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DISCUSSION OF LIVING ISSUES, AND  
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## SERMONIC.

### HEAVEN AND HOW TO GET THERE.

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*And behold, there talked with him two men,  
which were Moses and Elias: who ap-  
peared in glory, and spake of his decease  
which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.*  
— Luke ix: 30, 31.

I HAVE been specially requested to preach on a theme from which I preached not long ago in another part of this great continent. That is my apology, should any one be here who was present on that occasion. From these words of the text let us endeavor to draw some idea of the present condition of departed saints; for which, for my present purpose, I use the term Heaven. What is the present state of departed saints, and what lessons are suggested by the text, to direct us so that we may join them by and by?

All mankind may be classified as the quick and the dead: those who are dead and have passed away, and those who are still alive upon the earth. Our Lord, when He comes, will judge the quick and the dead. "We shall not all die, but we shall all be changed." The

quick—the living ones—will enjoy the great privilege not to die. But the great majority of mankind are under the class of the dead. Now Moses and Elias are examples of these two classes. Moses represents the dead. We are told that God buried him, and his sepulchre was not known; but we are surely not to infer that he did not die. There was good reason why his sepulchre should be hidden. Some of you have been in Roman Catholic countries on the continent of Europe, and you have seen bits of bones enclosed in cases in different churches—subdivisions of apostles and prophets, perhaps more bones of one saint than ever existed in one human living body; and you have seen people bowing before those relics, paying adoration looking very much like idolatry; and this in Christendom! The Israelites were prone to idolatry. Even when God appeared upon Sinai they were worshipping the golden calf. Now if they had found the body of Moses, especially in a time when they were degenerated, would not they have distributed those relics all over the land? Would not every synagogue have had those relics of one of the greatest men, if not the greatest man, that ever lived?

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To avoid this, God buried him, and no one could tell where his sepulchre was. But he was buried, and he represents the dead. Now Elias represents the quick; he did not die, but was translated. He was changed, and went into glory without the medium of the grave. Both of these men are here, Moses and Elias; and the point to observe is this: that Moses, who died, whose body was left in the earth, is exactly in the same circumstances and enjoying the very same privileges as Elijah, who did not die at all, but who went to heaven in that chariot of fire.

And so we may learn what is the present condition of departed saints. We may look on all those whose bodies are in the grave as represented by Moses; and inasmuch as Moses shared with Elijah, we have reason to hope that those who have died and whose bodies are in the grave share with those who have never died at all. We may learn from the simple facts of the text:

I. THE CONSCIOUS EXISTENCE OF DEPARTED SAINTS. They have left us, but they have not ceased to be. They do not sleep in cold unconsciousness; there is no long interval of being; there are no ages of slumber till the trumpet of the resurrection shall sound. Moses, the dead one, is consciously existing along with Elijah, who never ceased to live. If we had been with Elisha when Elijah was caught up into glory, we should not have returned to our dwelling and put on mourning and lamented that Elijah was dead. Elisha went back triumphing in the thought that the prophet and the friend and the father whom he loved was in conscious existence still. Though the sunken cheek and the unresponsive eye, and the hand that no longer clasps our own speak to us of death, yet we may be as well assured that our departed friends still live, as if we had seen an angelic convoy taking them to glory, even as Moses no less than Elias appeared with Jesus on the Mount.

And we may learn, secondly, that they are in glory. "There talked with him two men, Moses and Elias, who ap-

peared in glory." Though the resurrection is the climax of the glory of the saints, yet they enter into glory as soon as they depart out of this world. Elijah was translated, and Moses also passed at once into glory. And so it is with the saints who worship the same God as Moses: when they die they go into the glory into which Moses went, which was the same as that of Elijah. Let us think of them, therefore, as translated, rather than as dead; as those for whom the conflict has ceased in the festival of the victor; as those whose toilsome pilgrimage has ended in the peaceful rest of home.

We may learn, thirdly, the possible nearness of departed saints. Moses and Elias appeared upon a certain mountain in Palestine, in immediate neighborhood to the scenes with which they had been familiar on earth. Are those who were once so very near us, so indefinitely, so infinitely distant as some seem to think? May they not sometimes revisit, unseen by us, the places where once they dwelt? May they not sometimes be very near us, though we cannot hear their voice or feel their hand, even as angels are ministering spirits to the saints? The universal heart of humanity seems to suggest that perhaps the departed may sometimes be as near to us as Moses and Elias were near to the disciples upon that mountain in Palestine.

A fourth suggestion is that the departed are together. Moses and Elias were together, though five hundred years divided them when on earth. They had different work to do, at different times. God's servants are placed in different localities: they may be living at the same time, but they may never be able to meet with one another, or, as in this case, they may be living in the same place, but at different epochs. But they are together yonder. As Moses and Elijah, though they did not meet on earth, met in glory, so Enoch and Paul, Noah and John, Abraham and James, David, Daniel, the apostles, the martyrs are all together. We read the lives of the saints, we become famil-

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iar with them through their writings and biographies. There are those whom we seem to know and love as personal friends, and seem to stretch forth our hand over the abyss, but there is no hand to clasp ours. It will not always be so. We shall meet some day with those who have lived in other places and at other times, and all the saints shall be together, as Moses and Elijah were together upon the mount.

We may also learn that there is surely recognition of departed saints. How great a portion of the happiness of this world arises from intimate and tender affection! How closely hearts are bound to hearts, so that another's life is dearer than one's own. Is all this to cease at death? Do the departed enter into some generality of life, ceasing to have their distinct existence, or, with distinct existence, to be incapable of recognition? We cannot suppose that God would have made us to be capable of such close affection and to have the happiness of life so dependent upon one another's love and communion with one another, and that this will forever cease. Life is too short for the development of love.

We are not told, "there appeared two unknown glorified beings," but here are two specific persons: Moses is one of them and Elijah is the other. We do not know how the apostles were informed who they were; perhaps by the intuition which we may possess by and by, with no need to be introduced to one another by name. And so we may believe there is recognition yonder. There are differences of feature in this world: in this great congregation there are not two faces exactly alike. You might have a million of people at one assembly and not find one who could not be recognized as distinct from all the rest. Blessed diversity! God loves diversity. He has not made two leaves on the same tree exactly alike. Some persons would improve upon the divine arrangement: they would have us all frozen into an icebound uniformity, as Milton somewhere expresses it. Let us rejoice in the diversities of manifesta-

tion of the love of our Lord. Those diversities may better illustrate the real unity of the Church than any prescribed uniformity. There is no uniformity of personal feature or character. Peter will be Peter still, and Paul, and John, and Daniel, and David, as Moses and Elias. But there are sympathies nearer our hearts. Some of you are thinking this morning of those whose bodies have recently been placed in the grave, and all of us have precious memories of friends once most dear. They are dear to us still. Though cleansed from every defilement, though reflecting the likeness of Jesus, they still retain so much of their personal peculiarity and individuality as to be easily recognized. Oh, the bliss of renewing intercourse there, with the dear ones that have gone before us! there, where no infirmity will remain; no possibility of misunderstanding; nothing to jar the perfect harmony, and where we shall not fear the entrance of death to sunder us again.

Another idea is, that departed saints are with Jesus. Moses and Elias were with Jesus. This is the chief joy of believers now. There are times when we are permitted to be specially conscious of the presence of our Lord; and then, as in the blaze of noon you take no notice of a rushlight, so the joys of frivolity and merely earthly things fade: our sorrows are turned into joy: and, though we have been mourning, we can begin to sing. There is no joy comparable to this conscious presence of Christ on earth, and it will be the chief joy hereafter. "I will that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am," Jesus said to the dying thief, "This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise." The apostle said: "Having a desire to depart and be with Jesus, which is far better"; "absent from the body" and, with no interval, "present with the Lord." Oh, to behold the glorified body of Jesus—that same Jesus who went up to heaven in the presence of the apostles—bearing still the wound-prints in His hands and in His side, whom here we have seen but through a mist,

obscurely, yet have loved and served, though imperfectly—to be in His very presence, to meet His eye and to hear His voice! “In His presence there is fullness of joy and pleasure forever more.” We see Him now by faith; our departed ones see Him face to face, as Moses no less than Elijah was with Him in glory.

Is death, then, so very terrible? If departed saints still exist, if they are in glory, if they are with one another, if they rejoice in recognition, if they are in the very presence of Jesus, should we so dread death as we sometimes do for ourselves, and so lament it for our friends? That world of glory to which they have gone is as near us as death is near; we are on the very threshold; spirits of the departed hover over us; “we are compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses”; and when our times shall come they wait to welcome us to glory. The saints of all ages are there—prophets, apostles, martyrs. Ye who once we loved so well—whom still we love—ye are not dead! Ye were never so much alive as now. Ye share the glory of Jesus; your raiment also shines as the light, and your faces also are radiant as the sun. Your transporting joys we soon shall know; but a few steps divide us; we shall soon clasp inseparable hands in the presence of that Elder Brother whose death secures our life, whose love will be our heaven.

Such are the glimpses which we obtain of the condition of the blessed dead, from the simple statement that there appeared two men, Moses and Elias, in glory with Jesus.

And now comes the question: How to get there. The character of Moses and Elias instructs us. God is a God of order. Every one goes to the sphere for which he is fitted. Judas went “to his own place.” The saints go to a holy heaven, and those who participate substantially in the character of Moses and Elias will go where Moses and Elias are. Moses by faith renounced the pleasures of sin and the luxuries of the world, that he might share with God’s own

people, preferring to be poor, despised and oppressed with the godly, than to have any amount of sinful pleasures with those who knew not God; and so he came out from the world and was separate. Are we like that? Are we willing to renounce the world, sinful pleasures and frivolities? Are we willing to ally ourselves with the Church of God, not when it is numerous, respectable, affluent and great, but also and equally when poor and oppressed? Are we aiding it according to our degree and position; actually coming out from the world, and rejoicing that God numbers us among His sons and daughters? If so, we are on the way to meet Moses, for we are like him. Not in eminent gifts—that is not the point; but in the substantial element of character. But if there are those here who are clinging to the world’s sensual enjoyments and preferring to be without God, they prefer to be without hope.

Look at Elijah. He was remarkable for his decision. We cannot resemble him as a great and illustrious prophet; but if we would join him we must resemble him in decision. “How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; and if Baal, follow him.” Are we decided? Have we made up our minds by God’s grace, that, whatever others do, we will serve the Lord? If so, we are on the way to join Elijah. But if we are halting between two opinions, thinking there is a good deal in religion, when listening to such sermons as you habitually hear, and on Monday thinking there is a good deal, after all, in what the skeptic has got to say, and a great deal in what the world has got to say: in a prayer-meeting thinking, “I ought to be converted and join the Church, and lead a godly life;” but when a frivolous and questionable (and when questionable it is generally sinful) pleasure comes before us thinking that such pleasure is too good a thing to give up; putting off repentance and saying, “I will wait, and enjoy myself a few years more, and then become religious”—if this is so, you cannot be on your way to join Eli-

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jah. You must be altered. "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." If we are sharers with Moses and Elijah in decision for God and godliness, we are on our way to join them; and if otherwise, we have as yet no hope. May God lead us every one, by the power of the Holy Ghost, to share with them in their character, and thus to be followers of those who by faith and patience inherit the promises, that we with them may possess the promises too.

Let us look at the same subject in another light. Again we ask, Who are these two men—Moses and Elias? Moses was the great founder of the Jewish commonwealth; the wonderful lawgiver, the magnanimous hero, the political and ecclesiastical authority to the Jews. His books were revered as divine, kept with scrupulous care, copied with minute accuracy, read in the synagogues every Sabbath. The religious and civil polity of the Jew all was identified with the name of Moses. Elijah, though he left no writings, was a very chief among the prophets. The Old Testament is made up of "the law and the prophets"—the books of Moses and the other books. Moses and Elijah are thus representatives of the Old Testament.

The third of this wonderful company was Jesus. It was supposed that He had come to set aside the authority of Moses and the prophets, because He put on one side many false interpretations current amongst the scribes, because He taught many things that Moses and the prophets had not taught, and because He came, by the sacrifice of Himself, to supersede and set aside the emblematical sacrifices and ceremonies of the Old Testament dispensation. But He said: "Think not that I have come to destroy the Law and the Prophets; I have not come to destroy, but to fulfill." If He had come to destroy Moses and the Prophets, would Moses and Elijah have been in friendly conversation with their destroyer? The fact that they were together was a most obvious sign to the disciples of their

perfect agreement. The Law and the Gospel are but parts of the one great whole: if the Law tells us our disease, the Gospel tells us of our remedy; if the one convinces of sin, the other whispers of pardon; if the one provokes the inquiry, "What must I do to be saved?" the other says, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." The mission of Jesus was foreshadowed in almost every ceremony of the law and in almost every prediction of the prophets: the lamb slain morning and evening, the high-priest entering once a year into the most holy place, the scapegoat, the blood of the passover—all these were types of Christ. He was the seed of the woman predicted to bruise the serpent's head; He was the prophet like unto Moses who was to be raised up amongst the people: in praise of him David swept his lyre, and with the sufferings He was to endure, and the glory that was to follow, Isaiah crowded the gorgeous canvas of his imagery. And if thus to Him the Law and the Prophets were pointing, what testimony more emphatic of this accord could have been given than this: that there were together upon the mountain Moses, Elijah, and Jesus?

Thus the mission of Jesus, as a whole, was adumbrated by Moses and the prophets; but was there anything special about the mission of Christ to which they specially pointed? Listen: what is the theme of their conversation? Events that had transpired in heaven since our Lord's incarnation? The glorious triumph preparing for Him when He should resume His throne? No: they "spake of the decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." What! That countenance, shining as the sun, suggestive of the countenance furrowed with grief? That crown of radiance, of the crown of thorns? The two saints, the two thieves? The voice of the Father's approval, of the bitter cry, "My God! my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Tabor, with its glories, suggest Calvary with its woes? And yet, if you think of it, that is the very theme about which Moses, Elijah and

Jesus were most likely to speak. It was the event to which Moses and the prophets had constantly been referring, by ceremony and prediction.

When he appeared, John the Baptist said, "Behold *the* Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world"—the Lamb of which the sacrificial lamb in the Temple had only been a type. And therefore it was no wonder that Moses and Elias should wish to speak about the event toward which they had always been pointing. Again: it was to the decease at Jerusalem to which Moses and Elias owed the enjoyment of glory. Great and good, they yet were not exceptions to the universal fact that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Jesus died for the forgiveness of sins that were past, through the forbearance of God; and He died for the sins of Moses and Elias. What a difference between their decease and the decease of Jesus! Elijah, caught up into glory: Moses falling asleep in the arms of God. Why their's so blessed? because His was so grievous. He bore their sins in His own body on the tree. No wonder that, owing centuries of bliss to that decease at Jerusalem, they should gratefully speak of that which was now about to be accomplished.

And was it not the event to which our Lord Himself would be most likely to refer? It was of supreme interest to Him. He was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. He said, "I delight to do thy will, O God"; and *that* was the will of God. Angels had intently been interested in the great work of Christ's atonement. They were at His birth, temptation, crucifixion; "which things the angels desire to look into." Much more must that event have been of deep interest to Jesus himself. He came for the salvation of the world, to seek and to save the lost by dying. He wept over Jerusalem. He gave Himself voluntarily a sacrifice. He said: "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." So He speaks of it in the great moment of His exaltation. Was it a humiliating theme? His de-

feat was His victory; the bruising of His heel was the bruising of Satan's head; that cross was a chariot on which He led captivity captive.

"That dying groan, that last loud cry,  
Are the glad shout of victory!  
The bruised heel grind's Satan's head,  
And life is won by Jesus dead."

No wonder, then, that they should speak of such a theme. Their conversation was responded to from the heavenly glory, for the voice of the Father was heard: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Well pleased that there is a pattern of divine perfection in humanity; well pleased that man has now reflected God; but specially well pleased because of the decease at Jerusalem—because of the willing sacrifice to carry out His loving purpose. As at the beginning of His ministry, so now, just before the completion of it, the Father says, "I am well pleased." What sadly false theology is it to represent that God the Father was all vengeance, and that God the Son was all forgiveness, and that God's avenging sword was plunged in the atoning blood! The Father's love, instead of being the consequence of the Savior's sacrifice, was the cause of it. "God so loved the world"—not because Christ died for the world, but "that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." God was well pleased that the sin of the world was borne by His Son; and we may be forgiven, forgiven at once, freely forgiven, though our sins might be the accumulation of all the sins of mankind—forgiven absolutely because Christ bare the burden of them—and the Father, with the Son and the Holy Ghost, the blessed Trinity whose praises we have been singing, rejoice in this provision for the salvation of the world. Oh! sinner, if you ever doubted before the willingness of God to save, doubt it no longer, when you hear the Father's outspoken approval and delight in the great work of your redemption by the decease at Jerusalem.

The question again recurs, respecting

heaven: "How to get there?" By trusting in that atonement, by relying on that decease, by pleading the merits of that Savior, by clinging to that cross. Rejoice in this salvation. And then, brethren, our death will only be our decease, our departure from this life into the better life, our going out from God's gracious presence here to the fuller manifestation of it yonder. We shall not be afraid to speak of our decease when we live in the power of the decease of Christ. Let us not be ashamed of the cross, to which we owe all our hopes. Let this be our solace, whatever our earthly circumstances: "He loved me and gave Himself for me."

O Lord, help us to behold Thee dying for us on the cross; nay, rather help us to behold Thee as now transfigured in glory. And so, habitually dwelling upon the thought of Thy great love, Thy presence and Thy glory, may we be able to say, in all places and in all conditions, "Lord, it is good for us to be here."

#### THE LIVING GOD.\*

BY HENRY J. VAN DYKE, JR., D.D. [PRESBYTERIAN], IN BRICK CHURCH, NEW YORK.

*The living God.*—Acts xiv: 15.

Is God real?

This is the question of the ages.

Four philosophers are discussing it together. The first says, "There is no God." This is the atheist, whose folly has been condemned alike by inspired Scripture and by modern science.

The second says, "I cannot tell whether there is a God or not, and therefore I do not think about it." This is the agnostic, who makes his doubts the limit of his knowledge, and exalts the confession of short-sightedness into the first of the virtues.

The third says, "I cannot be sure that God is, nor what He is; but I think He is thus and so, and I act upon this

supposition." This is the man who is willing to go beyond what he sees, who loves his hopes so much that he treats them as if they were facts, who is content with probabilities and turns them to the regulation of his practical life.

The fourth says, "God is. I know Him." This is the apostle of religion, who declares unto us that which he has heard, that which he has seen with his eyes, that which he has looked upon and his hands have handled of the word of life; that God is Eight—manifest, actual, real, as the sun in heaven.

I need not waste time in proving that this last man is the only one of the four who has the Bible on his side, for surely if anything is plain in regard to this book it is this: that it teaches the existence of a living and personal Deity, who may be really known by His creatures. But we cannot pause here. We must go back of this. We have to ask which of these four philosophers has the facts on his side; which of them is resting, not on illusions and dreams, but on the solid ground of reality.

In regard to the first of these four men, we see that he stands alone; and there is probably no danger that any of us will be inclined to stand with him, for he is in the difficult position of having to prove a positive by negatives. Admitting that all arguments for the existence of God are failures, the atheist must go beyond this, and bring facts to show that God is impossible. He must sweep the universe from end to end, and show that it is empty. He must prove, not only that an effect may exist without a cause, but also that the sum of all effects cannot possibly have had a cause, and that nowhere in heaven or earth is there a lurking-place in which an unexplained and primal power can dwell. With this task we may leave him, like a foolish builder trying to reach the skies with a tower of brick, and pass on to the other and wiser men.

We observe at once that the second and third stand together in theory, though they differ in practice. They are both professors of ignorance. They admit the idea of God, but they cannot

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discover the reality. Therefore the second says that he will have nothing to do with it. He has no need of it, and can get nothing from it save perplexity and humiliation. But the third declares it is so bright and beautiful that he will worship it and make it the guide of his life. So they part company, and the former becomes a famous teacher of science, and the latter a popular preacher of Christianity.

Now, in regard to their common view, one thing, it seems to me, is clear. It is at bottom unreasonable. For if there were surely no God at all, then it would be naturally impossible for us to find traces of Him. But the very possibility of God, the may-be of His existence, carries with it the necessity of some kind of manifestation. If he is in the universe, it cannot be as a mere abstraction or impotent idea; there must be evidences of His being and power. In other words, the very idea of God requires reality for its perfection; and this truth has been developed by philosophers of highest standing into what is called the ontological argument for the existence of God.

We have, therefore, an antecedent probability in favor of the fourth view; and he who declares that God is real and can be known has, at the very outset, a kind of reasonable supposition on his side. But certainly this is far from being complete and satisfactory. It is far from being enough for our present purpose; for we have agreed to make our appeal to facts. We are not dealing with abstract arguments and rational probabilities; we are searching for an actual and concrete reality. Evidence, contact, experience—this is the sphere in which we are moving. It is the sphere of our every-day life, our practical discoveries, our human emotions. And here, I say, in this very sphere of reality, we do not see light, we do not know gravitation, we do not feel love, one whit more really than we experience the living God.

It is not an argument; it is not a theory; it is not a leap from the region of the known into the region of the un-

known; it is not the supreme conclusion of a special and unquestionable religious faculty. But to man as man, in the best exercise of the faculties which are joined in the unity of his personality, the living Divine Being is manifest, as a physical reality, as a moral reality, as an historical reality, as a spiritual reality.

I. The world is full of God. He is immanent in the universe. Lift up your eyes, stretch out your hands. He is near you, on every side of you. You touch not His substance, for that is intangible, but the force that flows from Him. You see not His face, for that is invisible, but the glory that clothes and hides His presence. He is here as really and truly as the light, the gravity, the electricity which fill this room though you cannot see them. Do you question their reality? They are formless, they are invisible, they are actually unknown to millions of mankind who ignorantly experience their effects without seeking or discovering their real nature; but you are sure of them; you know them; they are manifested to you by their workings. So God is manifested in the world.

We may say that there are three forms in which this manifestation comes to us,—three forms under which we may include all appearances and relations of material things,—three great realities, in each of which the living soul is God. Power, wisdom, beauty—in these three forms we experience God.

Look at these mighty forces which permeate and encircle our globe, binding earth and rocks into a solid mass, hurrying waves of the sea and currents of rivers in their swift flow, submerging islands and upheaving continents, driving the clouds in flocks and armies, sending forth arrows of lightnings, marshalling the stars in their journeying hosts. Do not all these tell us of a living spring and fountain of force? Exalt their power and order as you will; define their nature; trace their method and relations; show how they play one into another; bind them all together into a co-ordinated system. Still they



must have a source. Still they bear witness to a Power unknown; nay, to a Power known, in and through them, since they flow from Him.

The heathen of old saw in a lightning flash a thunderbolt hurled by the hand of Jupiter, and trembled. We call it an effect of electricity. But what is electricity but an effluence of an Almighty Will? And do we not still tremble when the bright shaft leaps from the black quiver of cloud, and the rattling thunder tells of an oak riven or a house shattered? Aye, in the presence of great power,—earth-shaking, heaven-riving, death-dealing, life-unfolding forces, before which we are as insects blown on the summer wind, we tremble and bow down, for our heart tells us that a Greater than man is here.

But consider, again, how wonderfully these great forces, and the material substances which they are incessantly moving and changing, are adapted to the production of certain definite and desirable results. Men may deny that the term *design* is properly applicable to the processes of nature. They may say that we have no right to reason with *Paui* from the analogy of a watch and a watchmaker to a world and a world-maker. But whether this be true or not, I think no intelligent person can fail to see in the universe that which in any human production we should call *wisdom*, though on a scale so much more vast, and of a quality so much higher and more perfect than our own, that we can never hope to rival it, but only wonder and adore. How intricate and majestic is the combination of forces which keeps the heavens balanced and in order, steadies the spinning globe on its axis and guides it on its appointed orbit, ensuring the beneficent returns of day and night, winter and summer, seed-time and harvest. How skillful and exact is the construction of the eye, framed expressly to receive the beating waves of light, and without changing its place, capable of conveying to the brain the image of a flower in the hand or a star in the sky. How wonderful and admir-

able is even such a trifle as a sea-shell found on the shore:—

“Frail, but a work divine,  
Made so fairly well,  
With delicate spire and whorl,  
A miracle of design—  
Slight; to be crushed with a tap  
Of my finger-nail on the sand—  
Frail, but of force to withstand,  
Year upon year, the shock  
Of cataract seas that snap  
The three-decker’s oaken spine  
Athwart the ledges of rock.”

Surely when we behold these things we know that a Wiser than man is here.

And then, the beauty of it all! the strange and mystic splendor that gleams from the face of the world, filling our hearts with gladness and with worship! Whence is this derived? If the universe were but a vast machine, as some would teach us to believe—a lifeless thing of forces and substances, wheels and cogs and bands playing into each other and producing mechanically certain fixed results—what power could it have to touch our spirits? Why should our hearts leap up when we behold a rainbow in the sky? It is but the refraction of certain rays of light in certain drops of water. An orchard in the spring-time, covered with its rosy snow of blossoms; a field of golden grain waving in the soft wind of summer; a grape-vine with its trailing branches, and dark, rich clusters of fruit hanging motionless in the still autumnal air; a winter forest with its smooth white carpet, and its net-work of crystal boughs and glittering pendants of ice shining overhead—these are but chemical effects, the natural results of the changes of the seasons. Why should they be so lovely? Surely the grain, the fruit, the snow, could have been produced just as well without beauty. Why is it that they touch and thrill and uplift the soul? What is the meaning and the spiritual presence of which they speak to us? Who has informed them with this gracious splendor? Let the answer come in the magnificent words of the poet’s Hymn at Sunrise in the Valley of Chamouni:—

“Ye ice falls! ye that from the mountain’s brow  
Adown enormous ravines slope amain,—

Who made you glorious as the gates of Heaven  
Beneath the keen full moon? Who bade the sun  
Clothe you with rainbows? Who with living  
flowers

Of loveliest blue spread garlands at your feet?  
God! let the torrents like a shout of nations  
Answer! and let the ice-plains echo, God!  
God! sing ye meadow-streams with gladsome  
voice,—

Ye pine-groves with your soft and soul-like  
sounds!

And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow,  
And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God!"

Yea! He it is whose presence makes the world alive with beauty: He it is whose vision thrills us when we know it not. His smile brightens the outgoings of the morning: His voice sounds from the murmuring forest and the rushing cataract and the loud-roaring, multitudinous ocean billows: His garments of glory gleam before us in the lingering hues of sunset. In every form of beauty and scene of splendor we behold the presence of God. And this presence, we say, is a reality: it exists for us as truly as the light which enables us to see, or the heat which enables us to live. Power, wisdom, beauty, these are no dreams, but the actual manifestations, in the physical world, of the living God.

II. In the moral world we touch Him yet more closely: He reveals Himself to us as a person: He puts His hand upon us and we feel His power.

Here we are standing in another world from that which is known to our senses. Absolutely and totally different from the feelings of awe, wonder, or delight at the things which are seen and heard and handled, is the sentiment of moral obligation, the distinction between right and wrong, the voluntary movement of the soul under the laws of good and evil. No external force, no law of nature, no command of man can create that which we call *duty*; and yet it is a reality, which we cannot question or change. It presses upon us more closely and resistlessly than any other power. It cannot be escaped or evaded. It follows us, seizes us, binds us. The consciousness that among the paths which are open to my choice there is one that I *ought* to follow and one that

I *ought* to avoid; that among the actions of my life there are **those that are right and those that are wrong**, the sense of obligation, the voice of conscience crying in the secret place "Thou shalt not do this thing, for it is evil," or "Thou shalt do this, for it is good,"—nothing in the universe is more real to me than this, and in this I touch God.

He it is that calls me and commands me and binds me. He it is that reveals to me this world within the world, and summons me to live aright. He it is that hath "beset me behind and before, and laid His hand upon me." "Whither shall I go from His presence? If I climb up into Heaven He is there; if I go down into Hell He is there also." The universe is filled with His voice, saying, "Thou shalt," and "Thou shalt not."

But, mark you, there is no constraint laid upon me. My will is free. I can, I must, choose for myself between good and evil. And here is the wonder of it; here is the manifest presence of the living God. For if the moral law were natural and impersonal, it would bind us resistlessly as gravity or electricity, as the thousand forces which move us hither and thither in the ordinary courses of our lives without our will. But here, at the very moment when the loftiest interests of our being are at stake, at the turning where the fate of the soul must be decided, when we are conscious that the issues of life and death hang in the balance of our action,—at this moment the compulsion is withdrawn, the way is open, the will is left at liberty to choose the right or to reject it. But is the presence of Him who has revealed to us the difference between good and evil withdrawn? Nay, not so; but now most clearly manifest and felt; for he is warning us as a Father warns his child; He is watching us. Bending down above us with an infinite and tender solicitude He waits and longs to see us choose the good and reject the evil. We feel His eye upon us. "Thou God seest me." You cannot escape it! you cannot deny it! This trembling of your soul at the thought of wrong, this drawing of your will

towards the right, this joy of your heart in the consciousness of good,—this is the sense of the reality of God, touching you in your moral life.

III. But again, we find God in the world as an historical reality. Just as we know the reality of the Persian, or the Grecian, or the Roman empires by their records on stone or parchment, by the results which they have accomplished and the traces which they have left in the world, so we know that God is a reality by the records and results of His dealings with men. In the experience of mankind His will is the chief factor; and if you take that away, if you deny all traces of a supreme, overruling, beneficent Providence in the affairs of men, the history of the world becomes an inexplicable and monstrous fable. How has the race been preserved in numberless perils and advanced through incessant difficulties; how have human industry and knowledge and character been unfolded and developed; how, amid the crash of falling empires and the dust of ruined civilizations, wars and floods and earthquakes and revolutions, have learning and virtue been kept alive and nurtured and increased, and the happiness of humanity enlarged year by year and century by century; how has the world been guided on a course which, with all its windings, leads surely upward,—if it be not by the indwelling and inworking of an almighty and allwise Governor? God in history is a reality.

And more than this, we have the actual record of His special dealings with certain men and nations,—records which cannot be ignored or explained away. We have no reason and no right to doubt them. The Bible is a history,—a history of men and of God. As the traveller passes through the rugged defiles of Sinai, and sees the inscriptions graven upon the rocks, he says, "The Edomites, the Romans, the Arabs have been here." So, as we turn the pages of the Holy Scriptures, the handwriting of divine power and wisdom tells us that God has been here. He has revealed Himself to Abraham and Moses, Eli-

jah and David. He has manifested His omnipotence in the deliverance and preservation and guidance of His chosen people Israel. Above all, He has shined forth clearly in the person and life of Jesus Christ. This supreme and abiding personality, evidently superhuman, standing all the tests of criticism, refusing to be resolved into a myth or a dream, the most potent and permanent figure in all history—this divine-human Master and Savior of men, real and living through all the ages—is to us the unshaken evidence of the reality of God. When we see Him we see the Father, for He and the Father are one.

IV. But one more realm remains for us to explore: but one more region of human life in which we must feel after God if haply we may find him. And here, indeed, He is not far from every one of us. In the spiritual life, the deep and secret exercise of the soul's highest powers, the life of faith and hope and love and prayer, we meet and touch the living God. No mere vision of dis-tempered sleep was that strange and awful experience of the patriarch Jacob, by the ford of Jabbok's stream. It was a reality; the contact of the human spirit with the Divine; the wrestling of the human soul with God, so real and close that it leaves its marks on the body and the mind forever. Yes, He does come to us and lay hold of us; He does speak to us and answer us,—this unseen, eternal, living One, before whose presence our hearts tremble and adore. In the dark, silent hours of the night, in the glaring noonday, in the crowded assembly of worshippers, in the solitude of our chambers, He is with us and we feel Him. When the tide of penitence sweeps over the soul, and we are humbled in the dust crying for pardon, have we not felt the touch of His forgiving hand laid upon us in secret? Have we not cast ourselves in faith upon Him whom we see not, as one who leaps into the darkness, and found our Father's everlasting arms encircling, embracing, bearing us up? Have we not pleaded with Him in prayer, and known of a surety that He hears us, be-

cause the answer has come into our hearts? Have we not sought guidance and found it, and cried for help and received it? Have we not held communion with Him in secret, and felt the influences of His spirit moving with sweet and sacred compulsion upon our own? Who is it that has delivered our souls in great temptation,—and forgiven our sins in the midst of our anguish,—and spoken peace to the storm that swept our bosoms,—and wiped away the tears from our eyes in the deepest sorrow? God! our God!

O tell me that this most vast and excellent universe is an airy vision, that all things seen and heard are a delusion, that life itself is but a dream,—but never tell me that God is not real! For the one reality beyond all doubt is He who pardons my sins and upholds my spirit, comforts my grief and lights the star of my hope,—He in whom I live and move and have my being,—the living and true God.

#### THE PROPER USE OF NATIONAL BLESSINGS THE BEST EVIDENCE OF GRATITUDE.

THANKSGIVING SERMON BY J. H. W. STUCKENBERG, D.D. [LUTHERAN], IN THE AMERICAN CHAPEL, BERLIN, GERMANY. *For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.*—Luke xiii: 48

GRATITUDE is the affectionate response of the heart to kindness in any form. Its rarity is a sad comment on human nature. The world's ingratitude is frequently exhibited when material blessings are bestowed; but it is still more general respecting intellectual and spiritual benefits. Whoever gives what is highest in mind and noblest in heart, may fail to find appreciation even, to say nothing of thankfulness. Life and history clearly show that it is not uncommon for the voice of love from friend, teacher and parent, to be echoed by a curse. Is it strange, then, that God's gifts are received as a matter of course, and that for them men thank themselves rather than their Author?

Its rarity makes sincere gratitude all the more beautiful. The touch of kindness draws from noble souls their sweetest music. But there is more than music in real thanksgiving. Could we introduce into our worship all the exultant praise of the Psalms, our service would be truly inspiring. Yet this thanksgiving, to meet the Christian standard, would have to be supplemented by the gratitude of the life. The song of praise is a beautiful flower; but a life of praise is the flower developed into fruit.

Ability is the measure of responsibility. We expect the animal to put its sensualistic self into its life; but from the immortal soul and the image of God we expect a revelation of that which is immortal and divine. Ability is also the compass which points to the star of a man's destiny; it is the index of the design of his creation and the interpreter of his mission. Peculiar adaptation always means a peculiar sphere of activity. An eagle's wing is not put on a butterfly, and the base of a pyramid is not laid as a foundation for a hut. As the seed must have in it the plant which springs from it, so the grand life must have a grand personality as its source. Is there any reason for great endowments and opportunities unless there is to be something great in the result? There is no waste of power in nature. It puts no useless eyes in the fishes of Mammoth Cave; it makes no sun to give a glow-worm's light. In the plant, the animal, and in the revolution of worlds, the adaptation of means to ends is complete. Every power of nature has a purpose, every effort a corresponding result; and if there were a heart with a power for emotion to which there is no response; if there were a spirit with yearnings and aspirations for which there is no object, and if there were a soul for the spiritual without a spiritual reality—then there would be a waste of power; there would be something which, in reality, is nothing, and man would be the anomaly of the universe—an eye without the light, a mouth and hunger

without food. No; in mind and heart and conscience, as in nature, there is no waste; and the application of the text is universal: "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required."

The gift comes from another; the use is left to ourselves. However much we may say, "Thank you," the neglect to use the gift is unmistakable evidence of ingratitude. The essence of the law and its prophetic application is this: Blessing for the right use, and punishment for the neglect of divine mercies. The use of a gift, according to the intent of the giver, is the truest appreciation and highest gratitude. The book is to be read, the counsel to be followed, the seed-truth to be developed, and the inheritance to be increased or spent according to the spirit of the testator. It is one of the marvels of contradiction, of which only human nature is capable, that a man can say "Thank you," and at the same time can bury his talents and waste his substance. Only because sin has cursed man can he neglect that mind which God has given; so that neither nature nor God, neither past history nor present realities become his possessions. Whatever God gives is for appropriation, use, and exercise—the universe permeated with thought; the mind endowed with reason and taste; the heart and conscience with spiritual functions. No light is intended to be hid under a bushel.

The application to nations is apparent. Our thanksgiving days are intended to remind us of our blessings and their source, and to inspire us with gratitude to their Author. From our hearts, as altars, incense of praise is to ascend to God. But is that all? Is the nation's thanksgiving to end with Thanksgiving-day? Then our songs and prayers are but a breath, which appears for a moment and then vanishes. The condemnation of such thanksgiving is, Ye say, but do not. Whatever its apparent fervor and devotion, its essence is hypocrisy. The son who says, "I will not," but afterwards goes

and does his father's bidding, is commended by Christ above that one who says, "I go, sir," but goes not.

Instead of stopping with a verbal gratitude, let us to-day rather give that which is real, which consists in the use of our blessings, as God intended. It will be in harmony with the spirit of our text, and of this day, if we consider

THE PROPER USE OF NATIONAL BLESSINGS THE BEST EVIDENCE OF GRATITUDE.

1. Let us look at our national blessings in order to learn the measure of our responsibility. These blessings may indeed be viewed solely for the sake of self-congratulation or idle boasting. This all Pharisees do, in order to thank God that they are not as other men. It is also humiliating when a nation's glory consists, not in what it is or does, but in what has been done for it by nature or history. Are the African *people* noble because their *countries* have broad rivers, extensive lakes, sublime mountains, and a soil so fertile that they can live in idleness? Are the New Englanders more base than the Mexicans, because their climate is more rough, their sky less sunny, and their land less rich? A nation's glory or disgrace is in the people, never in the soil.

Equally foolish is it when a nation's glory is placed in its wealth or material prosperity. Rome's wealth was the load which weighed down the people, the burden which at last crushed the empire. It encouraged idleness, led to the enslavement of the poor, became the agent of low ambition, and the minister of every species of lust, corruption and crime. Even the Roman virtues could not survive the greed for gain, with its attendant sensuality and lust of power. The world has looked to Rome for lessons in statesmanship; but it teaches no lesson more eloquently than this, that institutions built on golden sand, instead of the rock of virtue and truth, cannot endure.

In a country whose principles make nobility personal, not hereditary, it would be a singular perversion to view the history of the past as conferring

any excellence on the nation to-day. The culture, virtue and religion of former ages ennoble the present only so far as they are appropriated and made a present factor in the national life. A nation's poverty is never more abject than when all its laurels are in the past. Is not the Greece of to-day all the more melancholy because it had a period of renown unparalleled in the history of literature and art? And is not the degradation of Palestine all the more sad when we remember that it was the home of Isaiah, Jesus and Paul? A country which lives on its past achievements is like families whose excellence is all in ancestors long ago dead and buried. The glory of some lands is in their ruins.

But the case is different when, instead of looking at these things for vanity or boasting, they are viewed as giving us the greater problems to solve, and as placing on us heavier responsibilities. Ought not the steward to know the greatness of the trust committed to him? If he does not, how can he be faithful in that which is least, as well as in that which is greatest?

Let us, then, contemplate our advantages and blessings as God's gifts, as a trust committed unto us as His stewards. As a people, our blessings are peculiar. Our vast and fertile territory, with agricultural and mineral resources of inestimable value; together with our industries and commerce, have made ours a singularly favored land, the envy of other nations. The wealth accumulated in our western empire is almost fabulous. And yet we are so young that, as a nation, we are only beginning to be; and what has already been attained is but a faint prophecy of what may yet be expected. Besides, we have no neighbor to fear, and need no large standing army; we can accumulate and develop treasures without the least fear of hindrance. What we do or become depends wholly, or almost wholly, on the impulse and energies of the nation itself.

But it is not merely in natural ad-

vantages that we are bounteously favored. The beginning of our national life on this natural basis has been peculiarly fortunate. We were not obliged to develop our civilization from barbarism, but were enabled to begin with the degree of culture already attained in Europe, the product of a long line of progress. Nor is it a disadvantage that various nations have contributed to constitute the one American people. The mingling of different nationalities has brought together the peculiarities of many peoples, and has added variety and richness to the national life. Only where there is unpardonable abuse can this union of the elements of different civilizations fail to produce a higher form of culture and a superior nationality.

We have all the energy, the inspiration, and the hope of youth. Ours is the new world—and what a meaning in that expression! A hope rather than a memory; a past, and yet more a future! Being yet in a formative state, we are not obliged to run in the grooves made by time, or to stick in the ruts made by custom. We have no corners or garrets in which traditions have heaped broken furniture; in which the ages have deposited their rust and dust and cobwebs, and where the ghosts of the middle ages lurk to frighten people in broad daylight. Our national life is not an ivy growing in a ruin, but an oak in a rich soil, and in the free air and bright sunlight.

Our religion is free, and can develop according to its own inherent energies. In principle, at least, all are equal before the law, and the same privileges belong to the poor and the rich. Here, as nowhere else, all depends on the energy and ability of the individual. We glory in the fact that we belong to a land in which a rail-splitter and a boatman attained the Presidency. It is no disgrace to one of our best orators that he was born a slave. Many of our greatest men have come up from the humbler walks of life. We can well afford to look with compassion on all worthless family pride so long as our

only nobility is that of well-directed energy, of sterling character, and vital godliness; so long as there is no aristocracy of wealth to grind the poor, and superciliously sneer at real merit and profound scholarship.

Blessed with principles of government admitted to be the highest, we have also been blessed with a development which indicates real growth. We are now united as never before; the elements of discord rapidly disappearing, and the States retaining their independence, yet constantly growing into a perfect union, so as really to form "one from many." With all excesses and wildness and lawlessness in some parts, the heart of the people has been for the right; and virtue and religion, in church and in school, have been controlling factors in the growth of the national life.

Add to all this the signal blessings of the year. On the whole it has been prosperous. The farmer, the laborer, the mechanic, and the manufacturer have been blessed, wonderfully blessed, when compared with those in other nations. There has been peace without, and peace within our borders. There have been no devastating plagues, and great calamities have been comparatively few. Religion has prospered; our schools and colleges have flourished; our people are growing in the desire for higher education, and the facilities for its attainment are rapidly increasing; there is a growing determination to secure more purity in political affairs; and not the least blessing is a President who began his administration under the most painful and most trying circumstances; yet to-day is esteemed by all parties as not only honest and upright, but also as earnestly striving to do full justice to all sections and all parties; a President of whom we can be proud at home and abroad. Many of us bring this tribute the more cheerfully and gratefully, because when he began his office our hopes were darkened by our fears.

These, and more than we can tell, are our gifts; these are indications of the

measure of our responsibility. Surely if ever much was given to any people ours is that nation. And comparing our land with others, we can truthfully say, "He hath not dealt so with any nation."

When so much is given to our nation, is it any wonder that on this day we look joyfully across the deep to the land so highly favored and so marvelously prospered? We gratefully rejoice in it as our home; and though thousands of miles away, we feel an interest in all the affairs of that land, and share its prosperity. Its peace, its freedom, its thanksgiving, are ours. And when, in foreign lands, amid strange tongues, we see its banner unfurled, it thrills us so deeply because it is the emblem of so much the heart prizes most.

"Ah! when the wanderer, lonely, friendless,

In foreign harbors shall behold  
That flag unrolled,

'Twill be a friendly hand,  
Stretched out from his native land,  
Filling his heart with memories sweet and  
endless!"

In order to appreciate the land for which to-day we give thanks, we need not depreciate other countries. It is not the world, neither is it the embodiment of all excellencies. Indeed we must admit that it has many defects. But if other lands surpass us in the fine arts, in science, and in various departments of scholarship, we need not blush to admit that youth has not the advantages of age. Our land is not so poor as to need falsehood to exalt it; nor is it so degraded as to need hasty, superficial and ignorant comparison with things not understood, in order to promote its glory. It rather rejoices in sons and daughters who can appreciate its excellencies without being blind to its defects, and who, when they travel far, gather honey from every flower, and then return to enrich the hive and bless all its inhabitants.

2. In view of the much that is given, what is required of us? The gifts bestowed are so many talents which may be buried or put to usury. Many a youth, with every advantage of wealth

and opportunity, makes his life a blank or a blot. The advantages of individuals and nations are by no means the measure of their greatness. The much that is given to us is seed to grow or to perish; it is a foundation, not a superstructure, for that is yet to be reared; it is opportunity to be embraced or neglected.

Other peoples have a long, rich, past—a history whose crowded pages are adorned by thoughts and deeds on which memory delights to dwell: our land, however, is the land of hope. But where the hopes are brightest the disappointment, if they are not realized, will be so much the greater. Was there ever in the past such a concentration of hope anywhere else as in Rome, when at the sway of its sceptre the nations of three continents bowed their necks as under a yoke? That hope of wealth and power and possessions has been realized in a chaos of ruins where the palace of the Caesars stood, in a forum where you "stumble over recollections," realized in broken columns, disfigured triumphal arches, and in a waste of desolation which staggers thought and bewilders the imagination. The land of hope may not be the land of realization.

In the commingling of different nationalities to form one new nation, there is a striking parallel between our country and Greece. The inhabitants of that classic land had come from Europe, Asia and Africa, and, together, formed a new people. Attica especially, where the highest culture was attained, was the refuge of persons from different tribes and families. All these nationalities were so amalgamated as to form a new one, each contributing his part to form the whole. Besides this, Greece was the inheritor of Oriental culture, just as America inherited the far richer and more perfect European culture. But the greatness of Greece in the world's intellectual culture consisted in the fact that it was more than an heir; it worked over what it had inherited, made it its own by earning it; then gave it the flavor of the new soil

in which it was to flourish, and made it the basis of original research and intellectual progress. It was not its heirship which made Greece, but it helped; its greatness was in its native genius which appropriated and developed its vast accumulations, infused into them its own spirit, and made them its ministers. The Greek mind occupies its solitary place in history because it was greater than its possessions, and richer than its wealth; because it was not buried beneath its load, but was the living seed which made these accumulations the soil in which it grew. In the midst of wealth and power and luxury and beauty, the Greek mind remained true to itself; and these things were but the sunlight and rain, which it drew into its life, and transformed into its thought and wrought out into symbols of its ideals.

If God has a special mission for America it certainly does not consist in the fact that that land is to be an estuary into which the peculiarities of other nations are to be permanently deposited by the stream of emigration. No one can doubt that America itself is to be peculiar, with an individuality and nationality of its own, to which others may contribute, but which they shall not overwhelm or sweep away. No one believes that the Western continent was so long hid in order that at last its civilization might be but a copy or reproduction of the peculiarities of other people—a chromo instead of an original. That God has some special design for our country is a deep conviction of our national thought and the inspiration of our hope. And sadly recreant shall we be if, with our peculiar gifts and peculiar history, we do not realize the hope of attaining peculiar results. What a waste and what a failure if, with a peculiar land and surroundings, with a peculiar commingling of people, and with peculiar institutions, we are simply lost in the great stream of history, without even a distinct current to mark our course!

We live in an age when there is a remarkable awakening of national feel-



ings. The consciousness that peculiar race and language and history and custom involve peculiar rights, privileges, duties and destinies, has been aroused with astonishing unanimity in different lands. This is true of the Poles, the Hungarians, the Bohemians, the Irish, and many others: they view the loss of their nationalities as the extinction of their individuality. Russia, Austria and Turkey are perpetually agitated by the efforts of the various peoples to preserve, manifest and develop their native distinctions. Among our own people, the same spirit has been aroused; and especially since the war has there been a marked growth of national feeling. The sovereign States form one sovereign nation, with one government, one hope, and one destiny, and all different from those of other nations.

It is the opinion of many foreigners, and the fear of not a few Americans, that amid the development of conflicting interests, our vast country will eventually fall to pieces, so as to be under separate and perhaps antagonistic governments. No man can lift the veil of the future. We cannot foretell the result of the union of various peoples, of the development of sectional interests, and the end of the religious conflicts in our land; but it is evident that the danger of disruption is likely to increase when our fifty have grown to hundreds of millions, unless the national thought and sentiment and life form a strong bond of union, and so cement the different parts together that conflicting political, industrial and religious views and interests cannot rend them asunder.

The national life is to be the product of all the various interests of the nation, the fruit of its liberty, its wealth, its power, its culture, its religion. The nationality, fully meeting the measure of our responsibility, must apprehend its destiny as transcending the mere possession and enjoyment of wealth and power and prosperity; it must recognize its mission to recommend freedom to the nations by making it attrac-

tive; it must prove that a people ruling themselves can have an honest ballot, pure officials, and well-governed cities; it must make its free Church so powerful that its influence shall bless all the elements of the people's life; it must be educated, or freedom will dig its own grave; it must elevate the masses so as to make them worthy of being freemen; it must rest on truth as the only immovable basis; it must do right for right's sake; it must learn from all peoples, in order that it may form aright its ideals, and it must draw from all, in order that it may realize those ideals; it must train its sons to sacrifice themselves for the nation—not to sacrifice the nation to their selfish interests; it must welcome the foreigner if he will become a living member of the national organism, but it must know how to protect the land from becoming the den of assassins and of the plotters of murder; it must be a nationality in which the people, the whole people, reign; but under God, subject to His law, in accomplishing the mission given by Him, and attaining the destiny appointed by Him. Not by mere sentiment, but only by hard work and through severe struggles can we hope to meet what is required for the much that is given. The creation, development and maintenance of a distinct nationality, is the condition for the proper position and the peculiar mission of the United States among the nations. When that is gone, nothing will be left to distinguish us as a nation. Its protection and ennobling are our first duties in meeting our responsibilities. All strangers may here find a home, but only on condition that they become true Americans. This is the absolute condition of self-preservation, and our holiest duty. And self-protection may mean that no man who cannot read his ballot shall be permitted to cast it, even if it deprives him forever of doing what he is not fit to do, and what may prove to himself and the nation a source of danger.

By developing such a nationality, and all that it involves, we shall prove our gratitude by our lives. Then, and then

only, can our land realize what one of our favorite poets has said:

"Here the free spirit of mankind, at length,  
Throws its last fetters off; and who shall place  
A limit to the giant's unchained strength,  
Or curb his swiftness in the forward race?"

To no other people is the exhortation to be true and godly so significant for the national welfare as to a nation of freemen, whose life is in their own hands. If the nation perish it can only be because the people commit suicide.

In view, then, of our national and individual blessings and responsibilities, let us make the text the inspiration of our deeds: "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more."

#### MARTHA'S OVER-ANXIETY.

BY REV. EZRA TINKER, [METHODIST],  
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*Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, etc., Luke x: 38-42.*

On the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, and nearly a mile from its rocky summit, nestled a quiet village, which has been made memorable by the footsteps of the Savior and the scenes which transpired there during His life on earth. It was there that Christ wrought His greatest miracle in raising Lazarus to life. It was there, in the house of Simon the leper, that the anointing occurred, concerning which Jesus uttered these words of prophecy: "Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her." It was from Bethany that the procession began its march toward Jerusalem, amid the shouts of the exultant multitude, that cried, "Hosanna to the son of David, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest." It was near Bethany that the risen Lord, after His forty days sojourning with His dis-

ciples, and after His commission to them, and His farewell benediction upon them, ascended to His throne on high.

It was during Christ's round of Messianic duties that He reached the village of Bethany, and was received by Martha into her home. The presence of so distinguished a guest, elicited all the skill of the sensitive and industrious hostess, who was eager to lay everything under tribute to the physical comfort of her Lord and Master. There is no intimation that Mary was negligent in due attention to Jesus. But Martha, in her extreme anxiety to minister to Him complained of her sister's seeming indifference. But Jesus mildly rebuked Martha and commended her sister's conduct.

We may learn from this interesting household scene that it is possible to be over-burdened with the ordinary secularities of life. There are imaginary wants, which, to an over-sensitive nature, and to an active mind may assume the dominating influence of real wants and absolute necessities. Our desire for large possessions may create an uneasiness which will not be assuaged, even after our laps are filled with abundance. Old age may find us as eager to accumulate as when in the flush of young manhood we entered upon our career of business activity. The modern facilities for the accumulation of wealth and the numerous avenues through which comforts and luxuries may be obtained, have only served to intensify men's anxieties to increase their possessions. If wealth brought with it rest of mind, comfort of heart and joy of soul, and strengthened the purpose to be good and to do good, then anxiety to be rich might be commendable. But the history of men's lives does not teach us that large estates, and vast material resources produce corresponding elevation of soul, and consecration of heart to noble ends. Our millionaires are not the greatest benefactors of the race. Many of them live and die without any generous plans for aiding the unfortunate and bettering the condition of the

race, while that which is of the utmost importance to them is entirely neglected. Even those whose purposes are of a higher type sometimes become so encumbered with much serving, as to neglect the weightier matters of the law and lose the spiritual gifts so essential to a proper development of the moral and spiritual nature.

With what constant anxiety are we asking the question, What shall we eat, what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed? "Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow, they toil not, neither do they spin. And yet, I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Therefore take no thought saying, what shall we eat, what shall we drink or wherewithal shall we be clothed? But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and these things shall be added unto you."

In the light of such Scripture teaching, it is evident that mankind are not encouraged in idleness and slothfulness, but are urged to diligence and activity and industry along legitimate channels. And the more thoroughly we comprehend the teachings of revelation, the more fully we imbibe the spirit of the gospel of Christ; and the more thoroughly we are consecrated to that which is pure and good, the more intensely active we shall naturally become.

Among the busiest men of the present age are some of the most devout and religious people in the Church—men who subordinate worldly interests to religious ends, and look upon themselves as stewards who must give an account of their stewardship to Him to whom belongs the wealth of the universe.

It speaks volumes for the gospel of Christ, when the brave and tried soldier thinks more of an hour alone with Jesus on the eve of battle, than days in council with the most skilled military experts. It thrills the heart of a great nation when it knows that its chosen chief is a man of prayer and never en-

ters upon the duties of the day without invoking the divine blessing upon himself and the people. It lends stability to any great enterprise when it is known that the conspicuous leaders in it are more intent on honoring their Lord and Master than in promoting their own individual interests.

In this age of commercial activity and gigantic enterprises, when worldly ambition dominates so many minds, when temptations to wrong-doing are so rife, and when almost daily the public is startled by defalcations and suicides, it is well for Christian teachers to call the people back to the fundamental principles of the Gospel, and to reiterate the words of Christ himself, that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

There is one thing needful to make a home what it should be, and what the Lord intended it to be, and without that one thing no home can be an ideal or scriptural home. There are homes palatial in all their appointments, invested with all that taste and skill can devise, and yet they are repulsive as the walls of a dungeon, because there is no love within them, no beauty of Christian grace, no delicate touch of sympathy, no gentle words of loving assurance, no open Bible, no altar of prayer for the burdened soul.

We live so much on the lower plane of our natures; we are touched so constantly by the things that appeal to our animal senses, that we are in danger of forgetting the higher plane, and neglecting the things that address themselves to our spiritual senses. Raised to the dignity of an intelligent moral and responsible being, man has powers and faculties whose demands cannot possibly be satisfied by that which simply responds to the outward and physical nature.

The testimony of those who have exhausted all earthly resources, and yet have become more and more dissatisfied and restless, and miserable, coupled with the testimony of those who assure us that they have found the secret of true happiness, in a perfect subordina-

tion of the physical to the spiritual, to put forever to silence those who are seeking to obtain solid happiness in the things that perish. Above the din of battle and the clash of arms; above the confused noise of the rushing, bustling world, I hear the gentle voice of Him who spake as never man spake, saying: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

The human consciousness is so benumbed by sin, that it often fails to respond to the voice of truth; and the human mind is so occupied with material things, with the pressing demands of the physical nature, that it often fails to discern those spiritual realities, on the right apprehension of which depends our present enjoyment and eternal welfare. Opportunities freighted with the greatest possibilities and richest blessings are forgotten, amidst the numerous and distressing cares which worry and torment us, while the Master is close by our side for the purpose of whispering that there is a better way to spend the precious moments of life. When will those who are professedly Christian, and anxious to be busy and useful, learn the lesson of dropping what we have no right to carry, and of hastening to the feet of the Savior, whose words of wisdom will more than repay us for every moment snatched from the round of secular pursuits.

Whatever we may fail to possess of educational advantages, of social privileges, of material comforts, there is one thing that we cannot safely do without, namely: a personal, vital and saving interest in the redemption of Christ. Poverty of purse may bring present discomfort, but nakedness of spirit will produce everlasting shame. The former may be endured, but the latter can bring nothing save unspeakable misery. If you are cumbered with much serving, it may prove fatal to your eternal interests, or at least prevent your highest

spiritual achievement. Mary's position at the feet of Jesus is better than Martha's much serving, in the presence of a speaking, teaching Savior.

#### THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON.

By J. B. THOMAS, D.D. [BAPTIST],  
BROOKLYN.

1 Kings x: 1-13,

The Old Testament revelation is given "in many parts and in many ways." Its characters, as well as its rites and laws, are fragmentary and immature. The "beauty of holiness" is a full circle, no matter from what angle it is seen; but their "perfectness" is only relative; they are segments of the circle—convex on one side indeed, but concave on the other. Some one quality stands out in bold relief, and by that they are henceforth commemorated, while all else falls into shadow. Abraham thus incarnates for us faith; Moses, endurance; Samson, strength; Elijah, zeal. On the side of actual works Abraham was no more "found perfect before God" than before the nineteenth century. Moses also "spake unadvisedly with his lips;" Sampson's strength melted in the bewitching Vale of Sorek, and Elijah's courage dwindled to childish petulance under the juniper bush. It is necessary, therefore, in studying the records of the early time to bear in mind that "the law made nothing perfect," and that the highest ideals of that age are shadows only, although shadows of the true.

It will not be needful to hammer open the narrative before us, for our Lord Himself has furnished us the lawful key to it. "The Queen of the South shall rise up in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold a greater than Solomon is here!" Following this authoritative hint, we recognize the one noteworthy feature in the character of the Queen of Sheba to have been her earnest pursuit of wisdom. Solomon's one legacy to men also is not the memory of his royalty or his riches, but of his

"wisdom;" for that alone truly made him great. Indomitable earnestness in inquiring is thus impliedly commended, and the high merit of Solomonic wisdom recognized by the divine Teacher. But the narrative is treated, not as something to be looked at only, but rather to be looked *through* in search of "some better thing" beyond. Good was the quest of the earnest queen, and great was Solomon, whose wisdom she sought to hear; but far better the yearning for the "wisdom from above," as the Son of God is "greater" than the earthly son of David.

On our Lord's authority, therefore, we may fairly assert that

I. WISDOM IS WORTHY OF DILIGENT PURSUIT.

The Queen of Sheba lived in the intellectual dawn of the world, and her country was in the shadows behind the dawn; but she was among them "that watch for the morning," and that "come to the light" when its first beams appear. She was not content to "hear of" the wisdom of Solomon, but must "hear" it also. When we remember that the breadth of the earth interposed in vain, we are reminded that

1. *Wisdom does not come unsought.* The Balearic mothers hang their children's food on the limbs of trees, and they must go hungry until they can bring them down with the bow. So God lets the vein of gold look through but not lie open upon the rock. He puts the star-depths within reach of the telescope, but not of the naked eye. The secrets of nature are given up to the wit and not to the listlessness of men. "The clouds may drop down titles and estates," but "wisdom must be bought." In vain, however, is "the price of wisdom in the hand of a fool," if he have "no heart to it."

2. "*Wisdom is the principal thing.*" All else is appendage. In Solomon's prayer at Gibeon he "showed his wisdom," as Dean Stanley says, "in asking for wisdom;" for in getting the fountain-head he got the stream. Our success in life depends not only on a right perspective—that is seeing great things as

great—but on a right order—that is, seeking first things first. In vain does the rich man "lay up much goods for many years" for his "soul," if he has not first made certain that he will have a "soul" beyond to-night. Wisdom "held (even) in her left hand riches and honor" for Solomon. She, and not they, made him known in "the uttermost parts of the earth."

3. *Wisdom is akin to piety.* It is the righteousness of the mind as that is the righteousness of heart and life. The wise man knows the truth, the religious man does the truth. And this is practical wisdom; for all sin is folly. The sinner breaks himself upon or grinds himself to powder under the rock which is always in the way, and on which the wise man builds. True science is no more at right angles with true religion than the multiplication table with honest dealing.

A second proposition fairly warranted by the word of our Lord is that

II. THE TRULY WISE ARE TRULY GREAT; "great," that is, in the sense of being fairly entitled to confidence and homage. Our knowledge of Solomon is scanty, yet sufficient to show him a man of great accomplishments, for,

1. He had a rare acquaintance with the facts of nature, with "trees" and "herbs" and "fowls" and "creeping things" and "fishes." The accuracy of his information concerning some of these is truly wonderful—his statement as to the habits of harvesting ants for instance, long disputed, being just now thoroughly vindicated.

2. He "knew" better than most "what was in man." His writings show ample knowledge of affairs and of the subtler agencies by which men are affected. His counsels betray the ripe judgment of an experienced man of the world, and vindicate their sagacity in current experience.

3. He had "largeness of heart." His large intercourse with other peoples had brought breadth of view and deliberateness. His utterances are neither provincial nor ephemeral; they are the fruit of judgment, not of pas-

sion, and so belong to all men in all times.

4. He had an eminently quick and penetrative glance. He did not look round the circumference, but shot at once to the centre. His prompt judgment concerning the disputed babe revealed such an instinctive discernment. The Proverbs gathered in his name (and no doubt largely his own) show how well he could condense and hammer vague notions into stinging "goads;" or to use Lord Bacon's figure, into "edge tools of speech which cut and penetrate the knots of business and affairs." Not he who sees things, but he who sees into them, reaches the truth and may fairly be called wise. But our Lord reminds us again that

### III. THE EARTHLY IS BUT THE SHADOW OF THE TRUE.

Commendable as was the zeal of the queen, and splendid as were the attainments of the king, there were manifest flaws in both, for,

1. *Her notion of the nature and function of wisdom was low.* Her supreme test was the ability to answer "hard questions," and when her riddles were mastered she was satisfied. The Pharisees, in the same spirit, asked entangling questions of the Great Teacher as though aptness in solving conundrums were the fit criterion of the Divine. "Smartness" is still confounded with, or preferred to, wisdom in some quarters.

2. *The wisdom of Solomon could not save him from ruin.* All worldly wisdom is fallible being limited in scope to the inductions of experience, and narrow in appeal since it points mainly to prudential motives. The "wise are taken in their own craftiness;" wise in the abstract and for others, they are blind and weak for themselves.

3. *In his old age he pronounced it "vanity" and pointed beyond.* He tried the great experiment under the best conditions, "for what can the man do that cometh after the King?" But the "conclusion of the whole matter" was a warning cry to the young to "fear God and keep his commandments" as the supreme wisdom. Only He who is

"greater than Solomon" embodied as well as taught "the truth." He only is the "wisdom of God" who can make "wise unto salvation." "Hear Him."

### "THOUGH HE WERE DEAD."

BY REV. CHARLES H. SPURGEON, LONDON.

*Martha said unto him I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth in me though he were dead yet shall he live, etc.—John xi: 24-26.*

Martha is a type of a class of anxious believers. They do believe truly, but not with such confidence as to lay aside their care. They do not distrust the Lord or question the truth of what He says, yet they puzzle their brains about "How shall this thing be?" Martha set a *practical bound to the Savior's words*; she laid the words of Jesus on the shelf as things so trite and sure as to be of little practical worth. She erred again in setting the promise in the remote distance. She also made it *unreal and impersonal*.

I. I ask you to VIEW THE TEXT AS A STREAM OF COMFORT TO MARTHA AND OTHER BEREAVED PERSONS. OBSERVE

1. The presence of Jesus Christ means life and resurrection. 2. When Jesus comes the dead shall live. The R. V. has it, "He that believeth on me, though he dies, yet shall he live." I think Christ meant that even now His dead are alive. Death cannot kill a believer, it can only usher him into a freer form of life. There is an essential difference between the decease of the godly and the death of the ungodly. No longer to the believer is it death to die.

II. View the text as a GREAT DEEP OF COMFORT FOR ALL BELIEVERS.

It plainly teaches: 1. That Christ is the life of His people. 2. Faith is the only channel by which we can draw from Jesus our life. 3. To the reception of Christ by faith there is no limit. 4. To conclude, if you once do believe in Christ and come to live, there is this sweet reflection for you, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

"Ah," saith one, "you don't know what I am." No, and I don't want to know what you are; but if you are so far gone that there seems to be not even a ghost of a shade of a shadow of a hope anywhere about you, yet if you believe in Jesus you shall live. Trust the Lord Jesus Christ, for He is worthy to be trusted. Throw yourself upon Him, and He will carry you in His bosom. Cast your whole weight upon his atonement; it will bear the strain. Hang on Him as the vessel hangs upon the nail, and seek no other support. Depend upon Christ with all your might just as you now are, and as the Lord liveth you shall live, and as Christ reigneth you shall reign over sin, and as Christ cometh to glory you shall partake of that glory for ever and ever. Amen.

#### LOOKING AT THE UNSEEN.

By B. M. PALMER, D. D. [PRESBYTERIAN],  
NEW ORLEANS.

*While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.*  
—2 Cor. iv: 18.

This is one of the passages so frequent in the writings of Paul, in which human language wrestles in its agony to utter the deep things of God. Word is doubled upon word, and emphasis is piled upon emphasis, in the effort to construct a form of speech that shall not break down under the intensity of the thought.

LET US CONSIDER THE ADVANTAGE OF A STEADY CONTEMPLATION OF THINGS UNSEEN AND ETERNAL.

I. It brings repose to the spirit amidst the ceaseless changes of life.

II. The presence of the unseen and eternal gives assurance of the final triumph of truth and rectitude.

III. The sense of things eternal gives endurance to bear the pains of present discipline.

IV. The contemplation of eternal realities places this life before us distinctly as the sphere of duty and of toil.

Only let us look across the border at the crown which awaits the conqueror, and we shall esteem this life precious because of the conflicts in which we en-

gage. If there be a lot which angels might envy, it is that which grace assigns to us fighting the Lord's battle against sin, and chanting at last the triumphal song to Him who has "redeemed us by his blood and made us kings and priests unto our God." (Rev. v: 9.)

#### FUNERAL SERVICE.

LIFE A SHADOW.

By REV. W. H. LUCKENBACH [LUTHERAN],  
GERMANTOWN, N. Y.

*Man is like to vanity: his days are as a shadow that passeth away.*—Ps. cxliv: 4.

This is David's answer to his own inquiries, "Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him? or the son of man, that thou makest account of him?" God's eternity flashed upon his thought for a moment. Man's brief life contrasted with His everlastingness is hardly worth naming: *man's* "days are as a shadow that passeth away."

On many a morning you have seen the mountains bathed in a flood of golden light. And as you gazed at the tableau of glory, wrapt in admiration, one and another cloud crossed the disc of the sun, and cast upon their green slopes shadows of various forms. Leisurely and gracefully moving along, your eye following them the while, they were soon out of sight. Unsubstantial and transitory, their only use seemed to be, to chequer for a moment the scene that bewitched you. Something like this David meant when he said, "man is like to vanity; his days are as a shadow that passeth away."

It follows, then, from this poetic fact, that

##### I. HIS LIFE IS LIMITED.

Of 1,000,000 people, one-half will be dead in less than half a century; and of the other half but one person, probably, will live to hear the bells ring in his centennial anniversary.

It would be a ponderous volume, indeed, to handle, if, in a biography, entitled *The Life of Mankind*, there were included but a few items of the earthly history of every individual man, woman

and child, since man was made. It would take our survivors a long while to find the leaf in such an immense book where your and my name were mentioned; and *there* they would see it, probably, in parenthesis, since your and my little, limited life, as compared with the aggregate life of our race would be worth only such mere incidental mention.

And all figures and illustrations fail to give an adequate conception of its brevity or likeness, as compared with the limitless future life. Little, short, brief as is our present life, yet of the grave responsibilities it involves, the truth so tersely stated by the poet should ever keep us thoughtful :

"I am, and I can never cease to be!"

But it follows, too, from the fact predicated of man in our text, that

#### II. HIS DAYS OUGHT TO BE WELL SPENT.

What false notions of "living well" obtain in the world! The sensualist often urges the very fact, solemn as it is, that "to-morrow we die," as a sufficient justification of his eating, drinking and merriment. The covetous think that to "buy and sell, and get gain," is the best use of life—a fiction exposed by the Master who said, "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth." The ambitious think that life is lost if distinction be not gained. But

"Why all this toil for triumphs of an hour?  
What though we wade in wealth, or soar in fame?  
Earth's highest station ends in 'Here he lies'—  
And 'dust to dust' concludes her noblest song."

So often deceived, as man is, by false ideas of what constitutes a well-spent life, in order to his correction, and, hence, his highest good, time and again he should be heard whispering this prayer, "So teach us to number our days, that we may *apply our hearts unto wisdom.*"

These thoughts lead us to the consideration of another deduction from the impressive truth of our text, that man's life is so very like a shadow. It is that

#### III. HIS DAYS OUGHT TO BE DEVOTED TO THE SPECIFIC END TO WHICH THEY ARE GIVEN HIM.

There is no better definition of "the chief end of man" than is given in the Westminster Catechism: "To glorify God, that we may enjoy Him forever." Who makes this the centre of his revolving life will feel no regret when he finds its wheels wearing out.

This narrow life is but the small ante-room of a vast, mysterious temple, ETERNITY. And in this little room we are expected to robe ourselves for presentation to the "King, invisible and immortal." Ever since time began He has been giving audience to the children of men, who, in response to his summons, have left this life, and, once in His presence, cannot return to us again.

Life's best use is to acquire the necessary meetness for presentation to, and an eternal residence with God and heavenly society.

"It matters not how long we live, but *how.*"

### THE INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY-SCHOOL SERVICE.

#### Drunkenness.

(Lesson for December 7, 1884.)

BY THE REV. GEO. E. REED [METHODIST],  
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

Golden Text: *Be not among wine-bibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh.*—Prov. xxiii: 20. Lesson, Prov. xxiii: 29-35.

VISITING some years ago the Hartford Institution for the Insane, the guide of the party pointed out, in one of the lower wards, a poor, grovelling wretch, from whom, as the result of nameless and abominable habits, every vestige of humanity seemed to have gone, leaving

a beast in human form. Horrible in appearance, filthy in dress, snapping and snarling with rage whenever approached, the poor creature—once a man of wealth and social position—yet served in living one useful purpose, namely, that of warning to the hundreds of young men, the victims of similar habits, brought thither, sometimes by keepers, sometimes by friends, that in the awful spectacle there presented they might see the inevitable outcome of the courses upon which they had entered, unless reform or kindly death should



intervene. And yet terrible as were the results of this poor creature's sin they were, nevertheless, scarcely more terrible than those declared by Solomon four thousand years ago, to be the position of the wine-bibbers and gluttons of his and every age.

Then, as now, wine was a mocker, strong drink was raging; and whose-ever was deceived thereby was not wise.

How life-like, how sadly familiar the picture hung out to view. Looking upon it one would think that but yesterday the artist had stood face to face with the blear-eyed, red-faced, feature-battered, contentious, foul and ill-smelling tatterdemalians, huddled in the tramping-room of yonder city station-house, rather than in the streets of a city of four thousand years ago.

And yet, familiar as is the picture upon which he looked, and upon which some look every day they live, it, nevertheless, is one upon which many to-day look with the indifference of fancied security, or the impatience of ignoble and sordid selfishness.

Yonder young man—the one there by that gilded bar, under the light of that flashing chandelier, surrounded by well-dressed companions, his ear greeted with voluptuous and dreamy music, his eye feasting the lusts of his heart as he gazes upon the splendid but indecent colorings of the picture hanging there upon the wall, what recks he that at the last—at *the last*—that red wine will bite like a serpent, will sting like an adder? What knows he of the horrors of drunkenness? Thus far he has seen it only in its *amiable forms*. Yonder merchant immersed in business cares, coining, it may be his very heart's blood into gold, what cares he that within a stone's throw from his office men are living and dying like brutes through strong drink? What *will* he care, until some day word comes that his own son yesterday was found drunk in the gutter?

Yonder wife and mother, living her sheltered, protected life, nursing her delicate loves and sympathies, willingly ignorant of the tides of suffering surging

about her dwelling, what cares she that thousands of her sisters are fattening the soil of Potter's Field through the fatal power of that same ruby wine, which to her is but a thing of beauty and of joy? What *will* she care before upon yonder splendid carpet there shall lie in drunken stupor the limp and nerveless form of the man—the husband—of whose danger she has never even dreamed?

To know what drunkenness is, to be able to picture it in all its horrid reality, to know why it is that God has so thundered against it, why that men everywhere are so lifting up their voices against it, go forth and study it for yourselves. Leave your comfortable houses, sicken for once your delicate sensibilities, and go forth. Take Solomon's arm, or better yet, that of yonder policeman; go with him where drunkenness holds its orgies of lust and blood. Plunge down, down, down into yonder "Dive," climb yonder rickety stairway, enter yonder shattered door, look at those piles of dirty rags whereon are lying mother, father and daughter, all under the influence of liquor. Look into those bloated faces, purple of skin, open of mouth, and gashed with wounds. Enter yonder alley where women, or what once were women, are shrieking, fighting, blaspheming, or pawning their very shawls from off their bodies for strong drink. Pass into yonder saloon, at whose counter men, once glorious in their strength, are squandering in a night what might keep themselves and their families for months in comfort and ease.

Follow them to their wretched homes. See children flying from their presence, see the poor wife as over the body of her fallen pride she pours into the ears of the Father the agonizing cry, "How long, O Lord, how long?" And when you have seen all, you know what Solomon meant when he said: "My son hear thou and be wise, and guide thine heart in the way. *Be not among wine-bibbers; among the riotous eaters of flesh; for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty.*"

That the picture may be more deeply impressed look again, and closely.

1. Consider how strong drink causes *physical degeneracy*, v. 29. The image of God defaced into that of wretches with bleary eyes, shattered nerves, palsied limbs, and the hundred other disorders induced in the system by the introduction of a liquid with which every part of the human system is at war, until the last vestige of it has been expelled; which, as one has said, comes in an enemy, remains an enemy when in, or too strong to be resisted and expelled, and conquers the citadel and destroys the life. *And this in bodies made to be temples for the Holy Ghost!*

2. Consider the *mental deterioration* hinted in vs. 29, 34. "Contentions," "babblings," clouded judgments, besotted intellects, wasted powers—what a category of appalling results in the line of mental deterioration through strong drink, the history of the Saxon race alone could furnish!

3. Consider the *moral ruin* it occasions, v. 33. *Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.*

(a.) Wine is oil to the fire of lust. No brothel could subsist without wine or strong drink, as an ever present auxiliary.

(b.) Wine makes the tongue unruly, extravagant, unseemly, obscene. What shame would mantle the cheeks of men could they have a stenographic report of the ridiculous, incoherent, obscene, blasphemous, silly sayings falling from their lips during the preceding day's debauch! Truly when the wine is in the wit is out.

(c.) Consider the hopeless slavery into which the victims of strong drink are plunged, v. 35. *I will seek it yet again.* Yet again and again, until death shuts down the curtain of hope forever; *for no drunkard shall inherit the kingdom.*

Do then thyself no harm; be not among wine-bibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh. This for thyself.

For others, like the Nazarites of old, like the children of Jonadab the son of Rechab, drink neither wine nor strong

drink, so long as by it you cause to stumble or tempt to ruin the soul—the priceless soul—of thy brother, thy brother for whom Christ died.

### Vanity of Worldly Pleasures

(Lesson for December 14, 1884.)

Eccles. ii: 1-13.

BY ARTHUR T. PIERSON, D.D. [PRESBYTERIAN], PHILADELPHIA.

"To understand the specific use of each book in the Bible," says Bishop Percy, "is the best possible commentary, and often makes needless any other." What, then, is the object of the book from which this lesson is taken?

It is to show that *human life, looked at from any point of view which this world affords, is a failure.* Whether we take our stand on the lowest or the highest level, whatever be the comparative breadth of prospect or range of horizon, all is vanity and vexation of spirit. This world, however little or much of it we have and hold and enjoy, cannot satisfy the demands and desires of man's soul. In other words, *man is too big for this world.* He is a half hinge, whose only complement is an unseen sphere of life and an eternal future. He has wings growing which demand a nobler flight; he has a migratory instinct which is the prophecy of a sunnier South. He has in him God's image, effaced, but not defaced. Only the divine and perfect and eternal can feed and fill his whole being.

This lesson traces the experiments, conducted in a strictly scientific spirit, and by a process of rigid induction, by which the wise man reaches at last his conclusion of the whole matter, recorded in the last words of this book: "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the *whole of man*—i. e., the secret of a symmetrical manhood; for God shall bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil."

Like many a scientist, this religious experimenter, in the beginning of his book, gives us a summary, by way of anticipation, of the results of his investigation. Climbing to the loftiest

summit which mere worldly wisdom can attain, and looking over human life, and even the whole cycle of human history, he sees that all is vanity: there is no profit under the sun. He is not only oppressed with the emptiness of this world, but with its dismal disappointments and disasters; it is not only *vanity*, but *vexation of spirit*. He gives his grounds for this conclusion. 1. Because *no complete, final, satisfactory result is reached*. From his highest successes man plunges into his deepest failures; he grows, only to decline and die. 2. Because there is *no permanent progress*. It is like motion in a treadmill—perpetual activity, but no advance. It is like going up a hill only to round the top and go down on the other side; or like a motion in a circle, in which you sweep round the grandest curve only to come back to the starting point. A generation appears, and then passes away to give place to another, which, in turn, gives place to its successor. The sun rises, moves along the celestial arch to the zenith, then as surely declines, to return to his place of rising. The wind whirls about continually, but only completes its circuit; and the rivers run from their springs to the sea only to rise in vapor to the clouds and be rained back into their springs. There is what has been called the "*law of circularity*," and man is under that law; for "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

Hence this world cannot satisfy the higher nature of man, for no new result is reached. The aspiring soul finds, like the dove in the Deluge, no rest, for there is none here.

And now let us trace the series of experiments by which this wisest of the sons of men was brought to these convictions and compelled to his final conclusion.

First he *tried pleasure* in all its forms, from lowest sensuous and sensual gratifications to the highest intellectual and æsthetic delights. He tried frivolity, but laughter he found allied with madness. He tried wine, but bitter dregs lay in the cup: at the beginning

it fascinated like the serpent, but at the last, like the serpent, it *bit and stung*.

Again he tried *treasure*, laying up silver and gold and the peculiar treasure of kings. He was the reservoir into which poured the streams of tribute—tributaries indeed! But gold was powerless to buy him contentment and satisfaction.

Again he tried *intellectual* pleasures and treasures. He studied the sciences, and especially the natural sciences, till he was familiar with all the mysteries of the animal and vegetable kingdom. He stored up knowledge till his mind was a mine of jewels, a museum of rare and curious things. He cultivated the fine arts, architecture, music, painting, sculpture. His palace was an earthly paradise, full of men singers and women singers, and a full orchestra of instrumental performers. He led the way in great works of enterprise; he builded great houses and palaces, and reared a temple for the Lord that rose from Moriah like a mount of gold and snow. He planted gardens and orchards and vineyards, and made the soil teem with fruits and flowers. And to insure fertility, he constructed immense pools like those near Bethlehem, which still, by a huge aqueduct, supply Jerusalem with water.

The result of all these experiments he solemnly puts on record in two words: *Vanity* and *vexation*. There must be another world, a higher life, a sublimer sphere. That alone can be the complement of this human, mortal experience. Admit that there is an unseen God, an immortal future, a perfect life beyond the grave, and what is otherwise vanity becomes filled with inspiring significance; what was otherwise vexation is compensated by boundless consolation. Augustine was right: "Thou, O God, hast made us for thee; and our heart is restless till it rests in thee." Man can only reach his *wholeness in holiness*; and this world can only become bright and beautiful as it wheels into its orbit about the Sun of Righteousness.

### The Creator Remembered.

(Lesson for December 21, 1884.)

BY FREDERICK A. NOBLE, D. D. [CONGREGATIONAL], CHICAGO, ILL.

*Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.*—Ecl. xii: 1.

"Now!" "*In the days of thy youth!*"

It is a thing to be done at once. To those standing on the threshold of life there seems to be no need of hurry. There is hardly anything in which the old and young differ more than in their feelings about the flight of time. Children think the days and the months and the years are long, very long. Often the only expression they can give to their sense of the length of the period from one holiday to another is a long breath and a sigh. Aged people think they have hardly time to turn round before the morning has settled down into the night, and the old year has given place to the new. It is hardly too much to claim that the aged people come the nearer to being right. Bryant has a little poem entitled, "The Old Man's Counsel," in which the increasingly rapid movements of our years are likened to the increasingly rapid beatings of a partridge's wing. It is an apt illustration. Pulse-beats, clock-strokes, revolutions of suns and stars, are right on and on; and to a thoughtful person it is amazing to see with what rapidity our to-days fade away into yesterdays. The Scriptures do well to urge all youth to an immediate remembrance of God. There are four good and sufficient reasons for acting on this recommendation.

I. It is *easier* to remember God in youth than later on in life. The years are quite likely to bring us under bondage to a great many wrong views and tendencies and habits. After drifting along without God for a while, it is only with severe effort and, it may be, with a sharp sense of cross-bearing that we shall be able to turn about and fall into line with those who acknowledge God and try to obey His commandments. Nothing is more common than for men and women who have put off confessing Christ till well advanced in years, to say, "We wish we had taken

our stand earlier." "Remember *now* thy Creator." It is never so easy as when young.

II. There is more *happiness* to be found in a life in which one early comes into the remembrance of God. There is good reason for this. Nobody, whether old or young, can ever be quite happy with a conscience not altogether at ease. Joy is a bird that flies away when there is no inward peace. We must either fall in with conscience and do what conscience requires, or we must destroy conscience searing it as with a hot iron—so that there shall be no more energy in it to rebuke us for our folly and wickedness, or we can have no satisfaction in life.

It is a notion widely entertained and often expressed, that for this present time it is only the world which can afford us much real gratification, and that, when we renounce the world for God we must consent to forego joy. Not so. For, measure them off and lay them down side by side, pleasure for pleasure, delight for delight, satisfaction for satisfaction, and it will be found that remembering God is a thousand-fold more remunerative of joy than disregarding God. No man rises so high in happiness as the man who from first to last does God's will. The music of the happiness God confers is a whole octave above the music of the happiness men can know, independent of God: for the happiness which God has provided for, and to which He lends approval, is the happiness which grows out of or is associated with dutifulness, and truth, and purity, and faith, and love, and with all high and holy aspirations.

"Virtue alone can give true joy:  
The sweets of virtue never cloy."

III. One who takes this course is more *useful*. To remember God in youth, and all the way through, is to make life more worth living.

There are a great many forms of ambition. Some are ambitious to have what they call "a good time" in life; some to be rich, and own stores and railroads and steamboats and lands,

and have fine houses and carriages and books and paintings, and all that; some to rise to high places of honor and power. They want to sit in the seats of authority, and help make and administer the laws. Some are ambitious to be scholars, and fill the world with the renown of their intellectual capacities or their learning; some to be inventors and explorers—the discoverers of things new and strange. Much of this is good, and to be commended; but it is safe to say, that the highest and worthiest ambition which it is possible for anybody to cherish, is the ambition to be really and largely useful.

The highest benedictions hide  
Where sacrifice is pure and true."

Persons who remember God early will be quite sure to be useful in two ways.

1. They will be quite sure to do more specific work for God and for helping on the kingdom of God. There will be no long stretches of years when the mouth will be closed against the speaking of the Name that is above every name. Many souls have been led into thoughtfulness and prayer and faith and consecration by the simple, winning appeals of mere children. Remembering God while yet children, they do not lose the chance of being serviceable to Him as children. "Father, why don't you do as uncle does?" "Very well; what does your uncle do?" "He prays in his family." It was the stray arrow which struck the heart, and brought the father to his knees in loving surrender.

2. The whole life will be pitched to a higher key of fidelity and honor. When the end comes, and the silver cord is about to be loosed, and the golden bowl is about to be broken, there will be no deep regrets that one has walked through all his years, and used all his resources, and exerted all his influence without any thought of God in it all, or any desire to please Him. The godly man is the highest type of man, and the man from whom his generation may well expect most.

IV. To remember God is what the young ought to do. It is the right and

dutiful thing for them to do. Whatever weight may attach to the preceding suggestions, this is the crowning consideration. Each soul owes it to God to acknowledge and follow Him. There is no human being—no matter how young nor how old, if he is not too young to have arrived at the use of his faculties, nor so old as to have lost the use of his faculties—who is not under obligation to love and obey God.

God is our *Creator*. "Remember now thy *Creator*." We owe our life to Him, and all our faculties, and all our privileges and opportunities. "In Him we live and move and have our being."

God is our *Father*. This is what Jesus has taught us to call Him: "Our *Father* which art in heaven." Jesus was fond of saying, "My Father." He was just as fond of having everybody else say it: "My Father and your Father." Jesus wanted men and women and children to take God to their hearts, and to let their hearts go out to Him as a Father. For He loves us as a Father. He deals with us in the tenderness and bountifulness of a Father. If we have health, cheering prospects in life, wholesome and stimulating associations, sweet homes, a knowledge of the way of salvation through faith in the Son of God; or, best of all, a personal share in this salvation, it is because we have a heavenly Father who cares for us, and watches over us, and ministers to us out of the infinite fullness of His grace. To remember God is the supreme duty.

On every ground, then, it is better to heed this counsel, and fall into line with God as quickly as possible. It is safer. It is wiser. It is worthier. To do this is to become a child of God and an heir of great and precious promises. To do this is to secure the friendship of God through all the temptations and trials and burden-bearings of our lives. If we remember God, God will remember us and brood over us with all the tenderness of a divine affection, and minister to us out of the measureless wealth of His loving kindness. He will never leave us nor forsake us.

## THE PRAYER-MEETING SERVICE.

By J. M. SHERWOOD, D. D.

Dec. 3.—*Missionary Service.*—WATCHING FOR CHRIST'S APPEARING.—Luke xiii: 37.

THE design of these suggestions is mainly *practical*; to furnish appropriate topics for the weekly season of social prayer, and throw out a few thoughts to lead the minds and move the hearts of God's people in this holy and delightful exercise. Hence we strive to select only practical topics and to give a practical turn or direction to the thoughts we suggest. The topic for this evening has a supreme *practical* side, as well as a *doctrinal* one, in which all Christians are not agreed as to its true interpretation. Hence we will confine ourselves to the former. The Christian duty here enjoined, and in several other parallel parables, is the duty of WATCHFULNESS, and the motive is, Christ's appearing, or a final personal accounting to the Lord Jesus Christ. Whether Christ appears in one form or another, this year or a thousand years hence, is a matter of no moment, compared to the stupendous *fact that He will appear*—appear in power and glory, sooner or later, and will arraign every creature at His bar, and reward or punish every man. He has entrusted one or more talents to every servant, and the day of inquisition is sure to come. Our one duty is to be READY—*always ready*—“living,” day by day, “as seeing Him who is invisible.” We may die at any hour, and the same preparation that is essential to meet Christ at His second appearing, is essential to meet death; death is the practical appearing of Christ to the individual saint, crowning him with victory in the supreme conflict and taking him home to glory.

1. Watching implies careful attention to *present duty*.

2. A prayerful study of the *signs of the times*, to learn the will of God and the indications of His appearing to revive and bless His people.

3. Daily living with death, eternity, and the judgment day in full and vivid view.

Dec. 10.—LIVING TO GOD IN SMALL THINGS.—Luke xvi: 10.

The Bible emphasizes *little things*; the widow's two mites; dead flies in the ointment; a cup of cold water; and here in Luke Christ says, “He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.” Small things, as a rule, are a surer index to character than great things. They are spontaneous, unstudied, trifles in themselves, yet showing the drift of our daily thought and life. Besides, life is mainly made up of little things; minute thoughts, seemingly trifling acts, ten thousand minute events, and not a few great acts or experiences. Life is made up of *moments*! And so it is with character. It is the result of our every day's thinking and doing in the numberless petty duties or omissions, virtues or sins of life. Little things make up the sum of good or evil in life.

IN THE MORAL WORLD THERE IS NOTHING LITTLE IN GOD'S SIGHT. There is a bountiful harvest in the little seed cast into the ground. There is heaven in a cup of water given in the name of the Master. The widow's two mites sanctified wealth and draws it into God's treasury. There is the principle of endless life in the faintest exercise of grace in a human heart. There are eternal rewards wrapt up in the little ministries bestowed upon Christ's poor and friendless and suffering children.

It is the *principle*, and not the act itself, which gives it character, importance, dignity in God's sight. There may be more virtue in one kind word dropped by the wayside, than in the most eloquent sermon ever preached to applauding crowds in the great cathedral. There may be more virtue in a small gift to some unknown charity, than of millions to found an institution to perpetuate one's name. A few moments in secret daily prayer, may do more to advance one in the Christian life than all other agencies. The pray-

er-meeting, where a handful pour out their souls to God, may do more to keep the church alive and sinners out of hell, than the sermons and the worship of the congregation on the Sabbath. Look after "the little foxes" which spoil the tender vines. Look after the "small things" of faith and love and charity and service, if you would honor Christ, and be honored by Him. Look after the humble agencies, the every day little opportunities, the casual chance to "sow beside all waters," if you would be a useful man or woman.

Dec. 17.—**ENOCH'S WALK WITH GOD.**—Gen. v: 24.

The record of Enoch's life and character is one of the briefest and most remarkable of any in the Bible. We have his age, his translation, and a single word descriptive of his character. "Enoch walked with God," a phrase expressive of constant companionship and undisturbed intimate intercourse with Him. We cannot conceive of a more exalted and spiritual state this side of heaven. And the record of his death, or rather translation, is equally wonderful. "And he was not, for God took him." His exalted piety received a fitting reward. He was taken away too in early life, according to the antediluvian duration of human life. What is it to "walk with God?" And is such a fellowship possible in these days to His children? *It is possible; it is the privilege of every true Christian.*

**WHAT IS IT THEN TO WALK WITH GOD AS ENOCH WALKED?**

I. *To be conformed to His will.* "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" God's law must reign supreme in the heart and rule the life. Our will must be subordinated, acquiesce in His, in all things.

II. *To be brought into living actual sympathy with Him.* The heart must go with Him as well as the allegiance. The soul must be drawn to Him by the power of a great moral attraction. There must be the mingling, the flowing together of feeling, sentiment, life, purpose, all that constitutes being. Paul had at-

tained to that state when he said, "For me to live is Christ." "It is not I that live, but Christ that liveth in me."

III. *To have divine grace work out redemption in the soul.* When that is done, when sin is dethroned, and the image of God is restored, and the spirit of Christ rules the heart, heaven is not far off: God is very nigh: the bonds are close between the believing sanctified child and the Eternal Father. The transition from earth to heaven, from conflict to victory, will be easy and natural.

Dec. 24.—**THE GLAD TIDINGS.**—Luke ii: 10-14.

Falling on the eve of Christmas, it is proper that our thoughts and prayers at this service should be inspired by this transcendent theme.

"The Glad Tidings." No such message of good news ever fell on angelic ears; no such message of mercy ever sounded its notes in hell; no such proclamation of joy ever before sounded down the sky of our lost world. Well might "the heavenly host," who heard Gabriel's announcement, shout, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

**WHY THE GOSPEL IS GLAD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY.**

I. The *source* of the proclamation thrills the heart with interest and inspires it with hope. It is direct from heaven, from the very lips of the Supreme God, from out the bosom of eternity. Listen, O earth, for God Himself speaks, speaks by the lips of Gabriel, who ministers before the Everlasting Throne, and the multitude of angels, whose shout has just rent the sky, are His servants, sent down to earth to herald the good news.

II. The *burden* of the message is a burden of infinite joy and gladness—"glad tidings of great joy to all people"—"for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." The long expected Messiah, the Great Deliverer, Jesus, the Savior of a lost race is born into the world in the fulness of time.

III. The *dignity and character* of the

announced deliverer is matter of wonderment and eternal rejoicing. It is the Son of God, incarnated in humanity! "God so loved the world as to give," etc.

IV. *The greatness of the salvation* which He came to achieve may well astonish angels and thrill the lost race of Adam with extacy. (1.) He saves His people from their sins. (2.) He came to destroy the works of the devil. (3.) To purify and gather a people to the praise of the riches of His grace. (4.) To lay, in this moral redemption, the foundations of an "everlasting kingdom" of "peace and righteousness" to perpetuate the achievements of the Cross and bind together in one great family all loyal subjects of the King of kings.

Dec. 31.—THE MARYS AT THE SEPULCHRE.—Matt. xxvii: 61; xxviii: 1-8; Mark xvi: 1-8; Luke xxiv: 1-10; John xx: 1-18.

The resurrection of Christ is the pivotal fact on which hinge all the doctrines of Christianity. If Christ be risen as the "first fruits" of them that sleep; if He hath power to revive the buried dust of men in the last day, then is the Gospel witness true, and Christian hope will not be disappointed. On the contrary, if the founder of Christianity, who as an historical fact suffered death in Judea eighteen hundred years ago, remains under the power of death—is a *dead* Christ—then the Gospels are untruthful—there is no Jesus and no salvation.

Hence the early preachers of the Gospel laid very great stress on the doctrine of Christ's resurrection. It was a cardinal fact with them. They bore special witness of it. They challenged attention to it—challenged it on the very scene of the crucifixion while the event was still fresh in the public mind. There is no fact in history more clearly and fully established by credible evidence than the fact of the resurrection of Christ on the third day after his crucifixion.

1. Note the influence which Christ's resurrection had on His disciples. It

put life, hope, inspiration into them all. It was like life from the dead.

2. Note how the early disciples emphasized and magnified this glorious fact; an empty sepulchre! a risen Jesus!

3. The power and bearings of the resurrection life are not grasped by the Church in these days and brought to the front and made conspicuous. The one stupendous fact in human history is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The one supreme force in human events to-day is the living presence of a Divine Personality, incarnated in living hearts and holy lives, quickened, redeemed and transformed by the grace of God!

4. The Marys were early at the sepulchre, and before any of the other disciples, and their faith and piety were duly rewarded.

### A SYMPOSIUM ON ROMANS.\*

No. II.

BY PROFESSOR F. GODET, NEUCHÂTEL, SWITZERLAND.

We have just heard a charmer. But to charm is not to convince. For where our imagination applauds, very often our intelligence protests. The St. Paul of Mr. Beecher is a Jewish rabbi coupled with a Greek philosopher. But in this double-faced being I do not recognize my St. Paul, the apostle of Jesus Christ, whom I have learned to know, by an intimate acquaintance with his writings during half a century. It appears to me, at times, in reading Mr. Beecher, that the painter has, to some extent, substituted his own picture for that of his model; and, if the editor of THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY will permit me to say it, I find that it would be better to sketch a Beecher in the image of Paul, than a Paul in the image of Beecher.

But perhaps I am blinded by prejudice. Am I not one of those commentators who imagine themselves able to comprehend Paul "with their grammar and their dictionary," and who produce the impression upon Mr. Beecher of an

\*Translated from the French by Rev. G. F. Behringer, Brooklyn



owl in view of the aurora borealis, or of a mole contemplating a magnolia-tree in full blossom? Paul was by nature "one of those beings that develop into poets and dramatists. He dreamed dreams, heard voices, saw visions, had translations from earth to heaven; had angels standing by him." To understand such a man, it is necessary, in a measure, to partake of his nature, and of his genius. What a pleasure it is to Mr. Beecher to see the poor exegetes, baffled at every turn by the blunt and abrupt style of the apostle, and by his wandering argumentation! Paul rushes forward in his foolish course as if he would never stop. Suddenly he pauses, leaps to the right, and then to the left, pursues a new idea which presents itself to him; and, after a moment, behold! he quite as suddenly returns to the main beaten path, without appearing to suspect that there has been any interruption in his onward progress. And the amazed commentator, with grammar and syntax in hand, does not know what to do with such a writer.

Let me, then, say to my readers that this picture is a veritable caricature, not only of the commentators of Paul, but of Paul himself. As for myself, I do not know of a writer more severely logical than he who has been pictured to us as an Arab steed in full play. Strict reasoning would demand that Paul be exhibited to us as a Demosthenes. The logical necessity is so preponderating in his writings that even his most superabundant effusions of sentiment are run into the most severe dialectic mold. Between Mr. Beecher's and my own appreciation of Paul, the distance is not less great than that which separates the two opposite shores of the Atlantic.

But let us go at once to the Epistle to the Romans, since that is the proposed subject of our present transoceanic symposium.

In the eyes of Mr. Beecher, who develops this thought with his customary geniality, this epistle was essentially addressed to the believing Jews of the

Roman capital, who certainly formed the controlling portion of the Church in that city. The apostle wished to persuade them to abandon Moses, without the fear of thereby committing an act of infidelity. He wished to convince them that to substitute Christ for Moses would not be to change the aim, but only the method. This was to replace the external and mechanical obedience by an internal regeneration.

But if it is to the Jews that St. Paul addresses himself, why is it that in the introductory part (the first seven verses) he develops the idea of his call as an apostle to the Gentiles? In what respect did this appointed calling serve to furnish him with the occasion to address a letter to believing Jews? Why does he characterize (verse 6) the Christians of Rome as belonging to the number of the Gentiles? And why does he say to them a little farther on (verse 13) that he desires to "have some fruit among you *also*, even as among the *other* Gentiles?" Does he not explicitly classify the Roman Christians among the number of the believing Gentiles? In the eleventh chapter he addresses himself at full length to the believing heathen, and calls them "*you*," while he speaks of the Jews and of the believing Jews as "*they*." We pass by other proofs, and this the more readily since Mr. Beecher himself acknowledges that *in the letter* Paul speaks to the Romans as Christian heathens; but that this does not hinder him from writing to the Jews *in the spirit*. To speak thus is to honor the cleverness of the apostle more than his uprightness. At any rate, the thesis of my opponent, thus formulated, remains inadmissible.

Was it necessary to prove to the Jews, as the first chapter does, the state of corruption of the heathen world, and the wrath of God which is manifested towards the Gentiles in this same villainess to which they were given up? The Jews did not doubt these facts. We perceive that it is the entire human race which engages the attention of Paul. Is it not for the purpose of reassuring the believing heathen that

Paul shows in the fourth chapter that there was a time in the life of Abraham himself when he was nothing but an uncircumcised heathen, and that it is precisely in this period of his life that he was justified by faith without the works of the law? If Paul thus addressed himself *in spirit* to the Jews of the Church, why does he go back as far as Adam, the head of *humanity*, instead of limiting himself, as in Galatians, to Abraham, the father of Israel? In chapter vi: 17-21, he reminds his readers that they were formerly "the servants of sin and free from righteousness." Servants of sin? Yes; the Jews could, in a certain sense, have merited this term. But "free from righteousness?" Never. Did not the law hold them under its discipline, and did it not put a barrier between them and heathen licentiousness? Very far from wishing to effect a change in the views of his readers, the apostle uniquely expresses the desire of strengthening them (i: 12; xv: 28). To strengthen is to confirm their convictions, not to transform them.

There existed then at Rome, several years before the arrival of the apostle in that city, a Christian community composed, for the most part, of believers of heathen origin, joined to these, without doubt, was a number of believing Jews of heathen origin; of whom the great majority adhered to the spirituality of the apostle. "But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin; *but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.*" (vi: 17.) Thus Paul says himself. This congregation had not been established from Palestine, as has often been supposed; much less had it been established by Peter, as the Roman Catholic Church pretends. It owed its existence to Christians coming from Syria, Asia Minor, and Greece; some of Jewish, others of Greek origin, but who had become acquainted with the apostle in the East, and of whom a certain number had come from churches founded by Paul. These are they that went out to meet him at several leagues'

distance from Rome when he arrived, for the first time, in that city, "whom when Paul saw, he thanked God and took courage." (Acts xxviii: 15.) These are among the most eminent to whom he sends greeting (*e. g.*, Priscilla and Aquila), by the intermediary of the whole Church, in this large enumeration of brothers, friends, and co-laborers, whose names fill one of the last pages of his letter. He feels the need of thus recognizing the services which they have rendered to the Gospel and to himself, and to remind the Church of the respect and affection which are due to them as the first bearers of the Gospel at Rome, and precursors of the Apostle of the Gentiles in this capital of the pagan world.

But why does he write such a letter to this Church? The reply has often been made: Paul wished to announce his arrival, and to prepare for himself a favorable welcome among them. This suggestion may explain a letter, but not *such a* letter.

Let us recall what was lacking in the foundation of this Church. When the apostle established a Christian congregation, he imparted to them, as much as was possible, a thorough and even a very detailed evangelical instruction. This is proven by the formula which often recurs in his letters, and which is applied at times to secondary matters: "Do you not know that," etc. At Antioch, Barnabas and he thus taught for one whole year. (Acts xi: 26.) At Ephesus, Paul hired a hall belonging to a rhetorician, where, during two entire years, he daily proclaimed the Word of the Lord Jesus, both to the Jews and to the Greeks. (Acts xix: 9, 10.) Thus this privilege was enjoyed by all the churches which Paul founded in the pagan world; but the Christian congregation at Rome had been deprived of this privilege. And hence this was the reason, without doubt, why Paul, profiting by the three months' rest which he enjoyed at Corinth during the winters of 58 and 59 (Acts xx: 3), wrote a letter such as, until then, he had never been called upon to write—a letter con-

taining that which he would have taught the Christians at Rome had he had the good fortune of himself establishing a church in that city. It was a connected and, in a manner, systematic exposition of his evangelical preaching; or, according to the expression which he employs twice in this same epistle, *of his Gospel*. (ii: 16; xvi: 25.) He means by this remarkable expression the contents of that special revelation which he had personally received of the Lord. (Gal. i: 11-16.) In his other letters (with the exception of those to the Ephesians and to the Colossians), owing to some particular circumstance, the apostle continued and complemented the general oral instruction which he had given them by special supplementary teachings. But in his Epistle to the Romans he does not aim to explain a special point, nor to rectify a particular error; nor does he seek, as in Galatians, to arrest a Church upon the verge of Jewish legalism, or, as in 1 Corinthians, to reclaim a Christian congregation from certain vagaries of a Hellenic nature to Christian holiness. He sees but two things: on the one side, *man under condemnation*, and on the other, *salvation by Christ*; and his unique aim (which is that of his gospel in general) in this letter is, to bring this man and his salvation together; to make one whole by the bonds of faith. Though we know little of the great heart of the apostle, we can form some idea of the solemn impression which he ought to feel in undertaking the sublime task to which he saw himself called. At last the moment had come to commit to paper the thought of his whole life. It was not a particular subject of doctrine, or of the Christian life, which he was about to explain. It was salvation in its entirety and in all its grandeur. And it was not to a little corner of the world that he addressed himself, as when he wrote to Thessalonica, or to Corinth, to Philippi or to Galatia. It was to the Eternal City, to the capital of the world, which was, as has been said, a *resumé* of the entire world. What St. Paul was

obliged to experience in applying himself to execute such a task, he alone could tell us; yet in studying this incomparable writing we can obtain somewhat of an impression of it. Similar to the angel in the Book of Revelation, flying in the midst of heaven, "having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth" (Rev. xiv: 6), the apostle soars above all differences of nationalities, religions, languages, and culture. He beholds at his feet all humanity, and the whole course of its history. Then from this luminous sphere, where his spirit dwells, he causes to descend to those vast regions filled with the darkness of sin, of suffering, and of death, the glory of salvation.

The preamble reveals the height to which he feels himself raised. That which God had promised by his prophets He had delivered to Paul, set apart for this mission by God Himself, to proclaim it to the world, especially to the Gentile world. This mission Paul had received from the risen Christ, the Lord not only of the Jews as Son of David, but of the entire world, as Son of God. And it is for this reason that he can write to the Church at Rome, although he had not at all founded it. It was part of his vast diocese, the world of the Gentiles. If he has not yet visited this capital of the world, it was neither fear nor shame that hindered him. When one bears a message which embraces the salvation of all that call themselves men, one triumphs over such feelings.

But is the world in need of salvation? Contemplate the heathen delivered unto the bondage of the most ignoble and unnatural passions. This abject condition, unto which they are delivered, is the evidence of the condemnation that rests upon them. (1st chapter.) And what of the Jews? In spite of the severity of their judgments upon the Gentiles, and their more respectable condition, morally and externally, were they really better? They dishonored by their conduct the name of God in the heathen world where they were

scattered. And because they were Jews, they imagined that the judgment of God would spare them! But "God is no respecter of persons." The divine wrath, which rests already visibly upon the Gentile world, is slowly gathering around the Jewish people, and is soon to be visited upon them. (2d chapter.)

All mankind is under the weight of God's wrath. And let no one excuse himself by saying that God will overrule everything, even the evil, for good. This excuse would be blasphemy, and would aggravate man's sin. Would that every man, Jew and Gentile, might remain silent, and account himself as guilty before God! (iii: 19.)

Evidently it is neither the Jew nor the Gentile that Paul has particularly in view. It is man, alike a sinner and condemned, whether Jew or Gentile, though differently situated. There is in this an appeal to the conscience of all humanity, more expressly embracing the Jew, because he dared to exempt himself from the mass of mankind.

Here each leaf is turned, as after every day of creation, when it is said: "Thus was the evening and the morning." The night of condemnation is succeeded by the dawn of the day of salvation (iii: 21); *the wrath of God* is followed by *the justice of God*. This justice, however, is not that which condemns, but that which absolves. But how can justice absolve when the world is guilty? Will God adjudge the guilty to be innocent? Yes, He will; and that without ceasing to be just. Here, at this time, the secret of God, long hidden, is at last revealed. For that long series of crimes which marks the course of mankind on this earth, and which, to a large extent, appeared to go unpunished—as if God had closed His eyes to the perversity of His creatures—an innocent victim, chosen by God from all eternity, is offered to suffer the punishment before the sight of a guilty world. And whosoever accepts, for his own sake, this judgment of sin in the person of this victim, and renders homage to the right of God against

guilty man, manifested in this sorrowful and voluntary punishment, places himself thereby in a favorable moral condition, in the which God can pardon him, and show Himself satisfied, without ceasing to be just.

This is that famous doctrine of justification by faith, which is the soul of the teachings of St. Paul, which was the principle of his moral and religious life, and which is to this day the "let there be light" of the new creation operating in man. The passage, iii: 23-25, is the key of the whole Epistle to the Romans. And yet, strange to say, Mr. Beecher passes it by in silence in his exposition of the Epistle. Are we not entitled to ask him to account for such a singular omission? Is it allowable to throw a bridge over the abyss of divine mercy and holiness as lightly constructed as this contemptuous phrase, "*Rabbinic reasoning?*"

After having thus founded justification upon the work of Christ, St. Paul confirms this means of salvation by his own agreement with Jewish monotheism in general, which demands that, since God is God of all, the means of salvation should also be within reach of all; then, more especially by the example of Abraham, who seized the Divine promise by the hand of faith, and thereby obtained the righteousness which he did not possess by his works. And in order that the Jews and the Gentiles might with equal certainty secure the salvation by faith which Paul announced, it was necessary that no one should doubt his entire agreement with the revelations hitherto accorded to the Jews. This is the contents of the latter part of the 3d chapter, and of the whole of the 4th chapter.

The first part of the 5th chapter finishes the picture of justification by faith, in adding thereto an essential trait, viz.: that this justification, possessed to-day, will not be wanting in the future before the divine tribunal. Here Mr. Beecher compares the argumentation of St. Paul to a torrent, which, after having foamed and eddied in a ravine, gently flows into a green

prairie. It is owing to his brilliant imagination that Mr. Beecher has seen all this. In reality, the preceding argument continues calm, serene, rigid, and even mathematical, one might say. "When I was an enemy, an object of wrath, God justified me; now that I am justified, will God make me an object of His wrath?" This is the line of reasoning in its simplicity. It is upon this irresistible *a fortiori* argument that he rests for the faithful assurance of salvation. Am I not right, therefore, in speaking of the mathematical rigor in which Paul envelops the most sublime emotions of his feelings?

Condemnation pronounced upon all, justice (righteousness) offered to all; behold the contents of these first two parts of the epistle! The third puts them into mutual logical relation with one another, and thus crowns this first part. The cause operating in Adam was a feeble one, and yet it was sufficient to found an empire of universal death. Grace operating in Christ included infinitely more powerful factors; will it not, therefore, be most surely efficacious in founding a reign of life of which all believers shall be the bearers? Herein, again, is found an argument of mathematical rigor to express the triumphant certainty of faith. The foundations of faith are laid; by being justified, the sinner is restored to a normal state in the sight of God. His favor is restored to man. But what will morality gain thereby? Will it lose nothing in this convenient position? And for the purpose of sanctification, will it not be necessary at least to return to the law, hitherto avoided as a means of justification. The apostle examines this question in chapters vi. to viii. And this is his reply: On the one hand, the union of faith with Christ dead for sin morally constrains the believer to die to sin. His plan of life can no longer carry with it the possibility of sinning. On the other hand, the union of faith with the risen Christ consecrates him to a holiness resembling that of Christ Himself. This principle of sanctification once for all

established in the heart by faith in Christ, dead and risen again, is an eminence from which the believer could not escape, except on the condition of renouncing faith itself. Christ thus supplants the ancient spouse, the law, in the believing soul, in that superior world to which He had elevated the soul with Himself. He can break with the law without scruple.

And there is no reason to regret this ancient spouse. The apostle here appeals to his experience as a sincere Jew. The law had, indeed, revealed sin unto him, but without aiding him to overcome it. Under this master he was sensible of his chains only to feel more grievously their weight. "O, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?" This cry of distress was all that he had learned in the school of the law. But heaven responded to his cry; the Deliverer is come. The Spirit of Life which is in Jesus Christ (Rom. viii: 3), and by which his justification in Christ has been sealed, has at last broken his chains. He has recognized the victory of the Spirit over the flesh. And the power of death, thus broken in his heart, will one day be vanquished by virtue of the same Spirit, even in his own body. The believer, having become the son of God by the life of the Spirit, will also become the inheritor of God. (Chap. viii: 1-17.)

Here the apostle discloses a new perspective. From justification there issues sanctification; from sanctification there proceeds glory—the perfect realization of the destiny of man. Without doubt salvation, to the degree of glory, is yet to come; but all tends thither. Nature invokes this new estate by the universal sigh which is heard in a world where all suffer and die. The children of God, inclosed in this infirm and tender body, invoke it. The Spirit of God Himself invokes it, filling with a longing sigh the hearts in which He dwells. Everything co-operates to hasten the advent of this blessed state to which God has predestined the believers, and where they will bear the perfect image of their elder brother. Who, then, will

oppose himself to the accomplishment of God's designs towards them? They need righteousness; God has given it unto them. They need holiness, in view of the final absolution which the Judge must pronounce upon them. Christ, the Judge Himself, procures this for them. They need perseverance in the warfare against the inseparable sufferings of the Christian life. The love which Christ has shown to them is stronger than the fear of death and all the conjured powers of the universe. And again in that magnificent passage where the feeling overflows, everything is strictly logical, and we can find the systematic plan, according to which the order of salvation has been presented: condemnation and justice, sin and holiness, grief and glory.

But let us hasten to a close of this feast, otherwise our guests might disperse—if they have not already done so.

After having explained this salvation, Paul retraces its progress in the history of mankind: for here arises a dark problem which might provoke doubt against salvation itself. For how can Israel, the chosen people, reject this salvation, if it were that which the prophets had foretold? This is the problem which engages Paul in the following portion (chapters ix-xi) of his epistle. I can be brief upon this point, because here I more nearly agree with Mr. Beecher. The divine election could not be absolute in the sense that God would dispense with the necessary moral conditions in man for the accomplishing of His plans (chapter xi). It is not God that has broken with Israel; it is Israel that has broken with God in not wishing to recognize, in the hour of Christ's advent, the end of the law and the death of its theocratic monopoly, and thus hindering the preaching of salvation to the Gentiles (chapter x). And, finally, all the Jews have not been rejected, and even those that have been are not cast off forever. After Christ's sacrifice shall have opened the entrance of salvation to all the Gentiles, the redemption of the Gentiles shall bring back the Jews themselves into the king-

dom of God. And the oldest son and the prodigal shall rejoice together, assembled at their father's table. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God."

After having thus illuminated the life and the history of mankind, the apostle again describes to us *the life of the individual under the influence of this salvation*. He shows us a holy and living sacrifice of himself daily rendered unto God, in the service of the Church (chapter xii); then by submission and justice toward all men, as citizens in the domain of the state, and this with constant regard to the return of Him who will inaugurate the new order of things (chapter xiii). The tenor of this practical part is not less systematic than that of the other portions of his letter.

Regard now the progress of the Epistle. From the beginning to the end of it, Paul goes directly forward to the goal, without evasion, without circumlocution, without introducing any extraneous matter. The special revelation as touching salvation, which Paul had personally received, has now come to an end.

It is certain that he who has composed such a letter is not a dishevelled Bacchant, carrying within his bosom a rabbi and a philosopher, and alternately ventriloquizing with the mouth of one and of the other. He is a man naturally endowed, at the same time and in the most eminent degree, with Japhetic discursive intelligence and Semitic intuition. Stricken to death by Christ, and resurrected as an apostle of Christ—from that moment he placed the Gamaliel and the Aristotle united within him at the feet of this unique One, who had been revealed to him as the son of David and as the Son of God; a Jew according to the flesh, but "who is over all, God blessed forever." (ix: 5.) And the monument which he has erected to this adorable Name, in the Epistle to the Romans, in concentrating upon this work, with an incomparable energy, all his natural and spiritual forces, will never be excelled or equaled.

**CONDITIONS OF PULPIT POWER.**

BY WILLIAM CLEAVER WILKINSON.

## No. I.

Observe I do not say, *The Conditions of Pulpit Power*. I purposely refrain from that. I do not wish to imply that I aspire to make the present discussion exhaustive. I shall not aim at enumerating all the conditions that must combine to secure for the pulpit its proper measure of power. I merely mean to mention a few of them. And for even these few I shall not seek to select those conditions alone which possess in themselves the highest intrinsic or absolute importance. My principle of choice will rather be to choose for remark such conditions of power for the pulpit as seem to be of the highest importance relatively to us and to this living moment in the history of preaching.

In accordance with this principle of choice, I lay it down as the first condition of pulpit power, peculiarly needed just now, *that the preacher should believe in preaching.*

This is by no means recommending self-reliance to the preacher as a condition of power in preaching. Self-reliance is useful in its way. It is, up to a certain point and within the proper sphere, a true condition of power. A self-reliant man is presumably at least master of what strength he possesses. His resources are his own and he can wield them at will. Besides this his self-reliance impresses his fellows. His fellows are ready to give way before him. Self-reliance both hides in its heart and binds on its brow the presage of victory. So far self-reliance is a real condition of power.

But self-reliance is not what I mean when I say that the preacher should believe in preaching. For the preacher to believe in preaching does not necessarily imply reliance on self. The preacher is not to say, "I believe in *my* preaching." He is simply to say "I believe in preaching." But to believe in preaching is still an ambiguous phrase. It may mean any one of several very different things. To believe in preaching may mean to believe in it as an exped-

ient to the preacher of getting along in the world. Preaching may be believed in as such an expedient. It is useless to dissemble the fact. The fact exists. Our fellow-men see it plainly enough. We gain nothing by ignoring it ourselves. The simple truth is that preaching is one of the ways of earning a livelihood. As things go nowadays with us in this country, preaching is by no means the worst way of earning a livelihood. Moreover, preaching is one of the ways for a man of studious tastes to secure to himself the opportunity of being a scholar. Preaching also opens before a man ambitious of oratorical distinction, the avenue to a conspicuous professional career. It is quite possible therefore, for the preacher to believe in preaching as an expedient to himself of getting along in the world. But such faith in preaching is not the faith in preaching that supplies to the preacher a condition of pulpit power.

Yet again preaching may be believed in by the preacher as an instrument of moral impression. To believe thus in preaching is good as far as it goes. No one can doubt that the office of preaching may be made a powerful instrument of moral impression. But a belief in preaching like this is inadequate. It does not go far enough. To believe rightly in preaching is more than to believe that preaching may be made a powerful instrument of moral impression. That is self-evident. It asks no faith. It admits of none. It is a matter of knowledge. But the belief in preaching which supplies to the preacher a real condition of power, is not knowledge. It is faith, sheer faith. You do not know. You believe.

Believe what? what must I believe with reference to preaching in order to make my belief a condition of pulpit power? You must believe that preaching is an ordinance of God. You must believe that it is an ordinance of God in a peculiar sense. In one sense every use of speech that men can make is an ordinance of God. But preaching is an ordinance of God in another, in a higher, sense than this. Preaching was or-

dained by God in a special and singular manner, to be the means of saving men. This is the truth, and this truth must be believed by the preacher in order to fulfil the first condition of pulpit power. It requires some courage to have this faith. But you must be courageous and have it. The world will smile at your folly. The world will call you either simple, or else proud, to dream that your vocation as preacher has any unusual sanction from God, or any transcendent connection with the saving of men. In its more tolerant moods the world will grant that preaching is useful. The pulpit, the world is sometimes willing to say, the pulpit has its place among the many agencies that exist for making men better. But it will not do for you, a preacher, to accept so much as sufficient for your belief. You will have to run a little risk. You will have to believe a little more than the world believes. The world admits that preaching is a means of making men better. You must believe that preaching is *the* means of making men better. More. You must believe that preaching has for its object concerning men something beyond making men better. That is a sober, a rational, a worldly-wise view. The world will concur in that. But again you will have to run a little risk. Again you will have to believe a little more than the world believes. Not making men better, but saving men, is what you must hold to be the true issue of preaching. That involves believing that men need saving. You must be brave and believe this too or you cannot believe as you should in preaching.

But all has not yet been said. To believe rightly in preaching implies something more. You must believe not only that preaching is an ordinance of God, and an ordinance of God in a peculiar sense, not only that preaching is a means of making men better, nay, *the* means of making men better, and not only that it has for its issue the saving of men. You must believe also that preaching is not a temporary device, a provisional expedient good for past times, good, though less good for these

times, but destined at last to be superseded by something better. You must believe that preaching was ordained by God an ordinance to endure. This is the truth and this truth you must believe. Preaching is not obsolete, it is not becoming obsolete, it never will be obsolete—till sin is. All this you must believe with reference to preaching, or you cannot preach with power.

Now to believe all this in these times takes courage. If you are not a brave man you will not dare believe it all. The world will call you an enthusiast for believing it, or, still worse, an impostor as pretending to believe it. The world has many eyes, and some of its eyes have a very trying stare. I tell you if you are not a brave man the world will look you out of countenance. The word to Jeremiah is good yet. When God sent Jeremiah to disobedient Israel, he charged the prophet, "Be not dismayed at their faces." The charge is to you the same. Be not dismayed at men's faces. Preach as if you believed in preaching. Rather, believe as you should in preaching, and preach.

But I know what some will say, some preachers, I mean. They will say: "Now do not let us be extravagant. We must not set up any unwarranted pretensions. After all is preaching quite what you claim? Once undoubtedly it was; but have not things changed? In the apostles' time preaching was the great means of spreading the gospel. But printing has been invented. Does not the press, to some extent, take the place of the pulpit? Is it wise still to claim the same pre-eminence as of old for preaching?"

Such language sounds conservative. There is the ring of a true worldly-wisdom in it. It has the charm of apparent moderation and candor. And it is, more than would openly be confessed, the secret persuasion of preachers. No wonder. We read every month, and every week, and every day, the boasts of the press. Journalism seems in fact to have made a law of good breeding for its own peculiar benefit. That law reverses the rule which used to be universal. It permits newspapers and magazines to



praise themselves without prejudice to their modesty. Accordingly the power of the press is a constant theme for articles. The "power of the press" is a heading that might very well be kept constantly in type at almost any flourishing newspaper establishment. No wonder, I say, if such an influence, perpetually in the air, affects the faith of some preachers in preaching. But I venture to assert that the press is no substitute, present or prospective, for the pulpit. I have no interest in disparaging the power of the press. That power is very great. In some instances it is also a very beneficent power. The pulpit has no occasion to repel the alliance of the press. The pulpit has however every occasion to repel the attempts of the press to head an alliance. The press is an excellent auxiliary. But it is a very dangerous usurper. Let it know its place. It is the second not the first.

It is no arrogance to say this. It is simple fidelity. I do not counsel the pulpit to flaunt its claims. The assertion of its claims is a matter of prudence. But the holding of its claims is a deeper matter. That is a matter of principle. Whatever you avow or refrain from avowing, deep down in your heart you must hold your belief that preaching is the one chief way, chosen by God, for once and forever, to save men.

The press cannot take the place of the pulpit for several reasons. First the press is an anonymous agency. There is a voice, but nobody utters it. There is something said, but nobody has said it. There are words plenty, but when you look for the man behind the words, the man is not there. Sinners are very perverse. They will unreasonably refuse to be saved in this anonymous fashion. Besides the men who write anonymously are not in general the men to be very good saviors. It is not the religious press, for the religious press is not in the habit of boasting itself in this respect over the pulpit; it is the secular press that I have now in mind. And here again it is but just that I should make exceptions. There are certainly

high-minded secular journalists, and secular journalists too, of noble moral aims. But the average newspaper writer is not your ideal of a moral reformer. In the nature of things he cannot be. Newspapers are not established to reform men. The anonymous feature in the conduct of newspapers tends naturally to enlist writers that prefer to write without a sense of personal responsibility. Even those better men who possess a native instinct of honor and conscience are insensibly corrupted to write less scrupulously when hidden under the mask of the anonym. You may say that the public which supports a newspaper will hold its writers to account. If the writers offend the public sense, they suffer punishment in loss of public favor. This is true. The public have it in their power to keep newspapers to as high a standard as they choose. The public is master of the newspaper. The newspaper is servant of the public. The newspaper is precisely as good, no better and no worse, as the public will have it. The power of the press, the newspaper press, lies in exactly obeying public opinion. The art of journalism is therefore largely a tact for feeling public opinion. Take the London "Times" for a fair representative. The editor-in-chief of that journal, I have been told, haunted club-rooms and coffee-houses to catch the whisper of the people about current events. He got this popular whisper gathered up in good round periods and rolled it out next morning in the fine reverberant thunder of the "Times" editorials. This is the high art of journalism—to echo, not to create, public opinion. Not yet is it time for journalism to take the place of preaching as the means of saving men. What the public needs, is not a slave, but a master. But the newspaper is the slave of its public.

I know that the pulpit can be as subservient as the press. I know that too often it is. But the press is subservient by virtue of its very idea. On the contrary it is the idea of the pulpit to be independent. The more shame to the pulpit when it truckles! But, as the

case stands, where the press dares challenge public opinion once, the pulpit dares it a thousand times. We all know too that when a newspaper has in some instance gone counter to public opinion, its first business, on finding itself out of the channel is to take the necessary tacks to get safely back where it can go with the current again. But the true pulpit always stands against the current. Its business is to resist. For this reason the press naturally invites to itself the timid men, while the pulpit invites the bold. A man who is willing to risk himself is so far the natural preacher. There are never too many such. But the pulpit is sure to have its share—men who do not care to hide behind a casemate and fire through a loop-hole, but who stand out in full sight exposed from head to foot and ready to take the consequences—God bless such preachers!

But there is a further reason why the pulpit cannot be superseded in its office of saving men by the press. The living voice, the living presence, the man himself as well as the man's thought, is necessary to the impartation of life and power from soul to soul. Words alone will not do it. Not characters to the eye, not sounds to the ear, but life to life—that is the law of moral influence. You must face men. You must look into their eyes, you must feel their eyes looking into yours, you must grapple them heart to heart. In this moral wrestle with men, this life-grapple, there is no escape from a decisive issue. There is a victory, and the victory is with you or it is against you. You conquer your hearers, or your hearers conquer you. Hence that enormous, that peculiar, agony in the soul of the orator, which precedes his encounter with the assembly. The quivering nerve, the quaking knee, the throbbing brain, the tumultuous heart—these are the foretokenings of a strife impending, in which the orator knows that he must master his hearers or submit himself to be mastered by them. It is a great matter to wrestle thus with an audience on any terms. But it is a moral as well as a

mental strain, not conceivable to a man who has not experienced it, when this orator's wrestle is undertaken on the terms which true preaching imposes. The gain, however, is equal to the cost. The struggle, the agony, is only a fair measure of the value of a victory won. By as much as it costs more to face your audience and conquer them with the truth, soul to soul, than it costs to sit withdrawn in your closet and write your thoughts for the press, by so much is the advantage accruing greater. Your audience have their chance to resist you. You feel the antagonist thews with which they struggle against you. You give out force on force, life on life, to match their efforts, until their energy of resistance is spent. You then have conquered them, and they are yours. The fruitful results of such a strife are simply incalculable. There is a law of the persistence of force in the moral world. The vast outlay of spiritual energy which preaching costs the preacher is not waste. The virtue goes out of you into your hearers. This is the law which presides here. And there is no other method possible for the communication of life, for the conversion of moral force, for the transfer of regenerating power—in short, for saving men—that can take the place of preaching. This reason for preaching is a reason that must always exist. Have no fears. Have no doubts. Preaching has its reasons in human nature as well as in the express and peculiar ordination of God. Preaching must last as long as human nature lasts. Nothing at least but the complete redemption of human nature can make preaching obsolete.

Gird your loins about with this faith in preaching. Never take the girdle off. Wear it in all presences without shame. If the press vaunts itself above the pulpit where you are present to hear, feel of your girdle. Tighten it a little; it will do your loins good. If science meet you, don't unbind your girdle of faith in preaching. Let it be some one else, not you, that shall greet an infidel scientist as a brother minister of equal

rank and office before God. You may well enough regard such a scientist as God's tool; but God's minister he is not, in any sense worth putting into words. The preacher who believes in preaching as he should, will be in no danger of dipping his colors like that. Those ministers whose Father Almighty chose the ministry for them, and who themselves confirmed His choice, will believe too solemnly in preaching to forget themselves thus in any presence. A man may, in his own private character, make any obeisance that he chooses as a homage to genius, even though that genius be hostile to Christ. But for a minister of Christ, a nominal ambassador of the Most High God, to degrade, not himself, but his office, by fraternal recognition of a scientific infidel as his official peer in rank—this could happen to a man only at a moment when he was not brave enough to believe as he should in preaching.

#### AN OLD-TIME NEGRO PREACHER.

By JAMES M. LUDLOW, D.D.

SOME years ago I spent a Sabbath in a town at the extreme South, and in the afternoon wandered into a Methodist meeting-house. The tumble-down building was packed and bursting out with sable humanity—as were the garments of many of the congregation.

Two clergymen occupied the pulpit platform. One of them had what, by contrast with that of his companion, might be called an intelligent countenance: at least, his forehead was not entirely thrown into the background by his protruding lips. A knob, if not a dome, of thought rose amid a group of facial protuberances.

After the choir had rendered an anthem, with voices whose native richness more than compensated the lack of artistic training, and which drew from some tow-headed cherubs peering over the gallery-front the selahs of "Golly!" and "Glory!" the reverend gentleman announced: "Friends, I ain't gwine ter waste my strength preachin' ter yer dis artnoon. Yer knows I done preached a mighty sarmon dis mornin', packed

down an' runnin' ober wid de Gospel—more truf dan yer'll live up ter till kingdom come. Besides, I'se gwine ter preach ter night, de good Lor' bein' willin', anoder sarmon, what I want yer all to yar. I'se gwine for ter leab dis flock. Bin wid yer dese two year, and Confrince says ter me, 'Brudder Bolles, yer must move on, an' gib udder folks de benefit of de light oyer can'lestick. Dis ebenin' yer'll yar a great sarmon, 'cause I'se got great t'ings to rehearse ob all de Lor's bin doin' for yer dese two year. So, not ter waste my strength, I'se jus' asked de Lor' ter let Brudder Yerkes blow de Gospel horn. Now, Brudder Yerkes, yer jus' stan' up an' tell de people jus' what's in yer heart."

The alert attention of the people evinced that "Brudder Yerkes" was a favorite with this congregation, though the poverty of his apparel suggested that he was not a favorite with his own. His coat, like Elisha's, had evidently once belonged to another, and a greater, man. It would not have been difficult for him to obey the injunction given to Moses, "Take off thy shoes from off thy feet," for only by careful shuffling could he keep himself in them. A mop of hair and beard left too little of his face visible to warrant a description.

As he took his stand beside the desk he began a teetering motion, swayed, perhaps, by his feelings, as a balanced rock might have been by an earthquake. This was followed by a rapid guttural breathing, not unlike that I have heard among the Dervishes. He seemed to be firing up sufficient physical excitement to start the machinery of his mind. The audience also caught the magnetism before he uttered a word; some voices encouraging him with cries, "Go on, Brudder!" "Bress de Lor'!" He suddenly broke into rapid and rhapsodic speech, pumping up wind and sermon together, with both arms working violently from the shoulders. The words poured as through a mill-race. Sentences without substantives followed sentences without predicates. Metaphors were mixed like the limbs of different trees whirled by a hurricane.

The audience was soon swept along with the enthusiasm of the speaker, and showed every changing emotion on their faces, as well as by their exclamations.

At first the effect seemed to be due entirely to animal magnetism; but close attention discovered an unconscious logic, a practical arrangement of ideas, and a natural sequence of feeling throughout the discourse, which no lack of grammar could vitiate. In the morning I had attended service in the most respectable Presbyterian church in the place, and had heard a distinguished divine from the North; but I must confess that an analysis of the two sermons showed that "Brudder Yerkes" had the advantage of Dr. —, in all that goes to make effective preaching. The colored man's sermon was superior in outline, in aptness of Scripture illustration and in massing of motives, as it was in unction of delivery.

The run of the sermon may be gathered from the following scraps which have lingered in my memory.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock."

"Oh, chillern, *whar* am de door? Speks yer t'ink it am de door ob hebbin. Oh, dem gates ob pearl into de golden city! Oh, de door inter de Fader's house! Oh, let de angels swing 'em wide open on ter de hinges ob redeemin' lub! But, chillern, dat's not de door dat yer and I is a watchin' yet.

"Speks yer t'ink it am de door ob de Church. Wide door, shua nuff! big as de door ob de Ark ob de Cubbinant; an' inter it go all de walkin' an' de creepin' tings, great an' small, rich an' poor, flyin' saint an' a-crawlin' sinner. But dat's not de door we's a watchin' dis arternoon.

"No, chillern; de door is de door in ter de heart.

"But *who* am a stan'in' at de door? 'Taint no tramp come ter de shanty, like de debbil, a-stan'in' roun' to eat up suthin' what he may devour. 'Taint no thief a-hangin' 'bout waitin' ter snatch some soul wid de claws ob de great temptation. 'Taint no 'cendiary ter set yer on fire wid de 'ternal burnin'. But

it's jus' de bestest frien' yer ebbler could hab; wiser dan de white folks, kinder dan de fader what toted yer when yer was a baby, an' more lubbin' dan de mudder what nussed yer. It's de Lor' Jesus a-stan'in' at de door; His head white as de light ob de noonshine, an' a-glisterin' wid de dew, an' all ober as lubly as de rose ob Sharon. An' he done brung de bread fur de soul, an' de wine fur de sperrit, an' de pearls ob great price fur de eberlastin' rejoicin'.

"An' *what* am He doin' at de door? Only jus' a-knockin' an' a-sayin' 'Oh, poor sinner, let me in! I se come ter supper wid yer!' Did yer nebber hear Him a-knockin'? He knocks wid de conscience when de sin am a-troublin'. He knocks wid de fear when de doctor am a-feelin' ob de pulse, an' He say, 'I am de great physicianer.' He knocks wid de hungerin' an' de thirsterin' arter righteousness, when de husks ob de worl' turn de stomach. He knocks soft and gentle when dar's a coffin in de cabin. He knocks like de thunder when yer wont hear Him in no tudder ways.

"Better let Him in! Let Him in, Susan! Let Him in, Daniel! He's a-callin' yer by yer name, fur He aint no stranger; knows everybody a heap sight better than he knows hisself. Oh, chillern, let in de Lor' Jesus; an' when de front door ob de heart swings wide open, de hull sky full ob glory will come a-rushin' in too, fur de Lor' Jesus am clothed wid de rainbow, an' walks in de shoes ob sapphire.

"Now, *why* don't yer let Him in? Oh! it's 'cause yer got de bar up—bar ob yer selfishness, bar ob yer drinkin', bar ob yer dancin', an' de bar ob yer foolin'. Oh, take de bar down, chillern! Did yer yar de screechin' dis mornin', when de fire done burnt up de cabin an' de little baby in it? O Lor', help Aunt Rachel, an' don't keep her refusin' to be comforted 'cause her baby aint no more. Madder lef de chile in de cabin an' locked de door. When de fire was a-shootin' from de winder, big men said, 'Open dis door, an' we'll save yer.' But de baby couldn't open de door. Oh,

how de tears run down yer cheeks, all fur that baby! But better cry some fur yerself, now, 'cause de flames ob de eberlastin' burnin' hasa-cotched on ter de cabin ob yer own life; an' de Lor' Jesus He's a-stan'in' at de door. But some of yer can't let Him in, any more dan dat baby. Yer's frowned away yer strength; yer's lost yer resolution; or yer's all up-sot wid de suddingness ob de hell a-bustin' out in yer. Oh! chillern, open de door dis yer bressed minit, before it am eberlastin'ly too late," etc.

The swaying motion was kept up for a few moments after the preacher had ceased speaking, when he suddenly dropped into the chair from utter exhaustion.

"An' now," said the pastor, "when de choir hab stopped cryin', dey will sing a hymn, an' we'll put all de penies we's got inter de box, and de white folks will put in de silber, for de relief ob Aunt Rachel."

#### LIGHT ON IMPORTANT TEXTS.

No. XXX.

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

*For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels.*

—1 Cor. xi: 10.

THE Revised Version reads thus: "For this cause ought the woman to have a sign of authority on her head, because of the angels."

This is one of the most obscure passages of Scripture, and occurring, not in prophecy or poetry, but in plain prose instruction to a Church. The obscurity gathers about the two words, "power" and "angels."

How does a woman have power on her head? And why should she have power anywhere, because made for the man? The argument seems to be a *non sequitur*. If the "power" should be "a sign of authority," we still ask the questions.

Then, who are the "angels," and why are they specially mentioned?

The apostle is telling the Corinthian Christians, who had become very lax in their conduct, inclining toward sensu-

ality in their religious meetings, that their women should behave modestly, and not uncover their heads in the places of meeting. The rest of the passage here, from verse 3 to verse 16 inclusive, refers to this one thing—the covered head of the woman. Now the 10th verse must not be an exception. The whole current of the other verses shows that this word translated "power" must refer to the head-covering. The Greek word is *ἐξουσία*, and undoubtedly means "authority." But may it not mean something else? Do not words, in every language, lose their etymological meaning in special applications? When we find that "rats" and "waterfalls" are ladies' head adornments, may not the Greek word, "authority," mean some head dress, and have no relation here to the idea of authority? Now, I have lately found a passage that helps this hypothesis. It is Lucian's Encomium on Demosthenes (Sect. 12). It reads, *παρὸν δ' αὐρῶ κατ' ἐξουσίαν κομᾶν*. It is in the description of Demosthenes as resisting the temptations in Athens to become effeminate and luxurious. The words mean, "and it being easy for him to wear long hair Exusia-wise." Surely, "authority" has no place here. The word must refer to a head-dress. The "dudes" of that day wore their hair long, and gathered in a fillet like the hair of the girls. The *Exusia*, or fillet, was the proper, modest covering of the woman's head, but a disgrace to a man.

The other obscure word in this passage—"angels"—we will consider in our next number.

#### EXTRACTS FROM THE MIDRASH RAB-BOTH: ILLUSTRATING THE SCRIPTURES.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL BY REV. B. PICK, PH.D.

GEN. i: 1.—Why was the world created, *i. e.*, why does the history of creation commence, with the letter *beth*? \* To teach thee that there are two worlds—this world and the world to come.

\* The reference is to the first word in the Hebrew Bible, *bereshith*, which begins with a *beth*.

Another reason for the letter beth is, because the word *beracha* (*i. e.*, blessing) commences with it. Why not with the letter aleph (א)? Because the word *arira* (אִירָרָה *i. e.*, curse) commences with it. Another reason for the letter beth is, because it has two strokes, one above and one below (ב), and if it be asked, who has created thee, it points with the one stroke towards heaven and says, He that is above has created me; and if it be asked: What is His name? it points with the other stroke towards the earth, and says: Eternal is His name. According to Rabbi Eleazar, the son of Hanina, the letter *aleph* complained throughout twenty-six generations before the throne of grace, and said: Lord of the Universe! I am the first letter, and yet the world has not been created with me. To which, God replied: The world and all that is therein was only created in the merit of the law, as it is said (Prov. iii: 19): "The Lord by wisdom, hath founded the earth"; but to-morrow (*i. e.*, in future), I will give the Law on Sinai, and it will begin with thee, as it is said: "I am (אֲנִי) the Lord thy God." (Exod. xx: 2).—fol. 2, col. 2.

Verse 3. According to Rabbi Abuhur, God already saw at the beginning of creation the works of the righteous and of the wicked. This it is what is said (Ps. i: 6): "For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous," etc. "And the earth was without form, and void," refers to the works of the wicked; and "Let there be light" to the works of the righteous. But I do not know whether the Creator is pleased with the works of these or those; hence it is said: "And God saw the light, that it was good"—*i. e.*, which means that He is pleased with the works of the righteous, but not with those of the wicked. According to Rabbi Hiya the Great, God beheld already, at the beginning of creation, His sanctuary built, destroyed, and rebuilt. "In the beginning God created"; this refers to the *built*, as it is said (Isa. li: 16): "That I may plant the heavens and lay the foundations of the earth." "And the earth was without

form, and void" refers to the destroyed, as it is said (Jer. iv: 23): "I beheld the earth, and lo! it was without form, and void." "And God said, Let there be light" refers to the rebuilt, as it is said (Isa. lx: 2): "For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth," etc.—fol. 3, col. 4.†

Rabbi Simon said: The word "light" is found five times, corresponding to the five books of the Law. "And God said, Let there be light," refers to the Book of *Genesis*, because in it God is engaged with the creation. "And there was light" refers to *Exodus*, because in it is narrated how the Israelites came from darkness to light. "And God saw the light, that it was good" refers to *Leviticus*, because it is full of halachoth (*i. e.*, regulations). "And God divided the light from the darkness" refers to *Numbers*, because it divides between those who came from Egypt and those who went into the land (of Canaan). "And God called the light day" refers to *Deuteronomy*, which is also full of halachoth.—fol. 4, col. 1.

[The law of God was the centre of Israel's spiritual life. After the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem its study became a matter of scientific treatment. It had to be adapted to the altered circumstances of life, and supplemented to meet the changes in individual relations. This study of God's law and its results—*i. e.*, its interpretation, explanation and application—was termed *Midrash*. It was further subdivided into the *Halachic*, or exegetical, embracing the doctrinal and practical, and the *Hagadic*, including all other results, such as historical, legendary, speculative, etc. The writing down of the *Midrash* began in the second century, and was concluded in the eleventh century of our era. The *Midrash Rabbah* was a continued commentary upon the Pentateuch and the Five Megilloth (*i. e.*, Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Ruth, Esther and Lamentations). See Schaff Herzog Encyclopaedia, Vol. II., p. 1,504 (American edition).—Ed.]

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"I love a serious preacher, who speaks for my sake and not for his own, who seeks my salvation and not his own vain-glory. He best deserves to be heard who uses speech only to clothe his thoughts, and his thoughts to promote truth and virtue."—MASSILLON.

†The notations are according to the edition published at Warsaw, 1878.

## PREACHERS EXCHANGING VIEWS.

"If, then, you do not like him, surely you are in some manifest danger not to understand him."—*Preface to Shakespeare's Works, 1623.*

## "Would-be Authors."

MR. EDITOR: Will you allow me to dissent from your first rule for "Would-be Authors" (Sept. No.): "Do not write a book so long as you can keep from writing it. When you feel that you 'must or die,' as the apostle felt about preaching, then, perhaps it is safe to conclude that you are called to authorship." Would the history of the best literature bear out this rule? The compulsion of outer circumstances and the stirrings of ambition have given us very much of our best literature. Shakespeare wrote, not so much from the stirrings of genius seeking expression, as from the needs of his larder and, by and by, the desire to swell his coffers. The need of paying his mother's funeral expenses was the wand that stirred genius into creating *Rasselas*. And would we have Goldsmith's sweet speech but that he was compelled to writing from without, rather than stirred to it from within? Stoddard confesses to write, not from inspiration, but by deliberately setting himself to the task. Is it not true that human nature needs more of encouragement than discouragement? If there be no spur to the sides of our intent, effort lags. If even genius be not brought to believe in its possibilities, do its wings ever spread? Genius is oftener humble than not. It underestimates itself and needs some large encouragement to bring it to itself. Burdett owes his achievements to the urgings and encouragement of his wife.

What is true in a less sphere is true in a greater. With some, I know, who have not been altogether unsuccessful in thinking and expressing thought, there has been no inward compulsion, but simply the desire or force of some demand or duty that set the hand to searching for a subject and then bodying it forth. Left to inspiration, there would have been neither thought nor its speech-embodiment. I believe this true mainly of all thought and thought

creations. So that your advice, rigidly followed, would tend to silence and obscure the "mute inglorious Miltons." It is these that need most encouragement. They are humble. Those for whom your advice is framed are unreached by it, for little ability, like little streams, are noisy in their confidence. Is it, then, not better to hold out encouragement to authorship, rather than discouragement, letting all the difficulties and chances of failure be fully understood, and the impossibility of making it pay, support the painful humiliation of failure, even when publishers will publish? Is it not best to say to all contemplating authorship, Write? In the effort there is a discipline and experience not wasted even in failure. To the furnace this would indeed bring tons; but the pure iron of a few immortals smelted from it will return abundant profit. S.

## Pulpit Scripture Reading.

I have read the admirable paper by John Montieth on this subject in *THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY* for October. It discusses one of the most important points of pulpit power—the reading of the Scriptures. We wish the writer had told us more definitely how to obtain the excellence in this art which he so well describes.

Permit me to call attention to a helper in this art, one who has been very successful. I refer to Prof. Charles W. Emerson, of Boston. He is at the head of a school of oratory there, and gives special attention to Bible reading, using the Bible itself as a text-book. His method is first to analyze each sentence as to its meaning. This he claims to be of prime importance in all correct reading. After this he attends to quality of voice, expression, emphasis, inflection, and so on. His own reading is easy, natural, impressive; holds and moves the hearers. Once, having read the 14th chap. of John, he uttered the word, "Arise,"

in the last clause, with such effect that the whole audience arose to its feet.

His method, too, gives the truth its rightful hold and power on the reader himself. As an example: a lady once came to him for lessons in the art of reading. He proposed the Gospel by John as the text-book. The lady replied that she was an infidel. The professor said that made no difference, as he should only teach her how to read; and so she consented. And, as a result, her infidelity was soon all gone, and she bought two Bibles, one for daily use and the other for the parlor table.

E. S. McMICHAEL.

Springfield, Ill.

### Sympathy More Needful than Money.

*By whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small.*

—Amos vii: 2.

This was the prophet's cry at a time of Israel's low estate before the advent of Christ. When He began His ministry, He said to the disciples: "The harvest is great and the laborers are few; pray ye the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." The wail of Amos and the burden of Jesus' injunction are as pertinent to-day as in any past age of Zion. All over our land, and even in our chief cities, there are feeble, struggling churches, crying in tones of deep anxiety, "By whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small." The cry of our Home Mission Societies and Boards is for more men and money. But there are multitudes of good ministers in all the denominations now without fields of labor; and this idleness deters others from entering the ministry. What we want most of all in the pulpit, are self-denying ministers, with the spirit of Christ and the zeal of Paul—willing to go anywhere, into any field, and live on small salaries; do and suffer all things for the sake of the Gospel. What our now feeble churches need most of all, is *genuine Christian sympathy* on the part of the old and strong churches. This is now sadly wanting. Feeble bands, struggling enterprises, are left to languish and often to die, and no words

of cheer are spoken to them; the sympathy and God-speed of the brotherhood of churches are not extended. We know whereof we affirm.

Ex-PASTOR.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

### "Did the Son of God Suffer?"

As to the God in Christ suffering, that seems to me a good point made in the October number: that no suffering God on the cross, no atonement by the cross. Is the evidence of a suffering God not found in the nature of God? God is love. Can we know anything about God's love, save as we read it through the broken fragments of ours? And is it possible for love to love the unfortunate and suffering without itself taking on that suffering by sympathy? Does not God in this sense suffer, and will He not suffer until redemption has completed its work? Shall we frame our God's character to us by the hard, unsympathetic lines of logic, built often upon supposed premises, or shall we take the most natural meaning of the large and near language of Scripture, and have God body for us His own character to our simplest and most direct understanding of His word? I believe in a suffering God; not in incarnation only, but through love's sympathy always. And such suffering is consonant with the highest joy: just as Jesus, while the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, gave to the disciples His joy in benediction to complete their own joy with fullness while they were to face the greatest of sufferings (John xv: 11) thereby proving that joy brooded His heart even in the night of suffering and grief, and may also brood ours.

J. S.

### A Missionary Leper.

I HAVE learned a very practical lesson from what Rev. Mr. Mackenzie, of the English Presbyterian Mission, tells of a leper in the missionary hospital at Swatow, China, who was converted to Christianity and baptized. He soon after returned to his home, still a leper, but with a heart glowing with love to Christ, and a strong desire



to preach the Gospel. His village had been distinguished for the piratical character of its inhabitants, and no missionary had ever visited it. Recently the leper has been heard from; and his labors have been blessed in the conversion of twenty or thirty men and women to Christ. The poor leper, now almost dead, still continues to "tell the story." Two native assistants have been sent to his aid.

How important it is that we, in our home missionary work, get hold of drunkards, thieves and outcasts, and secure their consecration to God, and then send them forth as missionaries to their kind! They know how to find the hearts of these people, and are not compelled to draw their bow at a venture, as are most clergymen in speaking to these "fallen ones." J. T. L.

#### A Home-Made Commentary.

No one man can write such a book. I have no complete commentary in my library. I try to get a book here and there by specialists.

I have "Treasury of David" by Spurgeon; "The Practical Philosopher" by Dr. Thomas; "Whedon on New Testament;" and, among the best, I find THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY. I here get Dr. Hall, Dr. Parker, Beecher, Crafts, Pentecost, Schaff, and a host of other living thinkers. I take my Bagster's Bible, with large marginal notes, and as soon as I get a MONTHLY I go through it, and at the margin of each passage I put the place in HOM. MONTHLY, where it is explained, thus at Luke xi: 2. I put on the margin "H. M. Nov. '84, p. 802," which means "HOMILETIC MONTHLY, Nov., 1884, page 802." If I ever think of getting up a sermon on this text and turn to my Bible, I find what Dr. Storrs said on it in that number; and thus I bring the whole of the H. M. to bear on my Bible study. T. W. JACKSON.

West Flambora, Ontario.

#### A Question to Dr. Hammond.

In the November number of THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY, Dr. W. A. Hammond says: "I am not opposed to

Christianity; I am in favor of sustaining the Church." He makes other admissions which are in consonance with these. In our congregations there are many men who accord with Dr. Hammond in views and feelings in relation to Christianity and the Church, who are not confessedly religious and members of the church. I have often wished to see their *real* reasons candidly expressed why they do not openly confess Christianity and identify themselves with the Church and Christian work. Will Dr. Hammond, or some representative man of his class, answer as above indicated? Also, how does he, or men of his way of thinking, regard inquiries on the subject of *personal piety* made to them by ministers? W. B. M.

#### Going Out of Church.

"P. C. A." (HOM. MONTHLY, Aug., p. 665) is annoyed by people leaving the church "during the sermon." I have a remedy to suggest. I was annoyed exceedingly by the same bad habit. I set myself to break it up, and this was my method: The instant a person rose to leave (unless I believed he had a good reason), I would stop preaching, breaking off sometimes in the middle of a sentence, and wait until the offender was outside of the door, thus giving him the whole attention of the audience, and at the same time serving silent notice on the rest that such conduct was counted a disturbance and an offence. I was also annoyed by whisperers, and used the same method with them, looking straight at the offenders during the pause, but saying nothing. The plan worked well. W. E. T.

#### "What shall I Do?"

I am pastor of a church in a large city. The people of my congregation are of the average character of a city church, neither better nor worse. But most of them have fallen into the bad habit of being late at the church services. I have appealed to them again and again, in kindness and with what authority I possess. I have endeavored to secure the co-operation of my official

board, but all in vain; they persist in coming late. What shall I do? Will some of your readers, who have successfully met this difficulty, give me the benefit of their experience?

Z. Y. X.

#### How Often to Preach Missionary Sermons.

REV. JOHN W. ETTER, B.D., in a new work on Homiletics, entitled "The Preacher and his Sermon," says :

"A missionary sermon must be preached as often as a congregation becomes lax in its zeal and contributions for missions. The pulpit must develop a missionary spirit in the Church, and through it 'Christians be kept in an habitual and alarming sense of the facts of the wretched, terrible state of the heathen, and of our ample ability and bounden and responsible duty to send them the Gospel.'" W.

#### SERMONIC CRITICISM.

"When the thread of the Gospel is too fine spun it will not clothe a naked soul."—CHALMERS.

"Stillest streams oft water greenest meadows; and the bird that flutters least, is longest on the wing."

#### Miracles and Christianity.

THERE is, beyond question, a good deal of blundering in the pulpit on the subject of miracles. And it arises largely from a misconception of the real nature of miracles. It seems fitting, therefore, under Sermonic Criticism, that we throw out a few hints that may possibly contribute to a better understanding of the matter, and consequently a truer and more effective presentation of it on the part of ministers. Notwithstanding so much has been said and written on the subject, we have not yet attained to a clear conception and a satisfactory definition of what constitutes a miracle. Hume's famous argument against the possibility of miracles was based on a false, unscientific definition of what a miracle is; and, on the contrary, the views expressed by the advocates of miracles are often open to criticism. They are wanting in a clear conception of the law of miracles—the relation of the natural to the supernatural—the basis in nature and in providence of God's miraculous interpositions. Hence, much that has been written and preached in favor of miracles is really prejudicial to the fact and the true theory of miracles as they are presented in Scripture. If we can get down to the true Scripture basis, we shall relieve the subject of much unnecessary difficulty and prejudice. Dr. Dollinger gives an excellent hint in a recent address. While his words had im-

mediate reference to Evolution, they apply equally to miracles:

"Christianity was the advent of a new moral power, and Christ was a miracle. History is at a loss to explain His power, His character, His career, and His death. We know that many truth-loving men say that any miraculous interference with the course of nature is inconceivable, nay, impossible. This merely means that a miracle does not happen so far as we know. What we see are sequences of natural laws. An interruption of those laws cannot be thought of. Note, however, *how much of nature and of natural law there is which we do not know.* This is negation; but we have seen enough of the power of negation to teach us modesty. Granted once that it was a personal God who produced nature; is it supposed that He did so ordain things to be beyond His power? Did He, by the act of creation, give up His power and become a mere slave amid the phenomena He produced? The momentous question meets us at the outset, Is there a God? It cannot be that nature, which requires mind to interpret and perceive its beauties, did not require mind to produce it. If mind alone can perceive the beauty and order of earth and the heavens, could it be less than mind which ordained and established them?"

#### "THE NATURAL IN THE SUPERNATURAL."

Dr. Parkhurst gives us some very suggestive thoughts on this point in THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY (July). They are worthy of profound consideration:

"The Cana miracle demonstrates, not God's indifference to law, but His profound regard for law. So when the hungry multitudes were out by the side of Gennesaret, and the disciples had intimated that they had only a little bread with them, Jesus said, 'How many loaves have ye?' 'And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes.' 'And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and GAVE THANKS.' He developed bread and fish

from bread and fish. He leaned on nature in doing what was above nature. Bread came only from bread, as in our story from Kings, oil came only from oil. His miracle was a reminiscence of nature, and so honored nature. He worked in the air, but stood on the ground. He tethered His miracle to a natural datum, and let even His miraculous energy flow in a channel that was calculated from His every-day habit. So, when the Lord would relieve His disciples, who had been all the night casting the net without taking anything, and drew near to shore in the early chilly morning, tired, hungry, and discouraged, He gave them a simple direction as to how they could best secure a good catch for themselves. They followed His counsel, and drew in a hundred and fifty-three at one haul. There was a miracle there, undoubtedly. The story intends to teach that; but the Lord took care to keep as close to nature as possible in performing it. His supernatural act was rooted down into natural methods. He stood by the net: He honored the fishing-tackle.

"This incident reminds us of another that is like it, when Christ wanted a few cents to pay His own tax and that of Peter. Instead of creating the suitable coin by an absolute act, Christ told Peter where the coin could be found—in the mouth of the first fish that he would pull in after dropping his hook in Gennesaret. Has it occurred to you why the Lord told Peter to go and fish for the money, instead of bidding him look for it on land, or dig for it? Was it not just for this reason, that that method of obtaining it lay in Peter's line? I suppose there was the same difference in the way in which people threw the hook then that there is now. Peter was a fisherman by birth and by profession. All the way along, then, the Lord kept close to the fitnesses of things. There is with Him no playing fast and loose with fact and with nature. Even in the instant of a miracle He manages to enlorge methods that are ordinary. He showed His approval of the fisherman's art, and quietly applauded skill in that art. While with one hand He performed a miracle, with the other He steadied Himself by keeping hold of the chain of ordinary sequence. So once, when He gave sight to the blind, He first in a way anointed the blind man's eyes. He wished it to be understood that there was a miracle, and yet He wanted to keep in, if I may use the expression—He wanted to keep in, as far as the case would permit, with the ordinary modes of treatment. With Him the methods of the miraculous were determined by the methods of the non-miraculous."

#### A Forgotten Art in Preaching.

The present declamatory style of preaching is anything but an improvement on the original style. That was unmediated and conversational. fre-

quently seizing on matters then and there occurring, and drawing powerful illustrations from them. The most un-studied simplicity, and even homeliness, characterized them. They were familiar chats, as the French expressively call them, *causeries*.

At first sight such a style would appear easily attainable. But it is not, any more than a versatile and brilliant conversation. It requires a certain art of adaptation, a readiness of illustration, a variety of ideas, and certain expressive gestures. It is unquestionably the most powerful style of oratory. The speaker brings the power of his look to aid the power of his words. He is untrammelled by "the dignity of the pulpit," which Sydney Smith described as a "holy paralysis." Confident in the merit of his subject, and only aiming at expressing it in the very best way he is able, he is not restrained by the petty regulations of an arbitrary etiquette, but speaks to five-hundred persons with the same natural freedom as he would to one. This style necessitates *variety of ideas*, whereas the didactic seems principally to need great copiousness of words. One idea in an ordinary sermon will be worn threadbare by the number of ways it is treated, and fail to produce decided effect from its flatness and wearisomeness. These written essays are but far-off echoes of grander men, whose thoughts are not improved by the channel of transmission.

But these stately pulpit efforts only succeed with a class, and that not the class which clergymen specially wish to reach. The stately orthodox style is a comparative failure with the poor and laboring classes. It has helped to foster the impression that religion is wholly removed from rough, every-day working life. Could we, speaking in all reverence, imagine the Sermon on the Mount delivered like those we ordinarily hear? or Paul on Mars Hill, or Peter on the day of Pentecost, preaching in the style of our modern clergy? The Salvation Army owes much of its success to their plain, almost coarse, style of preaching.

But there is abundant precedent for it. As Paul himself says, "We use great plainness of speech," prompted by the importance of the subject. Many of the most successful preachers in the past, have used this style, which would, if cultivated, transform many a dry uninteresting sermon into a bright, profitable talk. X.

New York, Oct. 1, 1884.

#### THINGS A PREACHER SHOULD REMEMBER.

\*\*\* That true modesty is both a winning grace and an element of power; while the opposite trait is always offensive, and detracts largely from a minister's reputation and usefulness.

\*\*\* That a frank, generous, unsuspecting spirit and manner are far more likely to win confidence, beget friends, and turn aside the shafts of criticism, than a reserved, diplomatic policy. Confidence begets confidence. An open face wins its way to the heart.

\*\*\* That it is better to be sought out and sought after, than to be thrusting himself forward and seeking preferment and "louder calls." As a rule, true merit and ability will in due time find their level, and in the end will achieve their appropriate reward.

\*\*\* That humility in speech and deportment is highly pleasing to God, and is the right road to exaltation; while pride, arrogance and self-assertion will prove a canker-worm at the root of the most brilliant character, and will in the end blight hope and expectation.

\*\*\* That the sphere of his duty is not bounded by the limits of his own parish, but his sympathies and prayers and alms and efforts, to the extent of his opportunities, are under bonds in behalf of those "in the regions beyond," in behalf of the Church of the living God and the whole world of perishing sinners.

\*\*\* That what is known as "the missionary spirit" is simply allegiance to Christ, fellowship with the cross—the highest form of Christian love; and hence, the more of this spirit a pastor possesses and exemplifies in his life and ministry, the more will he be blessed in his own field of labor, and become a shining light in the world.

\*\*\* That unselfishness is not only a requisite in the ministerial office, but that a contrary principle will stultify the most eminent gifts, and make one's ministry barren of great results. Let it come to be known that a minister is seeking selfish ends; is worldly and grasping in spirit; is penurious and hard in business matters, and the sooner he quits the sacred office the better for his honor.

### HINTS AT THE MEANING OF TEXTS.

*The quiet texts often run the deepest.*

#### Revival Service.

"IN DUE SEASON."

*And let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.—Gal. vi: 9.*

THERE is a time for every work under the sun. Nothing is left to chance or uncertainty in God's kingdom. God has "appointed times," fit seasons, to favor Zion: He makes conditions, which, if met, the blessing is sure to come. It is so with individual sinners. It is so with churches, communities, nations. "In due season."

I. *A vast amount of effort is thrown away because put forth out of season.* The natural and the spiritual are not in harmony. The law of fitness is not observed. The signs of the times are not heeded. The tide must be taken at the "flood," or it will "not lead on to victory." The battle must be pushed when the enemy is seen to waver. Prayer must be unceasing, and effort redoubled, when the presence of the Spirit is felt.

When youth is sinned away, and revival seasons are lost, and old age draws nigh, prayer, effort, striving, are of little avail.

II. *Successful Christian effort depends on faithful co-operation with the Spirit and providence of God.* Patient and persevering in laying the foundations, and watchful of the movements of Providence, the moment a "shaking of the tops of the mulberry trees" is seen, prostrate the soul in the dust and call on God; rise up and build; thrust in the sickle and reap. The time of harvest is at hand. All things are ready. Work while the day lasts!

III. "In due season, if we faint not." Ponder well this condition. It expresses a great and essential truth. In this direction lies one of the greatest weaknesses of human nature. We get "weary in well doing." We "faint" on the threshold of the harvest. We do not "wrestle," as Jacob did, till the dawn of day.

We can learn from this subject how anxious we are for a revival of religion. It presents a true test.

THE SINNER'S KISS.

*Thou gavest me no kiss.*—Luke vii: 45.

So spake our Lord to Simon, one of the Pharisees, who had invited Him to his table. His host treated Him with due respect, and was evidently anxious to honor Him. But there were important omissions, according to Oriental ceremony; and Jesus takes occasion, gently yet keenly, to reprove Simon, and turn the occasion to one of deep spiritual instruction. Simon's reception was formal, decorous; but there were no marks of affection, no indications that the heart received Christ and obeyed Him. "Thou gavest me no kiss; but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet."

I. Simon represents a large class of sinners, whose lives are free from open, heinous sin, and yet they have no love to Christ; they honor Him outwardly, in ceremonies, ordinances, but refuse Him their affections. "Thou gavest me no kiss."

II. *Loving Christ* is the evidence and fruit of genuine repentance. The conduct of the woman in kissing His feet and wiping them with the hair of her head, is spoken of by Him as proof of her deep penitence and ardent love. Much had been forgiven her, and here was the evidence that she loved much.

III. Love to Christ is the spring of obedience. Notice her tender assiduity, her self-sacrificing spirit, the extreme liberality of her testimonial.

A SOLEMN QUESTION: Are you denying the Lord Jesus Christ the "kiss" of

love, the "alabaster box" of personal sacrifice?

Funeral Service.

"GREAT WAS THE FALL OF IT."

*And it fell; and great was the fall of it.*—Matt. vii: 24-29.

I. *Living here is building for eternity.* We may not mean it; we may not think of it; but so it is, and we can't help ourselves. In youth we lay the foundations; and every day and every year, till we die, we are at work on the superstructure. We may build wisely, or build foolishly; but *we build*, every soul of us. And we build for ETERNITY! Our work will endure, at least in its consequences, when time is no more, and sun and moon and stars have gone down in darkness!

II. *Our work will be put to the test, and a test so severe and positive as to make manifest the fact whether we have been a wise or a foolish builder.* There is no escaping this inquisition. The law is inexorable. *Death will come to every man.* The rain will descend, the floods come, and the winds blow and beat upon every house; and it will fall and be swept away unless founded upon a rock,

III. *The overthrow of our eternal hopes will be an infinite and irreparable calamity.* We can never rise and build again. We have thrown away our only chance. The ruin of an immortal soul is the most terrible ruin, and will be the saddest sight, in all God's universe. "The wreck of matter and the crush of worlds" are nothing in comparison. Well might the divine Jesus exclaim, in view of such an awful catastrophe, "Great was the fall of it."

LIVING ISSUES FOR PULPIT TREATMENT.

"The contagion of crime is like that of the plague."—NAPOLEON I.

"Where there is initiation in crime from earliest years, it becomes a part of nature."—OVID.

"Laws act after crimes have been committed; prevention goes before them both."—ZIMMERMAN.

Is the Law to be Enforced?

*If thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he [the ruler or magistrate] beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.*—Rom. xiii: 4.

It is a well-known fact that there ex-

ists in the city of New York, and in other cities of our land, many organized bands of vagrant ruffians, who live in idleness, and who depend on theft, street robbery, burglary, and other crimes, for a livelihood. These "gangs," as they are commonly called, have be-

come powerful and dangerous. It is not safe for a lady to walk the streets after dark; and men are not unfrequently robbed in broad daylight. These "gangs" are made up, for the most part, of young rascals to whom a criminal is a hero, and who spend their ill-gotten gains in debauchery of the vilest type.

The existence and growth of these outlaws and desperadoes have begun to attract the serious attention of our police magistrates and thoughtful citizens. If they cause alarm now, under the reign of law, who can estimate the destructive power of such an organized element of depravity if any temporary suspension of law and order should occur in the future, as it has at times in the past? The boldness and comparative impunity of these outlaws are chiefly due to the potent influence of corrupt city politicians on the administration of justice. They often escape punishment after arrest.

One remarkable case which has been for some time in court in New York city, reveals a state of things which may well excite the disgust and alarm of all good citizens. One magistrate, at least, has discovered a mode of dealing with such cases under the "Vagrant" law by which they can be sent to the penitentiary, from which "influence" could not release them. The opinion of this magistrate, as to the causes of such bold and extensive outlawry, deserves the serious consideration of the public and of all our magistrates. As reported in the New York *Herald*, it is as follows:

"I suppose the old-time social clubs and coteries in the slums have something to do with it, but I think cheap literature is mainly responsible. This trash is in the hands of boys and girls all over the country. It sends the boys out West to kill Indians, and starts the girls after the circus companies. It organizes mere children into gangs, with grips and passwords and war-cries, and all such tomfoolery. They grow up, with these notions in their heads, indolent and unwilling to work. They lounge around. When they can they steal. For company and protection they stick together, and there's your gang for you."

Such testimony, from such a source, has much greater force than if it came

from the pulpit. We know, from a multitude of well-established facts, such as Anthony Comstock records in his "Traps for the Young," that the wide circulation of corrupt and corrupting literature, in the shape of "dime novels," story newspapers, obscene illustrated magazines, *Police Gazettes*, and other kinds of cheap, sensational reading, that this is the great educating force to-day in the "School of Crime," and if it be not suppressed or checked, there will be in another decade the most astounding development of immorality and crime that human history has recorded. It is inevitable. The agency at work among the untold millions of children and youth is one of the master devices of the devil, and, in its breadth of influence and depth of depravity and power, it is a force unparalleled in the experience of mankind. *The power of the modern press for evil* is fast assuming proportions and characteristics that may well startle every reflecting mind. And yet we have a stringent law enacted by the last Legislature of the State of New York, which

Provides that "any person who sells, gives away, or exhibits in any place within the view of any minor child 'any book, pamphlet, magazine, newspaper, or other printed paper devoted to the publication of, or principally made up of, criminal news, police reports, or accounts of criminal deeds, or pictures or stories of deeds of bloodshed, lust, or crime,' is guilty of a misdemeanor."

A wholesome law, and, if it were properly enforced, it would go far towards abating this intolerable nuisance and drying up this river of pollution and crime. *But the law is not enforced!* It is openly, boldly, defiantly, violated every day, in the chief city of the "Empire State," and we doubt not, all over the State. The publishers of this flashy, unclean, sensational, demoralizing literature are still in full blast. We know not of a single arrest and conviction under this law, from which we had a right to expect so much. Where is Mr. Comstock? What are our police force, and police magistracy, and Courts of General Sessions, doing in the matter? When and where has public opinion

given expression to its sentiments? There were commendable zeal and effort shown to get the law enacted. Shall it remain a dead letter? Shall not its power be evoked to protect the yet undefiled children and youth of our land, and to lay the hand of justice upon those who have already crowded the "School of Crime" with young thieves, highwaymen, cut-throats, and candidates for the State Prison?

#### Crime on the Increase.

*Make a chain: for the land is full of bloody crimes, and the city is full of violence.—Ezek. vii: 23.*

Notwithstanding the common belief that the moral character of the race is improving, it is unquestionable that crime during the last few years has assumed alarming proportions; and this is especially true of the grosser forms of crime. Recent statistics show that in England, out of every 10,000 deaths, seven are the result of violence; in Ireland and France the proportion was over eight to 10,000; while in the United States the ratio at present is *twenty-one*—a proportion more terrible than that of any civilized country in the world, save Italy and Spain. In the State of New Jersey during the last two years the number of criminals increased 300 per cent. The last annual report of the Prison Association of New York State says: "There has been an increase in the criminal population of the State of thirty-three per cent. over the highest estimate of 1870, while the population of the State has increased only twenty per cent."

From the same source we present a census of the criminal population of the State of New York.

"There are in	
Three State prisons.....	2,900
Six penitentiaries.....	3,500
Houses of refuge.....	1,350
Proctories.....	3,000
State reformatory.....	500
County jails.....	1,800
Work-houses.....	2,500
State asylum for insane convicts.....	140

Total..... 15,690

"It is estimated that the proportion of the

criminal population at present in custody of the State is one-fifth of the entire class, which gives us the appalling showing, in a population of 5,000,000, of 75,000 persons, directly or indirectly interested in the success of criminal practices, preying upon property, endangering human life, and contaminating society."

Some 1200 prisoners are every year discharged and turned loose upon the community. Very few of them have been reformed. They return to society ostracised, shunned, and with no means of earning an honest living; and hence, to a fearful extent, quickly return to their evil ways.

Among the *causes* of this marked increase of crime may be named as chief: The decay of moral sentiment in the community, and the consequent lowering of the standard of morality; the corruption and laxity which exist in the administration of justice; the gross failure to enforce existing laws, especially the excise laws, which are virtually a dead letter; the alarming increase in the use of strong drink (increasing at a ratio threefold greater than that of the population)—the most potent factor known as an incentive to crime; the abuse of the pardoning power; the ostracising of discharged criminals; and the unclean and vile press, which is flooding the public with vile, sensational, blood-and-thunder literature—inflaming passion, corrupting the young, and bringing on a carnival of vice and crime in every conceivable form. Epidemics of crime are sure to follow vivid descriptions of prurient vice, mawkish sentimentality, brutal conflicts, and lawless violence and bloodshed. The Grand Jury of New York city, in the Court of General Sessions, has just made a noteworthy presentment. They specially note and emphasize the fact that the license laws in the county of New York are a practical nullity, are not enforced, are openly violated, and offenders are rarely punished. And in this connection, read the following:

"Just here the Grand Jury desires to emphasize the fact that nearly all the homicides considered by them during this season were committed in drinking saloons, and nearly all the crimes of violence originated in such places, or were committed when the actors were under the

influence of strong drink. In asking for a more stringent enforcement of the excise laws, whose provisions are simple, reasonable and humane,

the Grand Jury is only aiming to dam up and control the principal sources of the crimes it is periodically called to confront."

### Prayer-Meeting Topics for 1885.\*

THIS department will be continued during 1886, and due pains will be taken to make the weekly Prayer-Meeting Service suggestive to all, and especially helpful to pastors and others who are called upon to lead this important part of church service.—Ed.

#### JANUARY.

- Jan. 7. Numbering our Days.—Ps. xc: 12.  
 " 14. Surprises at the Judgment Day.—Matt. xxv: 31-46.  
 " 21. The Philosophy of Prayer.—Heb. xi: 6.  
 " 28. The Mother's Anxious Cry: "Lord, help Me."—Matt. xv: 21-28.

#### FEBRUARY.

- Feb. 4. Refuge in God.—Zech. ix: 12.  
 " 11. The Fatal Choice.—Gen. iii: 1-6.  
 " 18. Dying Regrets.—Prov. v: 11 12.  
 " 25. Ruling the Spirit the Test of Greatness. Pro. xvi: 32.

#### MARCH.

- March 4. Keeping the Heart.—Prov. iv: 23.  
 " 11. The Warning Voice.—Mark xiii: 32, 37.  
 " 18. Watching for Souls.—Heb. xiii: 17.  
 " 25. Joy in Heaven over Repenting Sinners.—Luke xv: 10.

#### APRIL.

- April 1. Practical Test of Supreme Love to Christ.—1 John iii: 14.  
 " 8. The Walk to Emmaus.—Luke xxiv: 13-32.  
 " 15. Symmetry of Christian Character.—Ps. cxix: 6.  
 " 22. The Two Ways.—Matt. vii: 13, 14.  
 " 29. The Blessedness of Giving.—Acts xx: 35.

#### MAY.

- May 6. Compelling them to Come In.—Luke xiv: 23.  
 " 13. Religion in Business.—Rom. xii: 11.  
 " 20. Free Salvation.—Rev. xxii: 17.  
 " 27. The Final Separation.—Matt. xiii: 50-47.

#### JUNE.

- June 3. Indifference to Human Suffering.—Matt. xxv: 42, 43.  
 " 10. The Great Change.—2 Cor. v: 17.  
 " 17. The Wonder of the Angels.—1 Pet. i: 12.  
 " 24. How to Hear the Word.—Heb. iv: 2.

#### JULY.

- July 1. Christian Decision.—Josh. xiv: 15.  
 " 8. Alarm to the Careless.—Isa. xxxii: 11.  
 " 15. Faults in Prayer.—James iv: 3.  
 " 22. The Fruit of the Spirit.—Gal. v: 22, 23.  
 " 29. David's Recourse in Trouble.—1 Sam. xxx: 6.

#### AUGUST.

- Aug. 5. The Unity of Faith and of Believers.—Eph. iv: 5, 6.  
 " 12. The Almost Saved.—Acts xxvi: 28.  
 " 19. Destructiveness of Sin.—Eccl. ix: 18.  
 " 26. Afflictions Providential.—Amos iv: 6-13.

#### SEPTEMBER.

- Sept. 2. Citizenship in Heaven.—Phil. iii: 20.  
 " 9. Decay of Religion in the Family.—Mal. iv: 5, 6.  
 " 16. God's Helping Hand.—Ezra vii: 6.  
 " 23. What is it to be a Christian?—Acts xvi: 31-34.  
 " 30. Hold Fast.—1 Thess. v: 21.

#### OCTOBER.

- Oct. 7. The Sower in the Cloud.—Ezek. i: 20-26.  
 " 14. The Wonderful Book.—Ps. cxix: 129.  
 " 21. Soft Answers.—Matt. v: 4.  
 " 28. Hearers of the Gospel in a Solemn Position.—John xv: 22.

#### NOVEMBER.

- Nov. 4. Procrastination.—Luke ix: 57-62; Acts xxiv: 25.  
 " 11. God stirs up His People.—Deut. xxxii: 11, 12.  
 " 18. Profit and Loss in Serving God.—Matt. xvi: 26.  
 " 25. The Source of National Prosperity.—Jer. ix: 23, 24.

#### DECEMBER.

- Dec. 2. The Poor Man's Gospel.—Luke vii: 22.  
 " 9. Robbing God.—Mal. iii: 8.  
 " 16. Influence after Death.—Heb. xi: 4.  
 " 23. God's Christmas Gift to Man.—John iii: 16.  
 " 30. Confessions of Dying Men.—Heb. ix:

### QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

"O. T. REVISION."—When will the new revision of the Old Testament be published? A.: Dr. Schaff, the Chairman of the American Board of Revisers, informs us that it will be published next spring.

"READER."—Is it proper, in prayer, to say, "We bow us in Thy presence?" A.: It is grammatical, but rarely used by good speakers. We bow *ourselves* is a better form; but simpler and better still, is "We bow in Thy presence."

\*These "Prayer Meeting Topics for 1885," neatly printed, we shall be happy to send to clergymen for distribution among their people, at *thirty cents* per one hundred copies. No advertisements will appear on the back of the leaf as heretofore.—PUBS. OF HOM. MONTHLY.



"A CALL."—I have received a call to the pastorate of a church, but I learn that the call was not unanimous, and that several of the minority are bitterly opposed to me. The vote stood, 125 in my favor to 25 against me. Should I accept, under the circumstances, or not? I am free to say, that had the call been unanimous, I would have accepted at once. Should I permit the small minority to change my decision? A.: A rule in such cases cannot be laid down. Much would depend on the ground of opposition, and on the character and degree of influence of the minority. If the case were an *average* one, we should advise against acceptance.

"W. O. H. P."—Will you give us the best current explanation of the discrepancy between the Evangelists in the matter of the blind man—Matt. xx: 29-34; Mark x: 46-52; and Luke xviii: 35-43? A.: This discrepancy has never been satisfactorily explained. According to Matthew and Mark, this healing occurred as Jesus "went out of Jericho"; while Luke says, "as he was come nigh unto Jericho." Matthew mentions "two blind men," while Mark and Luke speak only of one by name. French remarks: "The silence of one narrator is not to be assumed as the contradiction of the statement of another; thus Mark and Luke making

especial mention of one blind man do not contradict Matthew, who mentions two." Dr. Brown observes: "Many ways of accounting for slight divergences of detail have been proposed. Perhaps if we knew all the facts we should see no difficulty; but that we have been left so far in the dark shows that the thing is of no moment any way. One thing is plain: there could have been no collusion among the authors of these gospels." It is not improbable that Bartimeus was a well-known personage, and hence was specially singled out by Mark and Luke, and referred to by name.

"FAIRS."—My people propose to hold a fair, and to have a lottery, grab-bag, etc., in connection with it. My conscience is against these things, but so set are some of my members in this matter, that they would sooner give me up than give up these objectionable things. Can you advise me as to the course I should pursue? A.: Firmly, yet prudently, express your views from the pulpit, and thereby wash your hands clean of the iniquity. If your people persist in it, remember that you cannot control their actions; and your duty will be done when you have protested against it. We do not think a difference on such a point ought to lead you to resign your pastorate.

#### THEMES AND TEXTS OF RECENT LEADING SERMONS.

1. David's Idea of Divine Worship. Based on Psalms xcv., xevi. E. P. Goodwin, D.D., Chicago.
2. The Fountain Head of Crime. "For the land is full of bloody crimes, and the city is full of violence."—Ezek. vii: 23. Heber Newton, D.D., New York.
3. Practical Working of Christian Faith. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."—Matt. vi: 33. Russell H. Conwell, D.D., Philadelphia.
4. The Give and Take of Life. "With what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again."—Matt. vii: 2. Rev. J. Brierley, B.A., Balham, England.
5. Don't Stop. "Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God."—Luke ix: 60. Justin D. Fulton, D.D., Brooklyn.
6. God Hiding and Revealing. "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee O Father, . . . that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."—Luke x: 21. Dean Vaughan, D.D., London.
7. What shall we do with our Sabbath Evenings? "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."—Mark ii: 27. A. J. Lyman, D.D., Brooklyn.
8. The Spirit of the Cradle. "And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them," etc.—Mark x: 13-16. Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, Brooklyn.
9. Some Laws of Spiritual Work. "He said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not," etc.—John iv: 32-38. John A. Broadus, D.D., Louisville, Ky.
10. Light for those who See Not. "And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see might see; and that they which see might be made blind."—John ix: 39. Rev. Charles H. Spurgeon, London.
11. The Discipline of Delay. "And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band," etc.—Acts i: 20. Joseph Parker, D.D., London.
12. Baptized for the Dead. "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead; if the dead rise not at all, why are they then baptized for the dead?"—I Cor. xv: 29. W. F. Gill, D.D., Brooklyn.

13. The Dignity of Christ. "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature," etc.—Col. i: 15-20. A. J. F. Behrends, D.D., Brooklyn.
14. A Great Battle. "Michael and his angels fought against the dragon."—Rev. xii: 7. Rev. David Swing, Chicago

### SUGGESTIVE THEMES.

1. Fairness to the Laboring Classes. ("The wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning."—Lev. xix: 13.)
2. A Neighborly Duty. ("Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him."—Lev. xix: 17.)
3. Majorities not to be Feared. ("When thou goest out to battle . . . and seest horses and people more than thou, be not afraid," etc.—Deut. xx: 1.)
4. Unclean Speech. ("I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips."—Isa. vi: 5.)
5. Self-Renunciation. ("Jesus only."—Matt. xvii: 8.)
6. The Unreason of Prejudice. ("His hand was restored whole as the others. And they were filled with madness," etc.—Luke vi: 10, 11.)
7. A Vain Ostracism. ("Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company . . . leap for joy; for behold your reward is great in heaven."—Luke vi: 22, 23.)
8. A Visit from God. ("God hath visited his people."—Luke vii: 16.)
9. A Mother's Plea. ("Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son."—Luke ix: 38.)
10. The Power of a Godly Life. ("That they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."—1 Peter ii: 12.)
11. Business and Devotion Wedded. ("Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."—Rom. xii: 11.)
12. Right Motive no Security against the Violation of Physical Law. ("For the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life," etc.—Phil. ii: 30.)

### GERMS OF ILLUSTRATION.

BY EDWARD JEWITT WHEELER, A. M.

*Out of the heart of Nature rolled  
The burdens of the Bible old.*—EMERSON.

**The Value of a Soul** may be not inaptly illustrated by the story told of Rechemuth, the wife of the consul of Cologne. The story is recited in German verse engraved on her monument. Rechemuth apparently died of the plague in A. D. 1511. Fortunately a ring of great value had been buried with her, and to recover it, the grave was reopened and the coffin lid removed. Strange to say, the supposed corpse revived, and was carried back home. Rechemuth lived to become the mother of three children. "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit," etc.—Ps. xl: 2.

**A Worldly Faith** has many times lured men to their destruction. When the great test of death comes near, how frail proves the trust placed in riches, or power, or fame! Gübner mentions that a Jew once presented himself before Duke Albrecht, of Saxony, and offered him a charm engraved with rare signs and characters, which should render him invulnerable. The duke, determined to try it, had the Jew led out in the field, with his charm round his neck; he then drew his sword, and at the first thrust ran the Jew through. "In the Lord put I my trust."—Ps. xl: 1.

**Regeneration** has, through God's wondrous grace, converted many lives filthy with all vileness—Jerry McAuley, for instance—into angels of light and ministers of grace. The Central Park of New York was once a place of most uninviting character. Marshy and malarious, unto it came thieves to divide their plunder; upon it was dumped the city's refuse—dead dogs and beasts of burden, decaying fruits and malodorous garbage. Now, through the agency of man working in co-operation with God's

great laws, it has become a second Eden, with new life for the sickly, rest for the weary, and bowers of beauty for all.

**The Church of Christ** has been assailed by many foes, but it has survived the generations of men and the wreck of nations. Said General Woodford, in a recent speech: "I stood in the Alps one morning when the mist clothed mountain and vale. As we watched, slowly it began to rise. First was unfolded to our gaze the valley, with its peaceful homes. Again we looked, and the slopes of the mountains had become visible. Slowly, higher and higher rose the mist, lifted by the breeze, till at length the cold, glittering summits were seen high above, and last of all, towering above all its rivals, grand old Mont Blanc stood before us, crowned with the snows of centuries, standing as it has stood while kingdoms waxed and waned, the sunlight of God flooding its peak with glory."

**The Hidden Life** is the secret which escapes so many who observe but the surface of things. Skilled hands have whittled a piece of wood so like a grain of wheat that practiced eyes could hardly detect the difference. But when it came to planting, there was no longer doubt; for the one had an inner life, hidden from the eye, but ready to burst the grain and rear the bearded stalk. Said Mr. J. Q. Maynard of Brooklyn, recently: "When I was a boy I saw a neighbor making a flower-garden. He spaded and hoed and raked; divided it into regular sections, smoothed the surface, rounded the corners, trimmed the edges. I went home, determined to have a garden like my neighbor's. I followed his course as nearly as I could, spaded and hoed and raked, and when I finished, it seemed to me

that my garden looked full as well as his. In the course of a few days a warm rain brought forth in his beds tiny shoots of green. I rushed home, expecting to find the same in my beds. In vain: nothing had appeared. Day after day, week after week, my garden remained barren,

while his was the pride of the village, with its rare and beautiful blooms. What caused the difference! Was my garden not made just as his? Ah! I had failed to drop the tiny seeds upon the soil, and all my labor was lost."

### HELPFUL DATA IN CURRENT LITERATURE.

By J. M. SHERWOOD, D.D.

*G. P. Putnam's Sons.* "The Unity of Nature," by the Duke of Argyll. This is a sequel to the author's former work, the "Reign of Law." The subject of Law in Christian Theology is too broad a subject to be discussed in a single treatise. A preliminary work is necessary, viz., to trace the connection between the reign of law and the ideas which are alike fundamental to all religions, and inseparable from the facts of nature. This is the object of the present discussion. Modern Doubt has called in question not only the whole subject of inquiry, but the whole faculties by which it can be pursued. Many of the problems which perplex us most are soluble in the light of the unity of nature. The work is a thoughtful and able one; and, while some of its positions are open to criticism, yet, as a whole, it cannot fail to give satisfaction to the distinguished author's friends.—"An Outline of the Future Religion of the World," by T. Lloyd Stanley. Same publishers. A shallow, pretentions and worthless octavo. We marvel that so respectable a house should put its imprint on a book of this character. It is a confused medley of conjectural criticisms of the myths and religious traditions of all sorts of people. The Bible is treated with even less respect than the myths of other religions, indicating a perverse heart as well as a confused head. Such stuff as this man gives us as the "Future Religions of the World" is both puerile and disgusting.—"The Jukes; a Study in Crime, Pauperism, Disease and Heredity." We welcome a new and enlarged edition of this very remarkable little book, with an Introduction by W. M. F. Round, Secretary of the National Prison Association of the United States. The author, Mr. Dugdale, was a remarkable man, and spent years in tracing the history of the Juke family, the extraordinary results of which are given in this volume. It is indeed a "study," and one of an appalling character, and yet highly instructive.

*Robert Carter & Brothers.* "An Explanation of the Epistle to the Hebrews," by Samuel T. Lowrie, D.D. This goodly octavo has cost the author years of study and careful preparation. As a detailed exposition of chapter and verse of this remarkable Epistle, it is a valuable commentary, and will reward the student's examination. But it is quite evident that the author lacks the critical spirit, and fails to grasp the Epistle as a whole, and to develop its grand themes, and trace its relations to other portions of the New Testament. It is not the work of an original, independent, discriminating, broad-cultured,

even balanced mind, and hence it will never take a high rank in our religious literature. Undertaking the work of exposition without an Introduction, or a word as to the authorship of the Epistle (which he attributes to Paul), or its date, or peculiarities, is proof that he has no just conception of what is imperatively required of one who assumes the task which he has executed—"A Red Wall Flower," by the author of "The Wide, Wide World," "The Shores of Peace," by Anna B. Warner. Same publishers. These sisters continue to instruct and delight their ever-widening circle of readers. The "Red Wall Flower" is truly a charming story, and, we are assured, "in its whole chain of facts is a true story." Through its 650 pages the interest of the story is kept up. There is great variety of incident and character, so that there is no dullness or weariness experienced in reading the book. The moral aim and the wholesome lesson are conspicuous throughout, as in all the productions of this popular voluminous author. The work by the sister is a dainty little volume, as beautiful within as without, and full of timely and instructive Christian thought.

*A. C. Armstrong & Son.* "Anecdotes Illustrative of New Testament Texts." This forms one of the series of "The Clerical Library," an English work reissued in this country by the above publishers. The series is specially intended, as the title indicates, to furnish preachers with stimulus and suggestion in the various departments of their work. The present volume is somewhat unique in form and structure. We have suggestive themes for pulpit treatment, with an appropriate text, a very brief exposition, and a striking fact, incident, or historical illustration to each. Many of these are excellent; some are fanciful, others very commonplace or familiar; but, as a whole, the preacher may derive many a useful hint or suggestion from its pages.

*Richards Bentley & Son, London.* "Letters from Hell." With a Preface by George MacDonald, LL.D. This book appeared in Denmark eighteen years ago, and was speedily translated into English, but has long been out of print. A German edition recently appeared and awakened intense interest in Germany. The present English version is made from the German, and the translator has faithfully followed the author's powerful conception, but pruning certain portions, and omitting or recasting others, and adapting it to the English mind. The title of the book is repelling. And yet it is a book of intense interest.

It may be classed with Miss Phelps' "Gates Ajar" and "Beyond the Gates," as an imaginative description of the future life. Like those, it is intensely realistic. The author is evidently familiar with the Bible, and the scenes he portrays and the characters he describes in the world of lost spirits are substantially in the line of Scripture intimations. No one can read the work without a shudder. And yet it does not aim at the "horrible," but simply to trace the workings and effects of retributive law, in the light of a guilty conscience and a lost eternity, in the world of despair.

*Pink & Wagnalls.* "Memoirs of David Brainerd." We are quite sure the religious public on both sides of the Atlantic will welcome a new and complete edition of this eminent Christian missionary. It has long been out of print, except in fragmentary parts, or in the ten volume edition of Jonathan Edwards' Works. The basis of this beautiful edition is that of Dr. Sereno E. Dwight's (1822), which was much fuller than the original work written by President Edwards. It has been carefully edited by Rev. J. M. Sherwood, revised, portions of it rewritten, with Notes, and an Introduction on the Life and Character of Brainerd. And in addition to the work of the Editor, and the liberality of the Publishers, a stirring Essay on "God's Hand in Missions," by Arthur T. Pierson, D.D., is given. These new papers, covering 66 pages, will be found to add greatly to the interest of this standard edition of one of the most remarkable biographies ever given to the world. The name of David Brainerd will live in history, and in the heart of the Church while the world stands. He has well been called "the missionary saint of New England." The story of his life has been a potent force in the modern missionary era. Reading the life of Brainerd decided Henry Martyn to devote himself to the missionary work. Carey received a baptism from the same source. Thousands of Christians in America and Europe, and all over the missionary world, have had their piety deepened, their faith quickened, and their spirit of consecration fanned into a flame by reading the wondrous record of this man's brief life and Christian experience among the Indians of the American wilderness. We know no better manual of Christian experience, no loftier example of Christian heroism and consecration to the work and purpose of Christianity since the apostolic age.—"Pastoral Theology," by James M. Hoppin, D.D. Same publishers. We have here a companion volume to the author's work on "Homiletics," published in 1881. Prof. Hoppin does all his literary work so carefully, conscientiously and thoroughly as to have won the confidence and esteem of the Christian public in an eminent degree. His "Pastoral Theology" possesses all the characteristics of his "Homiletics," and we have no hesitation in affirming our belief that it will be found to be not only a worthy companion of it, but will take the very front rank in the kindred department to which

it is devoted. We are familiar with the many similar works which have appeared of late years covering this field, the best of which, in our judgment, is Vinet's, edited by Dr. Thomas H. Skinner. But no one of them, nor all combined, possess all the excellencies of Prof. Hoppin's royal volume. Its characteristic features may be stated in few words:

1. Its style is clear, simple, incisive, scholarly, as is true of all the Prof's writings. There is nothing involved, mystic, doubtful, hard to be understood.
2. It is comprehensive. It covers the whole field, both in its theoretic and practical aspects. Every legitimate topic is treated, and treated in its proper relation and fullness.
3. It is systematic; thoroughly so, not only in arrangement, but in its methods of treatment. It is based on a broad and true ideal of the dignity and responsibility of the ministerial office.
4. It wisely blends theory with practice, doctrine with life, the pulpit with pastoral work; the author hits the mean, and unduly exalts no one quality or service to the injury of another.
5. Accordingly we have, as a whole, without any parade of learning, or undue exhibition of scientific skill, the best results of modest, thorough Christian scholarship and study—the fullest, most philosophical and instructive work on Pastoral Theology which the ages have brought forth. It is a work that cannot fail to be highly popular and useful, and is an honor to American authorship.—"Stories in Rhyme for Holiday Time," by Edward Jewett Wheeler. Illustrated by Walter Satterlee. Same publishers. The author of this beautiful holiday book is not unknown to the readers of THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY, *St. Nicholas*, and other publications. There is decided merit in his verses, a charming delicacy and quaintness of thought that is pleasing. The dedicatory lines to his mother are touchingly beautiful and a good specimen of the author's poetic gift:

"TO MY MOTHER.

"As, when a child, I brought to thee  
Some worthless pebble, bright to see;  
Then scanned thy face with eager eyes  
To see it lighten with surprise,  
As if a precious gem I bore;  
So now these simple tales of mine  
To thy rich love I do consign—  
Not for their worth, but just to see  
The smile I know will welcome me,  
As in the merry days of yore."

The artist has done his work well, as the numerous spirited sketches testify. The publishers also have brought out the book in admirable taste.

*The Outlook* [Alfred Centre, N. Y.], contains Volumes I. and II. of this Sabbath-Reform monthly bound. Price to ministers, 75 cents. It is published by the Seventh-day Baptists. While we have no sympathy with its peculiar views on the Sabbath-day question, yet there is a large amount of highly useful reading-matter in the volume in relation to Sabbath observance, temperance, and all the great reformatory movements and religious questions of the day.

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