessity, he became its first president; though it may be doubted whether a better could have been chosen had there been a thousand possessed of the requisite learning from among whom to choose. He seemed to accept his calling to the work of Christian education as specifically providential, and accordingly he steadily declined all other honors that were offered to him, and, though twice elected a bishop—in 1828 by the Methodists of Canada, and in 1836 by the General Conference of his own Church—he steadfastly declined to leave his place.

His personal appearance, as I first saw him, is felicitously sketched by one who was not very far from me at that very point of time, Dr. Abel Stevens,—himself, in his earlier days, no ordinary example of pulpit power—whose words I can adopt without reserve or modification: "His person bespoke his character. It was of good size, and remarkable for its symmetry. His features were beautifully harmonized, the contour resembling the better Roman outline, though lacking its most peculiar distinction—the *nusus aquilinus*. His eye was nicely defined, and, when excited, beamed with a peculiarly benign and conciliatory expression. . . His head was a model, not of great, but of well-proportioned, development. It had the height of the Roman brow, though none of the breadth of the Greek." To such a presence were added peculiar excellencies of tone and manner in public speaking. His voice was flexible and sonorous, and his manner the perfection of unstudied gracefulness, ease and naturalness, with, apparently, an entire absence of self-consciousness. His tones would reveal the prevailing emotion of the moment with the most delicate exactness, and they

were especially expressive in indicating anything tender or pathetic, at which times he would seem to enter into the most intimate sympathy with the hearer's emotions, whether of joy or sorrow. This strange power—of which all but himself were sensible, but which none could define—for want of another name, is called magnetism; and it was in him mightily effective, whether to conciliate or to persuade. But in all this there was no sacrifice of strength of thought, nor of manliness of tone, nor of solidity of matter. He entered upon his discourses, which were always spoken—neither read nor recited—with a frank manliness of expression and a quiet dignity, his voice slightly rising and becoming deeper as he advanced, and his utterances gathering emphasis; and now and then, illustrations, modest, but wonderfully apt, would, apparently unpurposed, cast their mellow brightness over the subject. The influence produced on his hearers, though deep and lively, was seldom of a kind to elicit open demonstrations; the people listened quietly, but intently, and though often deeply impressed they were still self-possessed.

So far as the occasion allowed him to choose his own subjects and preach to the people as simply a minister of the Gospel of Christ, his themes were usually in the range of Christian experience, or else exhibitions of the divine love as manifested in Christ; and when engaged in these, his highest elevations as a preacher were reached, and so thoroughly did he enter into the hearts of his hearers that the ordinary commonplaces of pulpit address appeared as the overflowings of a soul surcharged with the spirit of Christ. But he lived in unquiet times, and his church was assailed from without and agitated within by internal conflicts, and these seemed to necessitate both aggressive and defensive argumentation. The orthodox theology of New England had not at that time ceased to assert and defend its ancient doctrinal positions, against which those of Methodism were at once a protest and as-

sault; and he, as the champion of these, was called into many a sharp conflict of words. Having himself, in his own mental transition from his ancestral Puritanism, passed over the whole border-land between the Calvinism of New England and Wesleyan Arminianism, he was expert in all the points of the controversy, and proposed to respond to every argument of his antagonists. In these discussions, uttered with all the grace and forcefulness of his wonderful elocution, he displayed his highest powers: now clinching his arguments with keen logical force, now dashing in the repartee, and again pushing his antagonist's positions *ad absurdum*, and still again apparently demonstrating the horrible conclusions to which the doctrines he opposed must inevitably lead, his arguments seemed to his assenting and admiring auditors as the completeness of polemic triumphs. But this, evidently, was not his most congenial work; nor did he, in it, display his highest powers as a pulpit orator. His eminently religious character, and his own experiences of the transforming power of grace, especially qualified him to speak of the deep things of God; and, preaching on such themes, his natural gifts seemed to be glorified in the effulgence that is better than the tongues of men or angels.

THE MINISTER'S STUDY.

BY REV. WILBUR F. CRAFTS, B. D.

I WRITE not of an ideal study, but of real ones—of a church study that may be suggestive to those building churches, and of a home study, which may afford some hints for the young minister whose study is not yet arranged.

Here we are in the "pastor's room" of a city church—not a stingy "den" with only air enough to make it a "consumptive's home," but a spacious room forty feet long and twenty wide, with high and beautiful walls and two large windows to provide abundant air and light.

That great coal *store* is a mistake.

Steam pipes would have given so much cleaner and healthier warmth, or registers connecting with a furnace in some room below.

But that *safe* set into the wall speaks of prudent builders, who intended to save both the church papers and the pastor's sermons from the fire-fiend. Of course, it is not for preserving the pastor's money. That is always out in loans to the Lord for His poor, or invested in the richly-paying mines of home and foreign missions. Let us hope, however, that this pastor has insurance policies in the safe to "provide for his own" when he can no longer do so.

This closet near the door contains something more than study gown and toilet articles—fishing tackle (not for catching men) and a bridle (not for the tongue). Some dumb-bells and clubs would appropriately complete this department of muscular Christianity. Evidently this pastor recognizes, in theory at least, that he must prepare, not only his sermon, but himself, and "glorify God in his body" as well as through his Bible. How many a sermon falls short of its aim for lack of physical "projectile force"!

To batter down the walls of Mansoul the preacher needs the catapult of physical energy. Let us hope that the only part of this study which gets any attention on Saturday afternoon or Monday is the tackle and bridle. "Six days shalt thou labor, but the seventh . . . in it thou shalt not do any work."

Here is a long, large table, with a straight-backed, low chair, to keep the pastor's much-needed backbone unbent, and a revolving book-case to hold his reference books at hand, and a lounge for *visitors only*.

The library shelves are wisely sunk into the wall, and well filled with a thousand standard books, protected by glass cases. It is evident that this pastor has felt that wherever else the soldier of God is to economize, it ought not to be in his weapons. "He that hath a sword let him take it, and he that hath no sword let him sell his gar-

ment and buy one." It is passing strange that well-to-do laymen will allow a pastor to fight with the broken sword of a meagre library. Sometimes, alas! they have only the blunderbusses of outgrown books, adapted to the warfare of a half century ago. Many a preacher pinches his body rather than starve his mind, and unloads his table to increase his library.

One thing, evidently, has perplexed this pastor as well as most others—how to preserve his small change of notes and scraps. Index sermons and scrap books, with their "double entry," he has used, but they have proved too slow, and he has advanced to alphabetical cases, self-indexing, which make no delay for either pasting or copying; but even this does not meet the want as comprehensively as the arrangements of the other study, to which we now hurry away by thought express.

This home study is a "CHRIST ROOM." Its occupant day-dreamed its plan in Palestine, and brought its furnishings largely from Bible lands. The central idea in its arrangement is to surround the preacher at his desk with reminders of Christ. At his right stands a copy, half life-size, of Thorwaldsen's statue of the risen Christ, done in Carrara marble, by Andrevin, of Rome. The noon-day sun transfigures the almost transparent stone into a picture of "the glorified body." At the preacher's left is a painting, a copy of Carlo Meratta's "Christ at His Baptism." His face expresses the mental crucifixion he was suffering in standing at the Jordan with the penitents of John's revival meetings, as if HE too needed to have sins washed away. "Suffer it to be so now," He said, as He nailed Himself to the cross of mental agony. "He was made sin for us, though he knew no sin."

Above the preacher's head, on the top of his desk, stands a crown of thorns from Jerusalem, inclosing an olive wood cup from Gethsemane, and above that is Holman Hunt's picture of the boy Christ in the Temple, myste-

riously looking forth to the "Father's business," which He must "finish" amid the thorns of Calvary—the picture being a Christmas present from the thirty child-Christians of this pastor's church. Yonder, above the desk of the preacher's help-meet, hangs another of Holman Hunt's pictures—"The Shadow of the Cross," in the carpenter's shop of Nazareth; while a little to the right of the picture, in the cabinet of curiosities from Bible lands, are ancient tools from Nazareth, just such as Christ used in His consecration of labor. These tools and this picture carry back the mental crucifixion of Christ, even beyond His baptism. There, above the mantel, is its consummation in Doré's masterpiece, which shows us Christ as He goes forth from Pilate's prætorium to His atoning death.

A score of other pictures give us other views of Christ as babe, boy, man—copies from the paintings of Raphael, Müller, Salvatore, Titian, Guido Reni, etc.—while the large photographic scrap book on the centre table keeps at hand copies of every famous Christ-picture of Europe, and two other such books present views of the places where Christ lived or visited. Nor let us overlook this placque, which was also a part of the Palestine day-dream. It is beautifully painted with the flowers of the nations—roses for England, eidelweiss for Switzerland, kaiser blumen for Germany, etc., surrounding the Rose of Sharon—the whole symbolizing the union in Christ of all nations, to whom immortality, pictured in the butterflies, is brought by His Gospel. The central thought of this study is shown forth more intensely, as a shadow brings out the light of a picture, by that hideous marble image, above the library, of Subhardra, the third person in the trinity of India. By contrast we realize the more vividly that we worship the "altogether lovely."

This Christ-room is provided with a Bible atmosphere by Oriental curiosities. Besides the cabinet referred to, there hangs in a nook one of the leathern bottles of the Bible, just behind a

steamer chair which is covered with a Turkish rug and Oriental robe, while in another nook, on a shelf, is an Oriental ewer, set off by a tidy of Turkish embroidery. The desk and library, however, are not Oriental.

The great Wotten desk, with its forty compartments for classifying thoughts and things, is supplemented by an arrangement for keeping all pamphlets, notes and scraps as orderly and available for instant reference as the older topics in the encyclopædia itself.

The library, of forty shelves, is classified, and therefore needs no catalogue to tell in what row a certain book is to be found. One row contains books on "The Oldest Testament of Nature"—that is, all the literature bearing on science—and a full collection of the books on the world's natural religions, which are now being quoted so much by infidels that the Christian preacher needs to have the real documents at hand. The next two rows contain books on "The Old and New Testaments," and are followed by a row containing books on "The Newest Testament," including the *providential* revelations which God has made since the New Testament was concluded, in fulfillment of that promise of Christ, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." He has said many of these promised things, and so this row has a shelf containing the works of the Church fathers who succeeded the apostles; another shelf for another chapter of this newest Testament, with the literature of modern missions; another shelf devoted to temperance, and several shelves to the Sunday-school movement and to childhood. Another row is devoted to art; another is the "sideboard," containing full goblets of spiced wine from Carlyle, Emerson, Holmes, Macaulay, Bacon, Talmage, Taine, etc., with the poets, while history also has its nook in this secular corner.

This study is, like the other, large, light, and airy; but, unlike the other, it is warmed from a register, and last, but not least, it is carpeted with lino-

leum, which raises no dust either to the preacher's books or his throat, as he walks back and forth weaving his sermons.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

HOMILETIC SPECTACLES.

Beecher and Spurgeon.

By J. STANFORD HOLME, D.D.

"WHAT kind of glasses do you use?" asked a young minister of a preacher of experience and distinction.

"I use *homiletic spectacles*," was the reply.

"And pray, sir, what are they?" asked the young man. To which the senior responded:

"I look at everything through my preaching. I am ever on the alert to find, not so much topics from which to preach, as illustrations for abstract truth. I find my truth or topic in the Bible; I find my illustrations here, there, and everywhere. I try to look at everything homiletically—art, science, history, and the newspapers, as well as the Bible; and especially I try to look at the commonest affairs and incidents of life in this light, for here I find the most apt and merchantable supply of illustration. And in this I have no so great teacher and example as Christ Himself."

In this the preacher was right. This matter of illustration requires the greatest attention. We must never be obliged to stop to explain the illustration, or by any obscurity to lose the attention of the hearers. Illustrations may be good to those who understand them, and bad for those who do not. Illustrations do not always throw light on the subject. Sometimes the train of thought is lost by the introduction of an illustration. The hearer stops to think of the illustration, and loses the object of it. The illustration should be more simple than the thing illustrated. While the truth of the Gospel may be greatly enforced by illustrations, it is of the first importance that the hearer be familiar with the illustrations; and the more familiar the better. This is the striking characteristic, as we

have intimated, of Christ's discourses. He leads His hearers from what they know to what they do not know. And in this particular, Mr. Beecher, as a preacher, in our opinion, not only excels his contemporaries, but his predecessors. If to our inquiry of this Samson of the pulpit, "Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth?" he should vouchsafe a reply, he might say that it is in the dexterous use of the commonest incidents of life in the illustration of abstract truth. Mr. Beecher's range of truth, as it appears in his discourses, is not, as we apprehend it, so wide, nor so grand, as that of many other preachers; indeed, no one can read his sermons without discovering a certain narrowness of range—a monotony of thought. He is ever moving along in certain lines of truth.

In freshness of theme, Beecher is not to be compared with Spurgeon. Mr. Beecher never digs out new truth as does Mr. Spurgeon. In a recent life of Mr. Beecher, the editor, to show the variety of Mr. Beecher's topics, has given us the texts and themes for two years. But Mr. Beecher's themes are like Mr. Beecher's self: though they seem to change, they are not essentially new. His mind moves in a circle, and he is very apt to repeat himself. He takes a new text; but as his text is generally a mere motto, and his topic a suggestion of his own mind, he very soon falls into the rut of an old line of thought with new illustrations. There is much sameness in the theme. Mr. Beecher once said to one inquiring about his manner of preparation for the pulpit, that "his way" was like that of the old Maryland housewives: to make up a good batch of dough, put it into a cool place, and when she made biscuit for breakfast or dinner, to cut off a piece and make them up and bake them. Now, if this is "his way," it is no wonder that Mr. Beecher's sermons taste as much alike as a woman's biscuit.

This is not Mr. Spurgeon's "way." He goes to the granary every time he wants to make a loaf, and gets some fresh grain. He finds each harvesting

carefully kept by itself in the granary. At one time he will get some of the old corn of Egypt, at another some of the gleanings of Ruth, at another a handful from the threshing-floor of Araunah, at another some of that of which the disciples of Christ ate when hungry; and so on, in almost endless variety. He grinds it in his own mill, and bolts it after his own fashion, kneads it, and bakes it; and each baking has a peculiar flavor of its own, because the wheat is from a different harvest, though all taken from one storehouse.

Mr. Spurgeon depends more for his variety on his theme; Mr. Beecher, on his illustration. Mr. Beecher excels Mr. Spurgeon in the simplicity and freshness and variety of his illustrations; but Mr. Spurgeon excels Mr. Beecher in the freshness and variety and Gospel flavor of his truth. The secret of Mr. Spurgeon's power lies in a devout study and implicit faith in the divine Word. The secret of Mr. Beecher's power is in the infinite variety and wonderful aptness of his illustrations. And this comes from the fact that he looks at everything through homiletic glasses: he permits nothing he sees, hears, feels, tastes, suffers, or enjoys to be cast aside as worthless. All this is "*the material*" in the rough for homiletic use: he husbands it and uses it as occasion may require.

When I was a boy—and that begins to mean in old times—I lived a sort of an amphibious life on a little creek, either in it or on it most of the time. Its waters drove a cotton mill, and at every ebb tide its surface was covered with what was called cotton-waste—the refuse of the cotton—which was thrown away as worthless. To us it would now seem that "the waste" was almost greater than the cotton used, for nowadays there is no waste; not a fiber of the cotton that goes into the mill is wasted; it is all used in some way or other. Now, most preachers are like this old-fashioned cotton mill. They waste more of their *material* than they use, and then frequently go to infinite expense and trouble to replace it with

that which is comparatively worthless. Mr. Beecher would seem to find use, sooner or later, for every kind of material brought to his mill, in the illustration of his subjects. Out of the most trifling, ordinary incident of life he will work out an illustration of the greatest value. He seldom brings an illustration from afar, but generally gathers it from the wayside of common life; and in this particular it is not too much to say his preaching is more like Christ's than that of most other men. If only his truth was as fresh and Scriptural as his illustrations are forcible, he would be the greatest preacher of the age. And a greater than either Mr. Beecher or Mr. Spurgeon will not be found till one is raised up who preaches the Gospel as closely as Charles H. Spurgeon, and who illustrates his preaching with as much simplicity and aptness as Henry Ward Beecher.

♦♦♦♦♦

"IF THAT'S SO, SOMEBODY HAS GOT TO LET THE PEOPLE KNOW IT."—As Collins Graves, a milkman of Haydenville, Mass., a few years since was going his rounds very early one morning, he was met by a man out of breath with running, and intensely excited, who said: "The great reservoir on Mill River, up the valley, is giving way, and in a few minutes the floods will sweep everything before them down the valley!" "Do you mean it?" said Graves. "Yes," replied the man, "I do!" "Then," said Graves, "if that's so, somebody has got to let the people know it." He had not yet seen or heard the flood, but, believing the man's story, he turned his horse, thought no more of milk or customers, and putting on all speed down the valley, he shouted from house to house: "Wake up! The reservoir is broken away! The flood's coming! Save yourselves! Run, for your lives!" Sometimes he cried, "Fire! fire!" thinking that would wake the people quicker than "water." He started every one he met on a like mission. In less than ten minutes the overwhelming waters did come, and swept away the whole village—houses, factories, shops, and everything. But all that man could do (as it appeared on the inquest) had been done, and most of the inhabitants escaped with life; but some were too late, and were swept away and perished.

THE MISSIONARY SERVICE.*"The Gospel in the regions beyond."—2 Cor. x: 16.***A Bible Reading on Home Missions.**

Joshua i: 12-18.

I. WHAT peaceable possession of the land of Canaan was to the Israelites, our religious privileges—our churches, the ministry, our Sunday-schools, and our Christian family circles—are to us.

II. If now we enjoy a *rest* in these privileges, while those whose lot is cast in newer and more distant parts of our country do not, it is God that has given it to us. (V. 13.)

III. Our responsibilities are not limited to our own States or immediate neighborhood: it is ours, also, to see that our brethren in the more remote parts of our country have *rest*, as well as ourselves. (V. 15.)

IV. It is only when we have helped our brethren to possess the land that we may return and enjoy our rest to the full. (V. 15.)

V. If we must share our brethren's conflicts and toils in new and unsubdued regions, is it not some compensation to us that our wives and children are, the while, resting in peace? (V. 14.)

VI. Now, as of old, it is the East (the land toward the sun-rising) that is to help in evangelizing the West. Westward, not only the course of empire, but the Star of Bethlehem, holds its way. (V. 15.)

VII. A hearty response to these obligations on the part of those to whom God has already given rest is especially fitting and pleasing to God. (V. 16.)

VIII. To neglect this duty and these obligations is to bring condemnation and judgment on us. (V. 18.)

Smooth Stones.

"I LOVE TO TELL THE STORY."—When the disciples (Luke xxiv: 16-33) had found the risen Savior, their hearts were so full of the good news that they could not wait till morning; so they started at midnight and walked seven or eight miles back to Jerusalem, to tell their brethren that the Lord was risen,

and that they had talked with Him by the way.

A MISSIONARY'S PRAYER FOR HIS DESCENDANTS.—Dr. Judson, when nearing the end of life, remarked that he had always prayed for his children, but of late he had felt impressed with the duty of praying for their children and their children's children down to the latest generation, so that he should ultimately meet a long, unbroken line of descendants before the throne of God, where all might join together in ascribing praise to their Redeemer.

A HAND IN EVERY GOOD WORK.—An intelligent English farmer, having carefully read the annual report of an English missionary society, found that there were one hundred and twenty-three missionaries of the society laboring in different parts of the world. Meeting the secretary of the society, he said: "I am determined to have something to do with every sermon preached, every tract distributed, every school established; and for this purpose I will give a sovereign for each of the missionaries. Here is my check for £123, in order that I may do something all over the world."

"THE DAY IS BREAKING."—Though the processes are slow and inconspicuous by which the ancient structures of false religions are being undermined, yet the time will come when they will tumble suddenly into ruins, when a nation shall be converted in a day. In the baptism of ten thousand Telugus in India, within a single year, do we not already see the gray dawn of such an era of culmination?

"We are living, we are dwelling
In a grand and awful time!
In an age on ages telling;
To be living is sublime.
Hark! the waking up of nations—
Gog and Magog to the fray;
Hark! What soundeth? 'Tis creation's
Groaning for its latter day."

—*Life of Adoniram Judson, by his son, Edw. Judson.*

THANKSGIVING SERVICE.

*The holiest of holidays are those
Kept by ourselves in silence and apart—
The secret anniversaries of the heart.*

H. W. LONGFELLOW.

**The Gospel the Only Security for Eminent
and Abiding National Prosperity.***

*Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise
man glory in his wisdom, neither let the
mighty man glory in his might: let not
the rich man glory in his riches, etc.—
Jer. ix: 23-24.*

THE Jewish nation had come to rely on their wealth, power and political wisdom. To rebuke such this text was spoken. It is no philosopher that speaks, but God. No doubtful theory is announced, but eternal truth. No vain experiment is recommended, but the wisdom which is from above. The same propensity to forget God and confide in man for national prosperity is rife in every age. And no nation was ever more strongly tempted to do this than ours at the present time.

Consider—I. The inefficacy of the common grounds of confidence: 1. Reason has been appealed to, but its impotence in the conflict with passion, ignorance and irreligion is demonstrated on every page of history. 2. Education has been relied upon, but knowledge and virtue are not inseparable. There is no moral power in science, learning, mere civilization, to purify the heart and restrain vice and crime. Philosophy, culture, the arts, did not save Rome or Greece from ruin. 3. The efforts of philosophy to reform and elevate mankind have proved signal failures in the past. 4. National wealth is thought to be the perfection of prosperity. But in all ages and lands it has proved the most active and powerful cause of national corruption. Our nation to-day is shaken to its foundations by our monetary power. 5. Nor is military genius and prowess any safer ground of confidence than wealth, as the history of nations illustrates

with solemn and awful significance. 6. Political wisdom, statesmanship, the boast and confidence of nations, is inadequate to secure and perpetuate national prosperity. 7. Our boasted free institutions, bought and maintained at immense sacrifices, and the envy of the nations, are not a guarantee of the future. There are elements existing and at work in our land to-day that are sure to work out disaster and ruin to personal liberty, national thrift and virtue, and even our national existence, unless checked and brought under control by a higher power than man's; by more potent elements and forces than those on which nations are wont to rely.

II. There is efficacy in the Gospel of the grace of God, and nowhere else, to secure eminent and abiding national prosperity. It was devised and bestowed upon mankind for this purpose; and in its principles, provisions, institutions and moral tendencies, it is eminently adapted to elevate, purify and bless nations as well as individual man. The proofs of its power to do this are not wanting. See the effect of Christianity on the laws and institutions of the old Roman empire—on the social and political life of Germany at the Reformation—on our own history and destiny as a nation by means of our Pilgrim fathers—on the condition of the Sandwich Islands, and in South Africa among the Hottentots. Hence patriotism demands of the Christian Church to-day earnest prayer to the Lord for His speedy and gracious interposition in our behalf as a nation, and the faithful and earnest application of the Gospel to stay the tide of demoralization which threatens to engulf us, and to reform and purify and evangelize this mighty and rapidly growing nation, with possibilities and responsibilities beyond our power to compute.

* This outline was suggested by reading a thanksgiving discourse by Dr. Lyman Beecher founded on this text.—Ed.

National Gratitude.

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Enter into His gates with thanksgivings and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him and bless His name.—Ps. c: 1, 4.

The duty here enjoined is based on the strongest obligation. God has not dealt so with any other people. Hence we are under peculiar obligations to enter His sanctuary with thanksgiving and praise. The year in review has been one of signal and manifold blessings: harvests abundant—general health in city and country—freedom from threatening pestilence—peace in all our borders—the prevalence of law and order—the quiet and effective operation of God's ordained moral agencies and forces—and the presence of Christ and the Holy Spirit in all our sanctuaries, hearing prayer, blessing the Word, stimulating Christians, converting souls, and making the power of the Gospel as a mighty and effective agency to purify and conserve, felt and confessed everywhere among our fifty millions of souls.

The Locomotive the Chariot of Our Christian Civilization.

*The chariots * * * shall seem like torches; they shall run like the lightnings.—Nahum ii: 4.*

These words are descriptive of the war chariots of old. They bring to mind that triumph of modern science—the locomotive. The locomotive stands for the subjugation of physical forces. Nowhere has this subjugation taken place with such signal rapidity and success as in America, and at no time here as during the year now closing.—The extension of the railroad system.—The opening of the Northern Pacific.—

The perfection of the electric light, etc. God's command that we subdue the earth is being obeyed. These victories reach in their consequences beyond the material world.

The Idea of Brotherhood Triumphant.

All ye are brethren.—Matt. xxiii: 8.

The leaven of equality is working mightily. Everything that stands in the way of the liberty of the individual is being resisted and overcome. The machinery of party politics has proved itself weaker than the sense of justice and of liberty. The American people will not brook anything that places obstacles in the way of the development of any individual. The black man, the Indian, the Chinaman, must have opportunities for growth equal with those enjoyed by the Anglo-Saxon. The anti-Chinese legislation is hostile to this spirit and must give way—is a reaction that cannot last. Every man a brother is an inspiration. America to-day is the logical result of the recognition of this idea.

The Response of a Grateful Heart.

For this child I prayed, and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of Him; THEREFORE also I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent unto the Lord. And he worshipped the Lord there.—1 Sam. i: 27-28.

The truly thankful heart does not rejoice less in the *repayment* than in the receipt of blessings from God.

True Gratitude a Characteristic of True Piety.

I will sing of mercy and judgment: Unto Thee, O Lord, will I sing.—Ps. ci: 1.

The truly pious heart can sing of judgment as well as of mercy.

Thanksgiving Sermons.

The following is a list of the thanksgiving sermons, also facts and suggestions relative to the occasion, published in former volumes of the HOMILETIC MONTHLY, *Metropolitan Pulpit* and *Complete Preacher*:

1. Lessons from the Birds and Lilies, by Canon Farrar.—Matt. vi: 25. HOMILETIC MONTHLY, Vol. VII., No. 3.
2. Harvest Home, by Arthur Mursell.—Matt. xii: 1. HOMILETIC MONTHLY, Vol. VII., No. 3.
3. Our Country, by J. P. Newman, D.D.—Ps. cxlvii: 20. " " " IV., " 4.

3. Thanksgiving, by Wayland Hoyt, D.D.—1 Chron. xxiv: 13. HOMILETIC MONTHLY, Vol. IV., No. 4.
5. Owe No Man Anything, by Henry C. Potter, D.D.—Rom. xiii: 8. *Metropolitan Pulpit*, Vol. II., No. 4.
6. The Hard Times God's Pruning Knife, by C. D. Wadsworth, D.D.—John xv: 2. *Metropolitan Pulpit*, Vol. II., No. 4.
7. Divine Forces in Human History, by Prof. A. J. Nelson.—Ps. xxvii: 1-2. *Complete Preacher*, Vol. II., p. 302.
8. The Crowning of the Year, by J. H. Rylance, D.D.—Ps. lxxv: 11. *Complete Preacher*, Vol. II., p. 180.
9. The Ideal Country.—Deut. xi: 12. HOMILETIC MONTHLY, Vol. VII., No. 3.
10. Munificence of Nature's God.—Ps. civ: 24. " " " VII., " 3.
11. The Harvest and the Drought.—Ezek. xvi: 27. " " " VI., " 2.
12. The Harvest Basket and Its Lessons.—Amos viii: 1. " " " VI., " 2.
13. Rural Life.—Prov. xxvii: 23-27. " " " VI., " 2.
14. How to Keep a Feast Day.—Neh. viii: 10-12. " " " III., " 2.
15. Hints at Facts for Addresses. " " " IV., " 2.
16. Themes for Thanksgiving Sermons. " " " IV., " 2.

SERMONIC CRITICISM.

"I want my religious teacher to give me the nut as it came from God, and leave me and God to crack it between us."—JAS DUNCAN.

FACTS IN CONCEPTION AND EXECUTION.
 —"E. B." sends us a sermon, with the request that we criticise it on "general grounds." His accompanying letter is so full of good sense, and evinces so strong a desire to improve, both in style and method, in order to greater effectiveness in preaching, that we comply with his request. While excellent in spirit, and not wanting in scholarly traits, the sermon is essentially lacking in the chief elements which go to make up a good and impressive discourse.

1. The title of the sermon shows that the author had no definite, well-matured conception of his subject. It does not clearly and properly express the substance of the discourse.

2. The text does not suggest the sermon, and the sermon is not evolved from the text—a very "general" fault, but inexcusable, and fatal to the highest success, nevertheless. The subject is "Life"—the true and the false view of it—and the text is the record of Christ's temptation in the wilderness! And yet there are scores of texts exactly adapted to the subject chosen—pointed, pithy, striking words of the Spirit, fitted to arrest the attention and impress the mind. To make a bad choice of a text is to throw away the main chance of a sermon.

3. The plan of the sermon is also defective. Next in importance to a good text is a good plan. No beauty of

thought and style, or variety and aptness of illustration, will make up for a faulty plan. The adaptation of the text and the wisdom of the plan will give character to the discourse, and gauge its power to interest and affect the audience. A good plan is always simple, natural, logical, progressive, symmetrical, and exhaustive of the doctrine or topic proposed. Without such a plan, the thoughts of the preacher will be confused and rambling, his hold on his audience weak, and the effect of the sermon feeble and transient. Our friend fails here; sadly fails, like too many other preachers. He has not thought out his subject, mastered it in his own mind, before he put pen to paper. Hence he fails to grasp his theme. His thoughts and arguments and illustrations are not skillfully arranged for effect. There is no reach of thought, no resistless logic, no cumulative power of conviction, no ground-work laid in the body of the discourse for practical home thrusts in the way of concluding application. The sermon is hazy; the sunlight does not flood it. There is scarce a word of Scripture in it. One apt, singing text is better than pages of man's thoughts. The literary element dominates the spiritual. Hence, while an audience might be interested, it would not be swayed as by a strong wind, or deeply and permanently impressed.

SLANG AND THE PULPIT.—In the September HOMILETIC, DR. PORTER states his belief that "dignified colloquialism is the perfection of pulpit style." Doubtless what the worthy Doctor intended to express by the term "dignified colloquialism" is perfectly appropriate at times in a sermon; but it is not so certain that what some ministers may understand by the term would be likewise desirable. People's ideas of dignity differ; and we have seen men who appeared to regard dignity as assured for any phrase by the fact that *they* use it, with impressive tones and an imposing shake of the head. But what is slang—not in the abstract, but in the concrete? What words are slang, and what have ceased to be slang? The English language has many such expressions as "blizzard," "bulls and bears," "carpet-baggers," "on a strike," "at a discount," "making a hit," "high-toned," etc.; and to draw the dividing line sometimes takes as much research as composing a sermon. One fanciful writer even suggests, recently, that, prior to Shakespeare, "shuffle off this mortal coil" might have been slang. Who, then, can say that some daring genius may not yet make "fire him out" a classical phrase for the violent ejection of an unruly member of the congregation? If we were to hazard a definition, we should say that, as dirt is matter out of place, so slang is language out of place. Now, there is a place in the pulpit for the homely, every-day language of men: but that place is in the treatment of homely, every-day scenes and occurrences. "The language," says Kame, "is the dress;" and it would be about as appropriate to appear in the pulpit in corduroy breeches and shirt-sleeves, as to dress some of the sublime truths of the Gospel in the rough-and-ready phrases of the work-a-day world. Lincoln's homely advice, "Don't swap horses in the middle of the stream," was more effective than a tome of swelling phrases would have been; but what effect would such language have had in his oration at Gettysburg? Association counts for

much—for nearly all. Language which, though in itself unobjectionable, is sure to call to mind the gutter or the barnyard, should be rigidly eschewed by the preacher, unless he is dealing with barnyards and gutters. W. E. J.

THE SENSATIONAL PREACHER.—This preacher determines to attract the "camp-stool congregation," and he sometimes does it by advertising that he will preach on some strange and irreligious subject. The theory of the announcement is, that the public is weary of religion and wants something else. If the camp-stools are full, it is because the sensational preacher has established a reputation for sprightly talking on other subjects than religion. He will sweeten them a little with religion, but the points that interest his motley crowd are not religious. Another type of the sensational preacher uses the truth of Christ, and really means to drive it home to the conscience. He is a good man who is mistaken; and he does not go home with the people and learn from their conversation that what sticks to them is not the truth, but the ludicrous story, or the sentimental incident, or the slang phrase. What these were meant to help in teaching is not remembered. The conscience is at ease, while the sinner laughs over the sensational preacher's jest, or sheds tears over his sweet little story. A good test of a sensation is what comes of it. If men are led to cry out, "What must we do to be saved?" the sensation is legitimate. The sensational preacher may be known by the fruits of his work. If a preacher arrests attention by his methods, and fixes it on truth, he will be called a sensationist only by very careless people. To create a sensation must not be the aim, but if a sensation can be made legitimately a means to bring home the truth, let us have the sensation. Better sensation and life than no sensation and death.

LOGIC AND LOCOMOTIVES.—It has been well said that a logical sermon is like a locomotive—good for nothing without

the fire. The comparison may be carried a step further. The difference between English and American locomotives is, that the former are so compactly built that it would be impossible for them to take the curves and grades on our American lines. The same difference strikes us between logical sermons: some are so tightly jointed that they can move only in a direct line. It matters not what beauties of landscape or what riches there are off in this direction, or how many people with their needs and sufferings are in that direction. The track must be laid straight, and the Gospel train goes thundering on, but, alas! with empty cars. Now, there is a place for each kind of engine, and each kind of sermon. But study the topography, brother, and don't put the English locomotive on the American track.

TACKLING ON TEXTS.—In your December (1882) number you cited a glaring instance of a non-pertinent text. In your January number, page 244, occurs a double illustration of the same fault in the sketches entitled "The Compass of Life" and "The Thief in the Night." Let any one transpose these passages, and then say if the comment on the *second* one is not more appropriate, or, at least, *as* appropriate, for the *first*, and *vice versa*. It appears to be a practice now with our craft to compose a sketch, sermon or essay, and then tack some passage of Scripture to it as a text. This is not explaining the Word of God, whatever else it may be. W. P.

[The two texts mentioned are easily transposable, which, however, does not prove that either is non-pertinent as it stands. If a preacher waits to find the *best* text in the Bible, his flock is liable to go a long time unfed.—Ed.]

LOOSE REASONING.—"I see that a grotesque performer by the name of Lorrella died in Philadelphia a few days since of paralysis of the brain. Is it not natural that such a result would follow a prostitution of intellect? God has ways of making the law of cause and effect felt."—*Extract from a Sermon*

This logic would be stronger if no

clergymen or other men who are spending brain force in good works ever died of paralysis of the brain. We cannot measure Providence with so short a line.

THE FIRST PERSONAL PRONOUN.—In the July number of our excellent *Homiletic Monthly* appeared a sermon in which the preacher used the first personal pronoun sixty-six times, besides several allusions to "me" and "myself." Is that a good model? Ought not the speaker avoid everything that suggests egotism? E. H. A.

Vinton, Iowa.

Things a Preacher Should Do.

- Grow in grace, power, and adaptation to his work.
- Keep up the reputation of his class by being just as good a man as possible.
- Read the most important new books, if he can possibly buy them or borrow them.
- Cultivate habits of punctuality; begin every service on time, and close it on time.
- Interest himself in the children and young people, for their good and for his own.
- Take kindly all honest criticism, and learn something from that which is not kindly.
- Remember that his real reward is a good conscience, a growing character, and immortal hope.
- Make a vigorous push for honest success, doing his very best all the time—not merely now and then.
- Neglect nothing; life is made up of details, and small matters neglected by a preacher soon provoke much justifiable fault-finding.
- Avoid condemning in haste, without evidence, a brother minister, and as carefully avoid defending a bad man because he is a minister.
- Take time enough in deciding difficult questions arising in his church. The silence of the pastor will often convince both parties that they are wrong, and a well-pondered judgment will have weight.

Things a Preacher Should Not Do.

- Insist too much on being respected for his office; but rather let the office command respect by his personal character.
- Get tired of work that is good work, but seems fruitless. Soul crops last a long while, and often take a good while to grow.
- Hesitate to preach a truth because it is unpopular. It may be misunderstood; and the misunderstanding should be sought out and removed.
- Try to be eyes for people who are not blind. Every church has a few saints of whom the preacher may learn the way of God more perfectly.
- Be so rhetorical as to be vague. A great use of rhetoric is to make light strong on a particular point; but there is a rhetoric which is nothing but unaimed brightness.
- Be always hiding his thoughts behind general orthodox terms that people do not understand. Peter, on the day of Pentecost, spoke in plain words: so should we always speak.

PREACHERS EXCHANGING VIEWS.*If you have anything better than this, candidly impart it; if not, use this with me.—HORACE.***Dearth of Ministers.**

To our request for views or facts on this subject, we have received a number of responses, the more instructive of which we publish below:

At the headquarters of ministerial supply at Congregational House, Boston, they say of New England that there are from fifteen to twenty churches in that section now vacant, which pay from \$2,500 to \$3,500, and about twenty-five churches vacant which pay about \$600, or \$600 and parsonage.

R. B. TOBEY.

New Haven, Vt.

Early in life I consecrated myself to the ministry. I worked myself through college and seminary, supporting myself by teaching. When licensed by the Presbytery of New York, I was ready to go anywhere I was wanted. I offered my services to the Home (Pres.) Missionary Board, to the Foreign Board, to the American Board, and at last obtained a little mission station in New York City, where I remained a year. I left through no fault of my own, and obtained a year's supply on Long Island, outside of my own denomination. At the end of that time I was ready for a settled field of work. I could speak French and German, and had numerous offers of good positions as teacher: but I wanted to preach, and again offered myself to Boards of Home and Foreign Missions, and candidated in churches wherever I could hear of a vacancy. I was ready to accept any situation regardless of salary, but failed to obtain one, and at length accepted one of the many positions open to me as teacher. I became principal of an academy in one of the oldest cities of the State, and remained in that position seven years, doing, I think, a good work. Last year a vacancy occurred in a neighboring church. I was pressed to accept it. The salary is small, less than half my salary as teacher; but I resigned my

position and was settled as pastor over the church. During the past year upward of forty have been added to the church on confession, and the general work has prospered greatly; and yet at no time during those seven years could I get a church of any kind anywhere, for I tried to do so often, and during that time I believe I could have done as good work as I am doing now, perhaps better. But there were so many better men than myself in the field that there was no chance for me. If I had been particular about salary or location, I would not have wondered at my want of success; but that was not the case, and I can only attribute my failure to an over-supply of ministers. I could go to any one of several churches now, but I have no desire to change so long as my present relations are pleasant. My experience is that it is hard to get in; when once in, it is not difficult to circulate.

PASTOR —.

The answer to the question, "Is there a dearth of ministers?" will depend very much on the point of view from which we discuss the question. On a superficial examination, looking at the large number of unemployed ministers, and the fact that there are often a dozen candidates for a vacancy, we might conclude, as many do affirm, that we have enough and to spare. But looking at the year-books of the several denominations, and comparing the number of ministers with the number of existing churches in each, we shall find the churches far outnumber the entire clerical force. Taking a more critical survey of the subject still, and deducting the large class of idle or superannuated ministers, arising from old age and broken health and other causes, and also those who are always candidating, who have never been settled and never ought to be, who are hopelessly unacceptable to the churches, and have no business to be in the ministry—and the discrepancy is seen to be far greater still. Taking

into consideration the additional facts, that our Home and Foreign Mission fields are rapidly expanding and calling for more men every year to cultivate them and gather in glorious harvests; that for the last decade or two of years there has been relatively, if not actually, a decided falling off in the number of candidates for the ministry; and that for various reasons, which will suggest themselves to the observing reader, there were never before so many ministers in secular callings;—in view of such facts, which no intelligent man will call in question, it will be found that there is a real, actual, alarming dearth of available and acceptable ministers already existing in the American Church. And the causes which have produced this sad state of things are growing in intensity and scope from year to year, and the alarm has not been sounded a moment too soon, and it is the part of wisdom to give heed to it and put in requisition every available means to increase the supply. S.

A True or Fancy Sketch—Which?

Two preachers I have in mind have caused me considerable reflection. One was a big, whole-souled, impulsive man, who made warm friends of sinner and saint at first acquaintance. His pastorate was blessed with a number of sweeping revivals, and his enthusiasm at such a season was irresistible. His life was purity itself, and his sermons were as times masterpieces. Yet, strange to say, after his first year his church ran down constantly. His congregations continued large, and their love for him seemed to deepen from year to year, yet the collections, the prayer-meetings, and, in fact, all the tests of an active, sterling piety, so forcibly illustrated the "*facilis descensus*," that a change was felt to be imperatively demanded.

The next minister was of an almost antipodal type. He measured his words in speaking and his time in visiting, and nothing could prevail upon him to use one word more or to stay one minute longer than he deemed necessary. He never overflowed, you knew to a

minute how long his prayer would be, and never was a good dinner spoiled because the service was longer than usual. The collections increased, and the prayer-meeting was well attended, and yet I have good reason for believing that that church never was at a lower ebb, spiritually, than under his ministrations.

I inquired into the history of the two men. The former had commenced his ministry as a "circuit rider," with little education. His sermons were thought out whenever he had opportunity, chiefly on horseback, his reading was done zealously, but in the most haphazard style, and by "boarding around" his habits of life were rendered necessarily irregular. The other had graduated from a theological seminary and had been drilled to perfection. He expended all his efforts on making the church a machine, and his sole idea of success was to make it run without friction. In short, he had system "on the brain," as the saying runs, and wished to systematize *everything*, even to the manifestations of divine power. The other hardly knew what system meant. And between the two the church at R— is in a bad way, and is still at a loss to know how it came about.

J. L.

That Mucilage Recipe.

We have received nearly a hatful of recipes, in reply to inquiry in August number, page 661, several of which we give in brief:

J. G. REID.—"Starch, two ounces; white sugar, one ounce; gum arabic, two drachms; mix with water. After the gum is dissolved add sugar and starch, boil till the latter is thoroughly cooked. A little alcohol prevents souring. Have used it for years in a mineralogical museum and find it invaluable."

A. G. MURRAY.—"About two ounces of gum tragacanth; one ounce of clean rain-water; one teaspoonful of camphor or tablespoonful of alcohol, as soon as the gum is well softened."

W. A. YINGLING.—"Gum arabic and

rain-water. Two ounces of the former should make over one-half pint of mucilage."

J. H. MACNELL.—"Common cherry-tree gum dissolved in water."

We have received also several recipes for paste which is claimed to be superior to any mucilage:

J. W. B.—"Alum, one ounce; warm water, one quart; when cold add flour to the consistency of cream; powdered resin, one-half teaspoonful; cloves, two or three; boil to desired consistency, stirring constantly."

R. B. T.—"Flour, one tablespoonful; water, one teacupful; powdered alum, one-half teaspoonful; oil of cloves or carbolic acid, six drops."

L. S. Keen, S. T. Icken, H. W. Trueblood, William Wilmer, all recommend: "Common flour paste, one teacupful, ordinary size; carbolic acid, twenty drops."

"An Acre of Ground."

In response to the pastor wishing to know (in July number, p. 661) how to till his acre-farm so as to bring good profit with little labor, we have received several answers. The following may prove helpful:

Much depends upon where 'a country pastor' lives about turning ground into money. If he lives near a city, strawberries and black-cap raspberries will pay the best to market. If in the country, and he wishes to raise for his own family use, let h'm raise a small amount each of beets, peas, string and lima beans, sweet corn and parsnips, but buy his celery, onions and cabbages. If he expects to stay long, let him always have what he needs of black-caps and strawberries, and plant the rest in potatoes. I never hoe my garden until I am obliged to "hill up." Constant raking over keeps the ground light and free from weeds, and I can rake over four times as much in an hour as I can hoe; then when I hill up I have no weeds the rest of the summer. That is the way I get the most money for the least work.—OLD PASTOR

On the same subject "D. G." writes: "He will find that, if his land is suitable for peas and oats, if he *sows oats broadcast*, and after harvesting them sows broadcast peas, he will not need to labor in the field at all after sowing until he reaps, and yet have a paying crop."

The Church for Young Men.

I don't claim to have found one that just meets my ideas, but, when I do, it will have two characteristics well marked. In the first place, its preacher will make more prominent than is usual the *manliness* of Christ. Manly young men admire nothing more than manliness in others. It will cover a great many faults in a preacher, and its absence will hide a great many virtues. So that the preacher of my church must, as one of the very first requisites, be a manly man, and delight in dwelling as often as possible on the supreme manliness of Christ—a theme, by the way, which it was left for a layman (Thomas Hughes) to develop.

In the second place, this church I hope to find will be careful to avoid unreasonable caution in intrusting young men with her work. No doubt it is all very proper for them to sit and learn wisdom at the feet of the Gamaliels, but after all an ounce of experience is worth a pound of precept. Then the young man who *is* a man has a horror of being a mere hanger-on, even to the best of things. He wants to feel that he is giving an equivalent, as far as possible, for everything he receives—even from the church. And when you have him at work—not merely at fitful and irresponsible work, as in revivals, but at some permanent charge, as a Sunday-school class—then you have him sure.

LAYMAN.

A Familiar Scene.

The following scene is by no means unusual in the winter, either in city or country churches. The last stanza of the last hymn is begun by the choir. Suddenly throughout the church a stir is seen. One arm after another flies up

in the air like the windmill that roused the wrath of Don Quixote. Then one head after another ducks down behind the seat; an animated shuffling is heard, and the heads emerge with a double allowance of blood in the face, and just in time to bow for the benediction. What has happened? Nothing at all. The congregation have simply been putting on their overcoats, wraps and rubbers. The preacher must not let such

a little thing disturb his gravity, nor detract from the solemnity with which he delivers the benediction. Of course such unseemly haste to escape from the building is neither reverent nor complimentary; but—time is so short, you know, and there is so much to talk about before dinner. If that isn't a valid excuse, it's the only one I can perceive. Who can suggest a remedy?

ORDEBLY.

QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

"S. A. C."—Can you give us a comprehensive definition of superstition?—A.: Faith without knowledge.

"K. A. S."—A.: Why be offended that your neighbor has adopted your methods? You forget that "imitation is the sincerest flattery."

"J. A. P."—What is the cheapest edition of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress"?—A.: That published by the *Book Society* of London. Price, one penny.

"A. K."—What is the best denominational work giving a collection of Scriptural passages for use in visiting the sick and the afflicted?—A.: Referred to our readers for answer.

"A. K."—By whom is written the poem entitled "No Sect in Heaven," and where may it be found?—A.: Mrs. Cleveland is its author; the American Tract Society publishes the poem as a leaflet.

"J. R. F."—Where can the work known as "Scott's Parallel References" be had?—A.: It is probably out of print, as it is out of date, having been superseded by more comprehensive works. It may possibly be had of some second-hand book-dealer in any of our large cities.

"E. B. J."—Can you recommend a really practical book to a beginner studying elocution without a teacher?—A.: The "Drill-Book of Vocal Culture and Gesture," by E. P. Thwing, is by one who has had years of experience in the pulpit and lecture field, and it is warmly commended by such men as Drs. Talmage, Duryea, etc.

"J. S. T."—What standard works on theology would you recommend a young minister to study?—A.: Study, first of all, the standards of your own church or denomination. What these may be, you can ascertain from your leading theological professors. An acquaintance with your own will lead you to know and to study other authorities outside of your particular church.

"J. H. T."—Can you inform me where and for what price I can purchase a small book entitled "The Diatetics of the Soul"? What are its merits and who is its author?—A.: The book in question may be recommended to all who are suffering from melancholy, or other mental depression. Its author is named Feuchtersleben, and its correct German title is: "Zur Diatetic der Seele." It may be had (in German) of E. Steiger & Co., 25 Park Place, New York, for 30 cents, bound in cloth. We do not think it is republished in English.

"W. F."—Moses took the golden calf, burnt it, and ground it to powder. (See Ex. xxxii: 20.) Can gold be burnt?—A.: Either gold or silver, if subjected to a white heat, becomes friable, and is readily converted into fine powder. The golden calf was probably hollow, and hence easily broken into pieces. The heat necessary to calcine the pieces could be produced by bellows. Another theory has it that the idol was of wood coated with gold, in which case the fire served the double purpose of consuming the wood and calcining the gold.

"C. M."—One of my congregation,

not a church member, whenever I approach him with words of solicitation, meets me with scorn and with allusions that are downright insulting. Does not a decent self-respect require me to let him alone hereafter?—A.: What are those allusions about, that you feel insulted over them? The probability is that he has some basis for them, or thinks he has. The first thing for you to do is to get that man's opinion of you in full. It will probably do you more good than the opinions of all the rest of the church. And then you will not have to strike in the dark.

"DUBIOUS."—Is it right for me to conceal from a church for which I am candidating my consciousness of certain weaknesses that may unfit me for the position?—A.: If you are tolerably sure you are unfit for the position, you have no sort of business candidating for it. Your own opinion of yourself, however, is probably the last thing anybody would want. Moreover, is not the Lord to have something to do with you and your weaknesses if He assigns you that field of labor? Remember the rebuke He gave to Moses. Give the church a *fair opportunity* of judging you; beyond this you need not feel called upon to "run yourself down."

"R. V. S."—Is it right for a pastor to appropriate to the use of the church what is known as "conscience-money?" Quite a sum has been sent to me through the mail. I have no hint as to where it is from, but feel assured it was not the giver's to give.—A.: Why, use it for the church, of course. What else *can* you do? If it is impossible to find the rightful owner, the church has the same right to it you would have to money you found, and whose owner you could not find. Besides, if the Lord's steward loses the funds, and you, finding them, return them to the Lord, who is wronged? Probably the money *can't* be returned to the owner now, or the sender's awakened conscience would have caused him to do so.

"PASTOR H."—Ought I to allow a blatant infidel in my neighborhood to say what he pleases, and I remain silent?

Or should I take up the gauntlet and answer him in my pulpit?—A.: The best answer we can give to the brother is a paragraph from the "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," by Dr. Holmes: "If a fellow attacked my opinions in print, would I reply? Not I. Do you think that I don't understand what my friend, the professor, long ago called the hydrostatic paradox of controversy? Can't know what that means? Well, I'll tell you. You know if you had a bent tube, one arm of which was the size of a pipe stem, and the other big enough to hold the ocean, water would stand at the same height in one as the other. Controversy equalizes fools and wise men in the same way, and the fools know it."

"JUVENUS."—A.: No; your intense self-consciousness in public prayer is not a hopeless indication. It is probably just the reverse. You say you can't feel as you do in private prayer, but "the thoughts seem more on the people than on God." Well, that shows that you have had little experience, but not necessarily that you have little piety. It shows you appreciate the importance of the situation and your own weakness. It is an experience we have all had to go through. Don't shirk your duty because of it. As a practical remedy, we would suggest that you fix your mind upon the afflictions, the trials, the temptations of persons present, until your heart is full of sympathy for them, and then out of your full heart endeavor to talk to God. Try to pray in public as you do in private.

"G. P. A."—Our new church edifice has a kind of ringing sound from the speaker's voice which prevents many from understanding what is said, and makes it unpleasant for all listeners. The auditorium is amphitheatre in style, about seventy feet by fifty in size, and rather more than the ordinary height. It has open timber finish, ceiled with ash. The speaker stands on the side of the room, in front of the orchestra. There is no alcove except for choir. What can be done?—A.: Stretching wires across the church below the ceiling,

one-third of the distance to the floor, is the cheapest and easiest remedy we know of, but it is not always effectual. Anything to break the sound-waves. We would be glad to receive suggestions from our readers who have had experience in meeting this difficulty.

"L. S. K."—To what extent have personalities a place in public prayer? Recently two men were gambling in a building when it fell in, one being killed. At his funeral I prayed that the other, through God's mercy in sparing his life, might be led to a better life. Was I right? Give us a few rules for guidance in such matters.—A.: A public prayer should be on public matters. No person should be singled out in it, except in one of two cases: when

the public welfare is exceptionally dependent on the person, or when public feeling is unusually aroused concerning him or her, as in cases of bereavement or calamity. The personal matter then becomes really a public matter. There are occasions, however, of a semi-public character, such as funerals or special prayer meetings, when the rule is more lax. The incidents related are an instance in point. Was the preacher right in so praying? We think so undoubtedly. The escaped sinner was so closely connected with the occasion that so far as that audience was concerned he was a public figure. But to pray for a sinner by name, in ordinary public worship, is almost never defensible. It is out of taste; it stirs up needless animosity; it furnishes a cloak for malice; it does no good, but much harm in many ways.

HELPFUL DATA IN CURRENT LITERATURE.

THE LIMITATIONS OF FREETHINKING. By Rev. Dr. D. S. Phelan. *North American* for September, 10 pp. A well-digested and rather brilliant essay, without much that is particularly new, but what there is being remarkably well said.

CAVE-TOMBS IN GALILEE. By Lawrence Olyphant. *The Living Age* for August 18, 6 pp. An article with something new even for old travelers in Palestine. The writer has made considerable study of the tombs of which he writes, and it is worth while for a minister to know what he has to say of them.

INDIAN WAR IN THE COLONIES. By Edward Eggleston. *The Century*, 19 pp. Mr. Eggleston here begins his series of historical articles on life in the colonies. It is safe to predict that they will be both valuable and interesting. The present installment certainly is. He handles the English language in an admirable manner, and his fancy is lively, while not running away with his facts.

OUR NOMINATING MACHINES. By George Walton Green. *Atlantic Monthly* for September, 6 pp. A clear and vigorous statement of the reasons for much of the rottenness in our politics. The writer attempts rather to tell what the matter is than how it is to be cured. We have never failed to urge upon the preacher his duty to take part in politics. We urge the reading of this article for the same reason.

WHAT IS THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH; OR, WHO ARE THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST? By J. S. Lamar. *Sunday Magazine* for October, 5 pp. The subject looks like an immense one for a magazine article, but the readers will find that it refers to the denomination called "Disciples" and "Christians"—of which Garfield was a member. It is a description of their doctrines, methods, and a few statistics of their progress.

WITHOUT GOD, NO COMMONWEALTH. By Cardinal Manning. *Eclectic Magazine* for September, 6 pp. A clear, concise statement of the principles on which government rests. The cry of "Equality, fraternity, liberty," is a taking one at present, and is too apt to be carried farther than reason can consent. Cardinal Manning recognizes this tendency, and his words on the subject are, to say the least, timely and suggestive.

EDUCATION IN CHINA. By Rev. D. M. Bates, M.A. *The American Church Review* for September, 18 pp. A very interesting article discussing the modes and standards of education in China, what relation it sustains to the people at large, and the advance made in educational methods from the West. The description of Chinese literature is brief, but interesting, and the discussion on the educational institutions established by missionary societies is not without value.

CLERICAL TRAINING BEFORE AND AFTER ORDINATION. By John Andrews Hartis, D. D. *American Church Review* for August, 16 pp. The writer admits the fact of a decline in ministerial authority, and sets himself to the task of finding the reasons and of pointing out the indications of such decline. The fact is not particularly agreeable, but it has to be faced. It is not necessarily a proof that the ministry is declining because its authority is declining. It may mean simply that the people are much farther advanced than they used to be in independent thinking and in moral judgment. The priest's authority is greater than the minister's, but the priest may be not nearly so great as the minister. This article is not profound, but it is suggestive, and shirks none of the disagreeable phases of the subject.

GERMS OF ILLUSTRATION.*

Without a parable spake He not unto them.—Mark iv: 34.

"You may consecrate an anvil, or desecrate a pulpit."

When Rev. Dr. Cutler, rector of St. Ann's Church, Brooklyn, lay a-dying, his friends, anxious to catch some "last word," gathered around his bed and asked him some questions. The departing saint beckoned them all away, saying, "I have said my say."

A missionary was telling a negro boy of Christ's love to man, leading the lad's thoughts on through the various acts of healing and sympathy and mercy which Christ's ministry exhibited, till at last he told of the death on the cross, when the boy exclaimed: "It is exactly what I should have expected from Him."

Professor Maury says of the Gulf Stream: "In the greatest droughts it never falls, in the greatest floods it never runs over. Nowhere else in the world does there exist so majestic a current. It is more rapid than the Amazon, more impetuous than the Mississippi, and the collected waters of these two streams would not equal the thousandth fraction of the volume of water which it displaces."

"I see two unquestionable facts: First, my mother is greatly afflicted in circumstances, body, and mind, and yet I see that she cheerfully bears up under all by the support she derives from constantly retiring to her closet and her Bible; secondly, that she has a secret spring of comfort of which I know nothing; while I who give unbounded loose to my appetites and seek pleasure by every means, seldom, or never, find it. If, however, there be any such secret in religion, why may not I attain it as well as my mother? I will immediately seek it of God."—(Cecil's Remains, p. 6.)

When the yellow fever was ravaging the city of New York, in 1822, a large section of the city, known as the infected district, was deserted and barricaded. Though the inhabitants had fled, the cats still remained in their homes, and many of them would have starved to death had not an old colored woman, named Chloe, remained in the district and fed the cats with as much faithfulness as if they had been human beings. If this was not *philanthropy*, it was certainly near akin to it in spirit; and it is no wonder that a public subscription was made, and a portrait of this Florence Nightingale of the cats painted by the then most noted artist, Thomas Dunlop.

A passenger, who had been looking with great interest at the "man at the wheel" as he was directing the course of a steamboat through the windings of an intricate channel, said to him: "I suppose, sir, you are the pilot of this boat?" "Yes," replied the man at the wheel, "I have been a pilot on these waters for over thirty years." "Indeed!" continued the

inquirer:—"you must, then, by this time, know every rock and bar and shoal on the whole coast!" "No, I don't; not by a long ways," said the pilot. "You don't!" responded the passenger, in great surprise: "what, then, do you know?" "I know," answered the pilot, with strong emphasis, "I know where the deep water is."

One cold Christmas day a poor blind man was playing on a violin and trying to earn a crust in one of the London streets; but, somehow, his tunes lacked the power to bring him any pence. There stood the blind man, cold and hungry, alone in his misery. Two gentlemen were passing, and stopped opposite the player, conversing a few minutes. One of them approached the player, and gently patting his back, said, "Won't the people give you any money?" "No," was the reply: "they won't open their windows; it is too cold." "Well, lend me your fiddle, and I will see if they will open for me." The speaker took the violin and played a tune, the like of which was never before heard and likely never to be heard again in a street. The windows opened as if by magic, and money was thrown out of them plentifully enough. The charmer, having accomplished his purpose, gathered up the money, and handing it to the blind player, said: "There, you can go home now; you have got sufficient to keep you for one day at least." It was Paganini. Is not this what Christ has done for the poor? Has not He opened hearts that otherwise would have remained forever closed?

A poor man who had just buried his wife was taking her little babe home to her relatives. The man was clad in humble attire; the crape on his hat told the story of his bereavement. The babe was sadly in want of attention, and the father could not stop its crying. The fellow-passengers on the train were evidently greatly annoyed by the child's crying; and the poor man wiped the great tears, first from the eyes of the infant and then from his own, but, despite all his efforts, it continued to cry, until an elegantly-dressed lady, whose own babe was in the arms of her nurse, went to the father and said, with motherly tenderness of tone, "Give me the child." The poor man gave into her outstretched arms his poor babe: its coarse and soiled robes rested for the first time on costly silks, its head disappeared under her shawl, and all was still. Like the Grecian daughter who, through the iron bars of the prison-door, fed her starving father, so did this high-born lady, from her own breast, feed this hungry child of poverty; and when its hunger was satisfied she put aside her shawl, and there the little one lay on her gentle bosom, in calm, sweet sleep, until her own child required her attention.

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

NOTICES OF BOOKS OF HOMILETIC VALUE.

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

LIDDELL & SCOTT'S GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON, A GREEK ENGLISH LEXICON. Compiled by HERR, George Liddell, D.D., Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, and Robert Scott, D.D., Dean of Rochester, late Master of Balliol College, Oxford. Seventh Edition, Revised and Augmented throughout, with the Co-operation of Professor Drisler, of Columbia College, New York. Harper & Brothers. 4to, sheep, \$10.

A time most inopportune, *this*, for the advent of a great Greek Lexicon. A distinguished alumnus of Harvard University has just pronounced, in the presence of the assembled members of a great Greek-letter society, the Greek language itself a "College Fetich," and nothing more!

But although this Lexicon first sees the light on so dark a day, in itself it will be generally acknowledged to be a really great work in Greek Lexicography, and it may yet be of some use to a class among us who may not be able wholly to divest themselves of all respect for this ancient "College Fetich," even to such men as Lord Derby, Lord Beaconsfield and Mr. Gladstone; men, who, it will be admitted, have some practical aptitude for public affairs, but still worship this "College Fetich;"—to a Macaulay, who on one occasion was met by an acquaintance in a by-way of London, with his face thrust into a Greek book and the tears streaming down his cheeks, alas! worshipping this "College Fetich," and he then an old man!—to a Robert Hall, who, when no longer young, in order that he might rearrange, as he tells us, the whole furniture of his mind, read the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* twice over critically and with great perseverance, went through the tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides, and other Greek writers, and then, in spite of his worship of the "College Fetich," wrote the noblest sermons in the language on "Modern Infidelity" and the death of the Princess Charlotte;—and to a Michelet, a man of the people in some respects, of modern tastes and advanced notions, who tells us that he himself "had been born like a blade of grass in the shade between the flagstones of Paris, but had been restored to color and vigor and life by southern sunshine and the warmth of another climate" in the study of the ancient languages of Southern Europe. His knowledge of the *people* he traces directly to this source—"Because I was," he says, enabled "to trace it to its historic origin and see it issue from the depths of time." Whoever will confine himself to the present, the actual, will not understand them. He who is satisfied with seeing the exterior, and painting the form, will not even be able to see it. To see it accurately and translate it faithfully, he must know what it covers; there is no painting without anatomy!"

Now this great Greek-English Lexicon, perhaps more than any other book, furnishes us with the means of *studying the anatomy of language*.

The Northern Pacific Railroad, the last spike of which has just been driven, may be, in the estimate of Mr. Adams, the glory of the nineteenth century, but the Greek language is generally admitted to be the crowning glory of the human intellect throughout the ages.

And while it is not too much to say that this book, its binding, its page, its paper and its type, leads one to *love at first sight*, and we can easily believe that its pretty face will do much to give a favorable impression to the *tyro* in the study of the Greek language, we are free to say that this seventh edition, in its approach to ideal perfection, in accuracy and breadth of scholarship and exhaustive research, will be found by the advanced student worthy of the great language of which it is the key.

But what leads us most of all to admire this great work is that it is the noblest illustration of the *co-operation of scholarship* that the world has ever furnished.

No one man could have produced it, no single school, no age, no country; but it is the grand result of the combined scholarship of the ages and of all countries. In editions back in this very work there were found indications of prejudice and sectarian bias, if not of ignorance. These have now all disappeared, and in this last edition the honest, fearless work of true scholarship is discernible on every page.

This book is intended to cover all the eras in Greek literature, from the early epic down to the Roman age, and it will not only be found an all-sufficient help to the student of classic Greek, but it will be all that most students will want in the study of the New Testament, and generally it will be more satisfactory than any special New Testament Lexicon, inasmuch as the words are herein traced in the development of their signification from their earliest age to their New Testament and even Byzantine use. As a book of homiletic value, we have never called attention to one more worthy of regard.

FRENCH AND GERMAN SOCIALISM IN MODERN TIMES. By Richard I. Ely, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Political Economy in Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, etc. Harper & Brothers. Price 75 cents.

This is a little book on a great subject. Socially, politically, as well as religiously, Socialism would seem about to be the engrossing subject in this country as well as in Europe. For the last fifty years it has turned Europe into a seething cauldron, and many of these elements of commotion are being rapidly transferred to this country. It must be acknowledged that neither practically nor theoretically have the ministers of this country known much about Socialism. It has been regarded by many intelligent people as a sort of a craze of some hair-brained enthusiasts, and at best but a theory of impracticable men. But, as the theories of one age, if not refuted, become the principles and give rise to the practices of succeeding ages, it is high time that ministers, and intelligent minds in all classes, carefully examine the theories of the Socialists. They are especially dangerous because they seem to rest in part on the basis of religious teachings, and on this account ministers ought to study them carefully.

This little work, with great brevity, but with remarkable clearness, gives the tenets, rise and progress of the various schools of Socialism in Europe. It will be seen that they differ widely, and that the principles of some are not easily overthrown, and that there is a probability that there are in them some truths that will largely influence our country and the world in the future.

THEMES AND TEXTS OF RECENT LEADING SERMONS.

1. Manifestations of Character. "And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him. * * * Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him."—Ex. xxxiv: 30-29. C. N. Sims, D.D., Chancellor Syracuse University.
2. The Secret of Success in Religious Work. "And the three companies blew the trumpets and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal, and they cried, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!"—Judges vi: 20. A. E. Kittridge, D.D., Chicago.
3. The Use and Misuse of Power. "And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines! And he bowed himself with," etc.—Judges xvii: 30. J. M. Pullman, D.D., New York.
4. Woman's Work for Woman. "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."—Ruth i: 16. J. D. Fulton, D.D., Brooklyn.
5. A Cure for Unsavory Meats; or, Salt for the White of an Egg. "Can that which is unsavory be eaten without salt? or is there any taste in the white of an egg?"—Job vi: 6. Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, London, England.
6. Influence of Impure Reading on the Young. "For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind."—Hosea viii: 7. Stewart A. Walsh, D.D., New York.
7. The Irrepressible Antagonism. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."—Matt. vi: 24. Monsignor Capel, London, England.
8. The Poetry of Life. "Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?"—Matt. vi: 30. Rev. Stopford A. Brooke, London, England.
9. Harvest Home. "My Father is the Husbandman."—John xv: 1. T. De Witt Talmage, D.D., Brooklyn.
10. Paul's Theistic Argument. "The God that made the world and all things therein, he being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands," etc.—Acts xvii: 24-28. Joseph Parker, D.D., London, England.
11. Modern Unbelief No Cause for Alarm. "For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?"—Rom. iii: 3. J. O. Park, D.D., Brooklyn.
12. Sluggish Christianity. "For none of us liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live, etc."—Rom. xiv: 7-9. Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, Brooklyn.
13. Certainties in Religion. "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beatheth the air."—1 Cor. ix: 26. P. S. Henson, D.D., Chicago.
14. Accepted of the Great Father. "He hath made us accepted in the beloved."—Eph. i: 6. Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, London, England.
15. Home and Family. "Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named."—Eph. iii: 15. Horace M. Scudder, D.D., Chicago.

SUGGESTIVE THEMES.

1. Intelligence Back of the First Material Cause. ("In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."—Gen. i: 1.)
2. Fellowship Between Man and Angels. ("And he took butter and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat."—Gen. xviii: 8.)
3. America's Besetting Danger. ("Lest when * * * thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God."—Deut. viii: 12-14.)
4. The Clever Hypocrite. ("And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart."—2 Chron. xxv: 2.)
5. Finding God in Adversity. ("And when he was in affliction he besought the Lord his God, and numbed himself greatly before the God of his fathers."—2 Chron. xxxiii: 12.)
6. Godless Philosophy. ("They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course."—Ps. lxxxii: 5.)
7. The Self-Polluting Power of an Evil Life. ("The plowing of the wicked is sin."—Prov. xxi: 4.)
8. The Key-Note of the Ministry. ("From that time began Jesus to preach, and to say, Repent ye."—Matt. iv: 17.)
9. Purity the Condition of Spiritual Illumination. ("Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."—Matt. v: 8.)
10. The Lesson of the Berthold Statue. ("Even so let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."—Matt. v: 16.)
11. Christianity Responsive to the Moral Instincts. ("But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst."—John iv: 13.)
12. The Christian's Responsibility. ("For we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men."—1 Cor. iv: 9.)
13. An Experienced Savior. ("For in that He Himself hath suffered, being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted."—Heb. ii: 18.)
14. Lessons from the Volcanoes of Java. ("And as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea."—Rev. viii: 8.)