

# THE HOMILETIC REVIEW.

VOL. XIII.—APRIL, 1887.—No. 4.

## REVIEW SECTION.

### I.—ON THE USE OF THE MANUSCRIPT IN THE PULPIT.

By WM. M. TAYLOR, D.D., LL.D., NEW YORK.

DIFFERENT methods of preaching have been practiced in the Christian Church, and each has been illustrated by men who have become famous for pulpit power.

The first is that which is commonly called the Extemporaneous, although it does not answer exactly to that designation, for the utterances of those who follow it efficiently are not unpremeditated, but the result of earnest and often prolonged study. The subject is brooded over until it becomes germinant. Then a mode of treatment is sketched out, a definite line of argument or order of thought is fixed upon; pertinent illustrations suggest themselves and are noted for use at appropriate points, and so step by step the path is "blazed" on and up to the conclusion, which as the most telling part of the discourse generally receives the greatest amount of attention. Then the preacher goes to the pulpit and leaves himself to the suggestion of the moment, quickened and focussed by the concentrating influence of the place, and by the grace of the Holy Spirit, for the language which he shall employ. This was the method followed by the great preachers of the Reformation epoch, and by some of the most eminent of modern pulpit orators. Luther, Latimer, and Knox among the former; Robert Hall, Robertson, of Brighton, Spurgeon, and McLaren among the latter, are specimens of its excellence and power. In the case of Robert Hall, however, the preparation often extended to the fixing of the very words upon the memory; while in that of Robertson the writing out of his discourses after they had been delivered, and in that of Spurgeon the weekly publication of his sermons, and the consequent necessity for the revision and correction of the stenographer's reports, furnished much of the discipline that would have been given by writing beforehand, with this drawback, that the faults, if there were any, were not

discovered until after they had been committed; though, of course, the caution given by their discovery would be amply available for the future.

The second method is that which is known as the Memoriter, and consists in the careful preparation of a written discourse, the thorough committing of it to memory and the recitation of it by the preacher in the face of the congregation. This was the plan adopted by some of the great French preachers—notably by Bourdaloue, of whose toilsome work in the memorizing of his sermons Bungener has given such a vivid portraiture in his most interesting homiletic story entitled “The Preacher and the King.” It seems to have been adopted also by Bishop Leighton, and it was commonly practiced until within a generation or two by the ministers of the Dissenting churches in England and Scotland. It would appear that Whitefield also followed it, for one who knew him well has said, that a sermon never came to its fullest power with him until he had repeated it more than twenty times and had it thoroughly and verbally at his command.

The third method is preaching from, or, as I rather prefer to put it—for there is a difference, though it may be hard to define it in words—preaching *through* a manuscript. The sermon is thought out with care, planned with deliberation, and written with precision, and the preacher, after having made himself thoroughly familiar with his manuscript, takes it with him into the pulpit, where, fortified and supported by its presence, he gives through its assistance his message to his fellow men. This was the method adopted by most of the preachers of the Church of England in former times, and by some of the foremost men both in Scotland and New England, and though despite its more general adoption in recent days, it never became what might be called popular with the hearers, and in Scotland was vehemently objected to, yet in the hands of such men as Jonathan Edwards, Thomas Chalmers and Robert S. Candlish, it was proved to be no hindrance to the mightiest pulpit efficiency.

Now in putting in a plea for the third of these methods let it not be supposed that I undervalue the other two, or that I think it the best for everybody, because I have myself adopted it. I do not by any means affirm that the use of the manuscript is absolutely the best of the three methods, far less, that it should be followed by every preacher. My own belief is that effectiveness in the pulpit is largely independent of all methods. It is in the man, and every real man will either choose or make his own method. He will soon find out what he, personally, can do best, and he will keep himself to that, laboring most earnestly to make himself as efficient in it as possible. But he will never think of setting himself up as a rule or an example to others, and if others persist in taking him for a model the result in their case will most likely be an exaggeration of his faults, unrelieved by any of



his excellences. For my own part, I have at one time or other tried, more or less, all the three methods, and have ultimately, now for a score of years, settled on that which, on the whole, I judge to be the best for *me*; but this article is neither an attack on the methods of others, nor a vindication of my own. All that I shall do will be to indicate a few of the advantages connected with the use of the manuscript and to give some hints as to how it may be most effectively employed. But "let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind"; let each preacher follow his own method, if it be indeed, his own, and let him take for his comfort the truth which the whole history of the pulpit at once illustrates and confirms—that pulpit efficiency is not a mere matter of method. There have been great preachers in all methods, for the efficiency is in the man. It is one of the forms of the efflorescence of character, and when we keep that in mind we shall come to see that in preaching, as in living, character is the main thing, and will always force itself to the front.

Having thus, as I trust, made sure that I shall not be misunderstood or be held as advocating as binding upon all, that which I mean only to vindicate as having as good a right to be used by those who find it for them to be the most effective, as either of the other two methods has to be employed by those who find it most conducive to their usefulness. "Let not him that useth the manuscript despise him that useth it not; and let not him that useth it not judge him that useth it; for God hath received him." That is my creed on the subject, and here too is the determining element—"whether the manuscript is used or not, do all to the glory of God." A discussion carried on in this spirit and with this determination can do harm to none, and may be helpful to not a few.

Now, first, as to the advantages connected with the use of the manuscript, I name the fact, that it ensures that there shall be a manuscript to use. This, of course, is secured just as thoroughly in the memoriter method, but few now, I believe, practice that, and therefore it may fairly enough be set down here as one of the benefits connected with the system of which we are to speak. "Writing," says Bacon, "maketh an exact man," and nothing else will produce that effect, either so easily or so effectually. But it is necessary that a preacher should be exact in his statements, and therefore they ought to be written. The pen is a marvellous crystallizer of thought. What before was nebulous and vague takes definite shape when you begin to write. The effort of composition checks diffuseness, and the sight of what one has written contributes to consecutiveness, so that every sentence comes to be a distinct step forward, while at the same time the sermon acquires a distinct unity altogether different from the abrupt, jerky, disconnectedness which so often makes a discourse resemble a heap of stones promiscuously thrown together, rather than a thoroughly

planned and well-built house. Besides these things the written preparation of a sermon enables the preacher to give to each section of it its proper proportion, and saves him from running into inordinate length. Moreover, it is a guarantee that at least, some amount of thought and study, has been given to its production, and that is a matter of so much importance that I have known congregations on both sides of the Atlantic whose members were always relieved when they saw the preacher lay a manuscript before him on the open Bible. It is true, indeed, that there is such a thing as extempore writing, as well as extempore speaking. But from the very nature of the case the degree of extemporaneousness is greater in the latter than in the former, and then in the case of the writing, that which has, it may be, been too hastily dashed off on the paper over night is always subject to the calmer revision and correction of the morning, so that all crudities may be ripened, and all questionable things removed before the actual delivery. Here is a grand safeguard against rashness of speech. In the heat of unpremeditated, or rather let me say unwritten, speech, one is apt to say some things that he has not thoroughly weighed, and so to commit himself to views which, on maturer thought, he cannot maintain. But if the discourse had been written that danger would have been avoided, for then there would have been time to discover the error, and the opinions would either have been kept back altogether or would have been properly guarded and balanced. This advantage of the manuscript is so apparent that even those who are the warmest advocates of the method of free speech betake themselves to it on important occasions. Thus Mr. Blaine, who recently spoke so strongly to the Boston Congregationalists against the reading of sermons, delivered his eulogy on Mr. Garfield from a carefully prepared manuscript; and Dr. Storrs, who is peerless as an extempore preacher, and rarely has even a note before him, read his great discourse on missions at the seventy-fifth anniversary of the American Board, and his magnificent oration at the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge. Whenever, therefore, accuracy of statement is demanded (and where is it more needed than in a sermon?) a written discourse, even in the opinion of those who are themselves among the best extemporizers, is to be preferred.

Not to be forgotten, either, is the fact that the use of a manuscript in preaching is a great relief from nervousness. And here I do not refer merely to nervousness in the pulpit. There is a feeling of excitement there, which it is not always desirable to get rid of, and which, as I know from experience, even a manuscript will not remove. I refer rather to the nervousness which is connected with the anticipation of preaching, and also with the afterthought consequent upon preaching. Men are variously constituted in regard to these things, and the feelings of one preacher may be quite different from those of another, but

many will sympathize with Angell James, who on being remonstrated with for having determined to read his sermon before the London Missionary Society, replied: "I'll tell you how it is; if I preach without reading I shall be miserable for three weeks—miserable till I am in the pulpit; if I read, I shall be quite happy till I begin to preach, though I shall be miserable till I finish." My own experience of the extemporaneous method has not been large, but usually it has cost me the sleep of the night preceding the Lord's Day, while I lay trying to fix what I would say; and also that of the night following, while I lay upbraiding myself for having said some things that I should not have said, and for having omitted to say many things that I determined to say, and ought to have said. For myself I could not endure such weekly misery; and therefore, at whatsoever sacrifice, I resolved to make the best of some other mode. Then when I had entered upon my present practice I found not only that I was relieved from all such nervousness, but also that I was able to concentrate myself on the devotional parts of the public service, as I had never done before, and *that* has been an inestimable benefit. If it be that the prayers of some ministers are bald and barren, may not the reason be that their minds are divided between thoughts on the petitions which they are offering and on the sermon which they are to preach, and would not that be cured if they knew that they had with them a carefully prepared discourse, about which now they need have no anxiety? That I know has been the experience of not a few with whom I have conversed upon the subject.

But all this time I have been speaking of the use of the manuscript, not of the abuse of it; for it may be abused, and it always will be abused if the mere having of it before one is relied on, and if no means are taken by the preacher to train himself to effectiveness in giving his message from it. He must not be so chained to it that he cannot look upon his audience. He must not bury his face in it, and stumble, and blunder, and flounder through it, tossing one torn leaf aside after another in dreary search for the next page until he and all his hearers are alike disgusted. But he must take all proper measures to secure that he may read with fluency and force. He must have a manuscript that will open easily, and that he can read consecutively. The leaves must not be "sybiline" in their looseness. The discourse must not be written upon "scraps." Let him take paper of the quarto size, in its ordinary packages of twelve sheets, and use as many sheets as he finds needful, writing on both sides, and let him stitch them together like a common copy-book after he has finished. Such a manuscript will open more thoroughly than any other, while the leaves will turn more easily than those, so popular among many, that are strung together through eye-holes "punched" for the purpose. In following this plan there may be a little inconvenience, caused by having to leave

the third and fourth pages of each sheet blank until the middle of the discourse is reached, and then having to go back and take each up in reverse order until the whole are covered, but the resultant comfort is worth the additional trouble. Occasionally, too, some paper will be wasted through changes that will inevitably suggest themselves, and compel themselves to be made, and it will be harder to make these under such a system than when one is writing merely on half sheets. But each must do here also what he can do best.

Then the writing must be large and legible. It is here most preachers go wrong. They have been accustomed, in taking notes during their seminary and college courses, to write a minute hand, and they keep that up in the pastorate. When I look at my early manuscripts now it seems almost as if I required a powerful magnifying glass to read them, for they have 46 lines on an octavo page, and an average of 14 words in a line. Very evidently such a manuscript would be fatal to effective reading. A good large round hand and good jet black ink (if we only knew where to get it), are here indispensable. Deeper distinctiveness too is given by underscoring. I found out that by accident, and now my manuscript is almost entirely marked in that way, not for emphasis, but that I may see the words more clearly. Let any one write for himself on paper similarly ruled, the same sentences in as nearly as possible the same hand, let him underscore every line in the one, and leave the other just as he wrote it, then let him compare the two, and I think he will be surprised at the difference between them in the matter of distinctness. Then let the preacher thoroughly familiarize himself with his manuscript, going over it with earnest attention, and seeking to fill and fire his heart with his theme, and after all that, I venture to say that he will find his paper a help to him and not a hindrance in the preaching of the word. I spend now in the underscoring of my manuscript and in its earnest study almost as much time as I used to require long ago for the committing of a sermon to memory, and every time I preach a discourse which I have formerly delivered, I devote an equal time—often a longer time—to the filling of my soul with its spirit, purpose and illustrations.

Finally, let the preacher look well to the light in the pulpit and its proper arrangement for his purpose. The poorer the light the shorter the chain of the man who uses a manuscript; but if his light be all it should be, if his manuscript has been properly prepared; if he has given enough of study to it to be thoroughly imbued with its contents, and above all, if he has taken hold of that Divine Strength which is ever available for all God's servants, he will be able to use a manuscript so as to have all the advantages which it gives, without any of the disadvantages that are supposed to be entailed by it.

But if a sermon is so prepared, will it not almost inevitably degenerate into an essay? and is not that the reason why so many pulpit

discourses nowadays are little better than essays? Concerning the latter question I cannot speak, but so far as the former is concerned, I should reply, there is no danger of the sermon becoming an essay provided while he is writing it the preacher will keep his audience before the eye of his imagination. To secure that, Guthrie, who preached memoriter, used to write his sermons, as it were, to his own dictation, delivering them all the time. That may be a cumbrous way of doing, but whatever device be adopted, or whether any device be adopted or not for the purpose, the sermon writer must have his audience constantly in mind, and when he has that his style will be what is called a "spoken style," and will be addressed to the ear, rather than that of an essay, which is addressed to the eye. Above all, he must have the burning heart in the pulpit, and if he have that, before he has got to the bottom of his first page nine-tenths of his audience will have lost all perception of his manuscript in their attention to the truth which he is uttering.

We do not advocate the use of the manuscript by every preacher, or for all occasions, and, indeed, for evangelistic purposes we should recommend the extemporaneous method, but we have a firm belief that the plan of which we have been writing is that in which the average minister will make the fewest failures and do the largest amount of good.

---

## II.—APPLIED CHRISTIANITY.

### HOW SHALL OUR CITIES BE EVANGELIZED?

NO. III.

BY GEORGE F. PENTECOST, D.D., BROOKLYN, N. Y.

THE problem of City Evangelization has been much discussed of late; but while there is more or less anxious thought about the matter there seems to be no practical move in that direction. It is very evident that our present methods are inadequate to the solution of the problem. The Christian Church has outgrown its old harness, and is only hampered and hindered in trying to do her larger work by the methods of one hundred years ago. The growth of cities has been so rapid, and the momentum of life so accelerated in every department that, even if we had not ourselves outgrown our methods, the demands which the times and the altered circumstances make upon us are so great, that we must readjust ourselves and our methods of work to these new conditions. The merchant of to-day could not survive, if he clung to the methods of fifty years ago. He would be as surely driven to the wall as the Church is being driven to the wall by the advancing hosts of modern city population, over whom we are not only not exercising any appreciable influence, but who, on the other hand, are seriously affecting our position as an aggressive moral and spirit-

ual power. If "eternal vigilance" was the "price of liberty" in the days of our revolutionary fathers, "incessant agitation" of this question must be the price of success in this work. If the average sleepy watchmen on the walls of Zion are content to go their Sabbath-day rounds still crying their monotonous "All's well," it should not deter others who are alive to the peril we are in, or to the responsibility resting upon us, from crying out, "Awake, awake! Put on strength, O daughter of Zion," and go forth to your God-appointed task of giving the Gospel and the witness of Jesus to the thousands of unchurched and unevangelized people within sound of our voices and within reach of our churches, who yet never hear the one nor enter into the gates of the other.

I. WHAT IS EVANGELIZATION? By evangelization we are not to understand the *conversion* of men, though evangelization looks toward their conversion. "Go and make disciples," is indeed one form of the commission; but "Go preach my Gospel to every creature," is the broad command. This is to evangelize: *to preach the Gospel of the Son of God to every creature*, and do what lies within our power to effect their conversion to God. We may not hope to see the whole city converted, but we must see to it that the whole city and the whole world is evangelized; that is, that all men have the knowledge of the grace of God brought to them. Nor must we be content to give them the privilege of *coming to us* in order that they may hear; it is our business to "*go*" to them. Sinners do not by their own intention seek after God; it is, therefore, our business to seek after them; nor are we to be content to preach to them once, but again and again, so long as they are still unsaved and we have the means of preaching the good news to them, warning, exhorting, and entreating them in the name of the Lord Jesus. No one will venture to say that in the sense of "continuing instant in season, out of season," as Paul did, "warning every one night and day with tears," we are evangelizing our cities, nor indeed any part of our country.

II. OUR RESPONSIBILITY. So long as the present dispensation of grace endures the responsibility of the Church for the evangelization of the world continues. The work of city evangelization is no small part of that work; indeed it is the most important factor in the problem. Our business is not simply to preserve a witness for Christ in the maintenance of a few churches in the cities—namely, for the benefit of those who are drawn to them either from personal or social considerations; but it is to continue the active and aggressive work of evangelization among all the people. If we would find an example for the manner in which our work is to be done, we need only to study the Acts of the Apostles, and note how those early disciples gave themselves to the work. It may be urged, and indeed is urged, that the conditions of the world are different now. That there is not



the same urgent necessity for a constant day-and-night-with-tears evangelization as there was when the apostles first went to the heathen cities with the story of "Jesus and the resurrection"; that Christianity has become established; that all men are informed of the contents of the Gospel, and they may come to Christ if they will. No greater fallacy than this could possibly exist. Unless the genius of Christianity has changed; unless the compassion of Christ has ceased to yearn over men; unless the Holy Spirit's commission to convince men of "sin, of righteousness, and judgment" has been revoked; unless the souls of men have ceased to be precious in the sight of God; unless the atonement of Jesus has been exhausted; unless indeed the whole scheme of salvation has broken down or become decrepit and worn out, then the responsibility to preach the Gospel to every creature, and to do it aggressively, continuously, and with spiritual fervor and compassionate entreaty, has not ceased. Our cities are larger and even more sinful than the cities of ancient Greece and Rome, within whose boundaries the apostles began their work for Christ and the souls of men. They are not pagan in the sense that those cities were, but they are opposed to God as really as they; they are infidel in an hundred ways; skepticism in a hundred forms is rife; atheism is practical and outspoken; many signs of the times indicate a wide-spread relapse from the traditional faith in the God of the Bible, and a tendency toward a heathen condition of thought. The cultivated agnostic is more atheistical than the Athenians who erected an altar to the "unknown God." They simply said "unknown," while our moderns say "unknowable." The semi-communistic societies of laboring men, under the guidance and inspiration of foreign atheists and socialists, are falling away from all faith in an overruling Providence, and resorting to the barbaric principles and practices of the race before the flood, when violence filled the earth. The modern doctrine of community of land, is a step backward even from ancient paganism. The grasping selfishness of rich corporations and monopolies, who oppress the poor, and fear not God, neither regard man, and are as far away from God as the representatives of the worst forms of socialistic atheism; the worldliness and wickedness which pervade the highest circles of society in the largest cities of the world; the mad craze after mere dissipation in all its forms; the enormous and growing power of the liquor interest (with its twenty thousand saloons in and about New York) which practically controls both our great political parties; the corruption of our city governments, and the difficulty of bringing criminals to justice; the degradation of the poor; the indiscriminate herding of men and women without regard to the marriage relation, as in many of our tenement districts; the angry cry of many of the poor who have in vain struggled against the increasing strength and greed of the rich corporations and the



grinding wage policy of their employers; the despair of men who have recently said that it is the fate of the poor man in New York to "see every second son an inmate of the workhouse or the penitentiary, and every second daughter in a brothel"—all tell the story of the need of *an aggressive, warm-hearted, and compassionate spirit of evangelization in our cities*. If there is not the same need for evangelization, and the same responsibility resting upon the disciples of Christ to-day as in the first age of Christianity, who will tell us when that responsibility began to be taken off from us, and when that need began to cease calling upon us and all that is within us, to go forth and preach the gospel to every creature?

III. THE PRESENT POSITION OF THE CHURCH. It may seem a hard and uncharitable thing to say, but the truth remains, that the Church is either *ignorantly or criminally indifferent* to this condition of things, and to her responsibility in connection with it. A survey of the churches in New York City will tell the story. In the upper regions of New York, huddled together within a stone's throw of each other, are a score or more splendid Protestant cathedrals, representing millions of money, toward which, on Sunday mornings, the fashionable world of our Gotham wends its way to worship God "in purple and fine linen," and to thank God that they are not as other people, poor and compelled to live on the back streets. Seven-tenths of all the wealth and the available resources, personal and material, of the Church are lavished upon less than three-tenths of the people, and they the favored better classes (so-called). There are churches among the denser populations and more crowded portions of the city, but they, are, as a rule, struggling for existence, rather than waging aggressive warfare against sin and misery, and conducting vigorous campaigns against unbelief and indifference. The ratio of church-going population is steadily decreasing before the advancing tide of the city's growth. Only one out of sixteen of the population of London are regular church goers, and the proportion is still less in New York. It is claimed that the churches which we already have are not now, on an average, more than half filled. This does not argue that we have enough or too many churches, but that the Church has lost her power over the masses of the people, either through a loss of evangelistic spirit, or through a world-spirit which seeks after something beside spiritual results. Is it not because the Church is busy with herself and not with her heaven-appointed work?

It is said again that there are many missions and numerous city missionaries supported by the churches of New York. This is true to a certain extent, but they are for the most part feeble and powerless. Being the offspring of a worldly, ease-loving Church, they cannot themselves become spiritually strong. They were planted with a

blight upon them, and they grow with paralysis in their very constitution. There are a few exceptions to this rule, but they are so few that they only serve to make the general truth of our statement most painfully apparent. Israel's apostasy began when she made affinity with the people of the land and confessed that she was not strong enough to drive them out. The Church's apostasy begins at the same point. Whenever the Church makes affinity with the world and becomes a respecter of persons, going after one class to the neglect of the other, and confesses, either by declaration or action, that she is not equal to the task of evangelizing the world, her power is gone and she must from that point decline.

IV. NEW METHODS NECESSARY. It goes without saying that new methods will be of no avail if the Church has not a new purpose—if, in fact, there is not a *revival of apostolic purpose and aim* in both the ministry and laity of the Church. Assuming, however, that there is an earnest and conscientious desire to evangelize the cities and other large centres of population, what methods ought to be adopted in order to accomplish that end? It is evident that our present methods are not adequate to the work. At the risk of saying over in substance what I have said recently elsewhere,\* I venture to suggest the following:

1. *There must be some concert of action among the churches.* At present each denomination is working apart from every other sect of the Church. There is comparative good feeling and fellowship among the leading Protestant sects; at least the age of bitter and acrimonious discussion is past, and we are all disposed to recognize each other as being of the true Church of Christ, with allowable differences of judgment as to the best forms of church government. This is a great advance upon the relations of the sects to each other fifty years ago. Practically, however, this better spirit of fellowship and Christian union is one of sentiment only. No substantial progress is being made toward unity of purpose and concert of action in the work of the world's evangelization, nor indeed in the work of evangelizing the cities. The various city missionary societies, supported as they are by contributions from churches of different denominations, can scarcely be said to meet the emergency, or to have risen to the great occasion. They are not looked upon, except in a remote and incidental way, as doing a part of *our church work*. They are committed to the hands of a board of directors, and the churches' responsibility ends with a small contribution each year toward the payment of the salaries of the superintendent, the Bible readers, and visiting missionaries. What is needed is something in the nature of a *City Evangelical Alliance*, composed of ministerial

\* "EVANGELIZATION," a paper read before the National Council of Congregational churches at Chicago, Oct. 17, 1886.

and lay representatives from all the churches, not for the purpose of cultivating fraternal relation and the mere discussion of interesting questions, but for the avowed object of projecting and carrying forward practical methods of evangelization, and arranging all matters of comity between the churches growing out of such a work.

The business of the world is carried on by mutual understanding and arrangement between business men representing the same interests. The stock, grain, cotton, mining, banking, and other great business interests have their exchanges, and the general commercial interests of the city are overlooked largely by means of the Chamber of Commerce. These exchanges and chambers do not interfere with the individual interests of the various houses and trades represented, but they assist all in doing the common work in which they are engaged. The churches of Christ are more nearly allied to each other than are merchants, brokers, or railroads, and their work is identical. The prosperity of one is the wealth of all, the success of one is the triumph of all. Such an alliance properly carried forward would make the churches intelligently acquainted with each other and their work, would prevent (through ignorance or strife) one church overlapping on the legitimate territory of another, and would assist in a more wise and proper distribution of the Christian forces and means throughout the city. I do not think for a moment that it would be an absolute check on the selfishness and pride of many churches who seek only their own at the expense of everybody else's good; but it would be a check, and would, in time, tend to correct most of the evils incident to the practical non-intercourse and isolation of the churches. It would develop a new and unwonted interest in the work of the Church; it would be a bureau of information; it would be a hot-bed in which many wise and vigorous plans for successful and aggressive work would be started, to be taken up, transplanted, and worked out by several churches. It would be the common centre where all matters of interest to the cause of Christ could be brought and discussed from the most catholic point of view. In a word, it would be a Church Exchange.

2. *The cities must be divided into parishes.* The parish system of the Episcopal Church is in many respects most admirable. If we might, in common, adopt some method by which every portion of the city were brought under the care of the Church, the chief obstacle to city evangelization would be overcome. As it is now, there are vast masses of people who are practically given over to the world, the flesh, and the devil, with nobody to care for their souls. The small mission chapel, or the occasional visits of a city missionary among the people make almost no impression upon these communities—these cities within the city. Of course, Church work in these neglected districts is not attractive, if looked at from the stand-point of

the worldly church; but if looked at from the point of view of the missionary Church—the Church of Jesus Christ—then they are exactly the places where we ought to covet to go,

“Not for ease or worldly pleasure,”

but for service and for souls.

The city once carefully districted or divided into parishes, the occupation and cultivation of these districts could be apportioned through the advice and co-operation of the City Evangelical Alliance to the various churches or denominations, which would in turn become responsible for the proper and thorough evangelization of the parishes or districts assigned to or chosen by them. Of course there would occur some difficulties and, perhaps, frictions, in adjusting these details, but if our hearts are set on the evangelization of the people, and not on mere denominational or local church advantage, these things would in time give place to higher interests and to the blessing of the Holy Ghost.

3. *A better and abler class of ministers must be assigned to work in the neglected portions of the city.* The rule with us now is, that all the so-called best preachers are chosen by the rich up-town churches, and the less able and less desirable men, whom the churches do not call to the pastorate, are given such city mission work as the City Mission Societies and individual church mission enterprises may have to give. Of course there are exceptions to this rule, for we have a few men, the peers of the best and ablest in the ministry, who, for Christ's sake, have consecrated themselves to the work of evangelizing the poor, the lowly, and the neglected. Conspicuous among such men in New York are Brethren Schauffler and Judson.

If the time ever comes when the Church of God in our cities takes up this work in earnest, a call will be made for the best and the brightest of our young men to give themselves to this ministry. In the past, and more and more in the present, it is coming to be felt, that in foreign mission work, the very best, the most gifted, as well as the most consecrated men are needed. Nobody thinks it is *a step down* in the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ to go to India, to China, to Japan, or to Africa to preach the Gospel either to the most refined or the most degraded pagans of the heathen world. The time was when our New West was practically saved by the enthusiasm which called out the Dakota Band and their successors to the Home Mission fields on the frontiers. The time must come when the brightest and best will count it an honor and a privilege to give themselves to the work of God in these great cities; not in the so-called high places of the world, but in “the high and lofty places” among the lowly and the neglected, the outcast and the poverty-stricken. Here, no doubt, the minister will find hard and even unpleasant work; he will miss the finer social surroundings, and the elevating (?) worldly influences of

"good society," but he will find compensations in the presence of the Lord, in the favor of Heaven, and in the consciousness that he is treading the path his Master trod before him, and is walking and working in the way and among the class of people that the great apostle to the Gentiles mainly wrought with.

That this class of people can be reached and gathered into the Church of God is witnessed by the work of Mr. Schauffler and Dr. Judson. The Cremorne Garden Mission of Jerry McAuley is a standing testimony as to what can be done among the degraded and neglected masses where there is a consecrated will to do God's work among that class. Here is a mission in the heart of a great city, surrounded by theatres, saloons, and houses of ill repute, that is crowded to the doors every night, and has been for years, by an eager multitude of weary and hardened sinners who are glad to hear of the love of God, the forgiveness of sins, and of the "rest that remaineth." There is no earthly or heavenly reason, except the apathy and sinful neglect of the churches, why there are not five hundred such places in New York.

We are lamenting the lack of ministers and the disinclination of able young men to enter the ministry. The reason for this is partly owing to our present unscriptural and unchristian methods. The ministry is now largely a profession in which there is only room for able men at the top. Well, the top places, where the salaries are large and the social advantages are the best, are but few; and ministers are graded, not by their spiritual power, consecration, and work, but by the church they minister to and the salary they receive. I have heard young men say that if they could be sure of success (meaning, sure of one of these high places) they would go into the ministry, but they do not care to be doomed to the drudgery of ordinary churches. After the few first places are filled, the second places are next best; the third comes next, and so forth. *Place* and not *service* is put first. The ministry or pastorate of an ordinary city church of the second and third class, where the struggle is for church existence, and where there is no broad, outreaching plans for the evangelization of the masses, is a place of dead level of drudgery and inspirationless work. I do not wonder that men shrink from such a calling, and that not a few ministers, made the pack-horses of their congregations who leave them to do all the work, and whose narrow ideas of work and service for God put the minister into a straight-jacket, are often found saying that, if they could get out of the ministry and go into business with a good conscience, they would gladly do so. If the churches of such cities as New York, Brooklyn, Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, and, indeed, all our cities, would, by concert of action, devise means for a thorough work of city evangelization and throw themselves into the work *with apostolic enthusiasm*, and call upon young men of God to give themselves to "preaching

the word" to the people, and go in for day and night, Sabbath-day and week-day, service and work, an enthusiasm for the work would be developed that would cause hundreds of young men to flock to the work, as the flower of our country flocked to the army in the days of the war. There are scores of young men in all our churches who might be easily called out and quickly trained for this work. But work among the lowly and the neglected must be elevated into first importance, and not damned with the faint praise and frozen with the cold shoulder of support which are now given to it.

5. *A Larger Consecration of Men and Means is Needed.* We have already touched upon the point of consecration on the part of young men for this work. Every young man, upon choosing the ministry as a calling, ought to be instructed that his commission is to go anywhere and do anything for Christ and his work; and so trained that where Jesus leads, there he is to follow. We wish, however, to insist on the larger consecration on the part of laymen, both of themselves and their means, to this work. It is one of the saddest spectacles of modern Christianity that there are so few laymen of first-class ability who give any attention to the work of God, who throw themselves with any heartiness into spiritual work. For the most part our "leading laymen" are men of business and of the affairs of this world only. They go to church, they pay the pew rent, they give a moiety (and a small one usually) of their wealth to the maintenance of their favorite church, and something—more or less, usually less than more—to the various benevolent causes that are presented from the pulpit; but in the main they are comparatively indifferent to the great work of evangelizing, either of the city or the world. Having given some money to build a beautiful nesting-place for themselves and their families on one of the great avenues or fashionable cross streets, they are content; and as to all the rest of the world, have made their contributions to home and foreign and city missions; they say "Corban," go to their business, and turn the kingdom of heaven over to the "Parson." "For all this they will be brought into the judgment." If God's work is to be done in this world, and done according to His mind and heart, our laymen must awaken out of their sleep and from their dreams of worldly wealth and great earthly ambitions, and give themselves to God and His service. Where they give dollars they must give hundreds and thousands: this as a measure for the rich. Those who are poorer must cease hiding behind the rich, and where they give pennies they must give dimes, and where they give dimes they must give dollars. God can work no farther and no faster than His people will go. It is in the plan of salvation that "we are workers together with God," and unless we work together with Him, He cannot work. This is an awful and solemn truth to those who are not coming up "to the help

of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." We owe to God our whole lives as "living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto Him." When we thus offer ourselves and bring into the storehouse of the Lord "all the tithes," then will the windows of heaven be opened and showers of blessings, even floods of blessings, poured upon the dry and thirsty—yea, the parched and baked places of our cities.

### III.—THE BEST METHODS OF GETTING CHURCH MEMBERS TO WORK.

NO. III.

BY CHAS. S. ROBINSON, D.D., NEW YORK.

NEHEMIAH tells us that the explanation of his success in finishing the wall of Jerusalem was found in the fact that the "people had a mind to work." Our question concerning methods of getting the church members to work, therefore, resolves itself into the problem of giving them a mind; for we may be sure that where there is a will there will be made a way. Generally speaking, it might be insisted upon that every healthy human being demands as his right the chance to do work.

Now the very earliest matter of consideration is suggested in an inquiry as to the *leading spirits of each congregation, and especially as to the minister in charge; they must have a mind to work; and whenever they are fairly out in the field, the rest will certainly follow.*

One of the greatest warriors the world ever knew was asked by an inquisitive imitator how he had managed to gain so many battles. With apparently a keen sense of his questioner he answered: "By not saying, *Adite illuc*, but *Venite huc*." It is to be feared that many ministers, who seem longing for better times, are making the mistake of supposing they can do all the kindling from the pulpit. They are just now somewhat overworking the evening service with cornets and praise-meetings, and the stereopticons are crouching at the door. Thomas Carlyle for a long time before his death, ceased to go to church: "To sit as a passive bucket and be pumped into," said he, "can, in the long run, be exhilarating to no creature, how eloquent soever the floods of utterance are descending." There is need of more outside work in the preacher's estimate and distribution of time. The successful head of a church in ten years from this will be the one who goes around the most. The chief occupation of the ministry is soon to be pastoral. The pulpit will be no loser; the day is past for serene and tasteful quiet in one's study chair; the man will get his sermons as he goes about, doing good. For it does not need even the poetic prescience of the sweet singer Bonar, to say, "A minister's life is, in more than one sense, the life of his ministry." If he would make his people work, he must live a life, not of elegant ease and luxury, but of



indefatigable labor among them. It is a mistake in this direction that keeps our settlements so changing. Men are trying to find the paradisaical charge in which they can order work done by touching a bell in one corner of a lovely library. These places are to be found only in Spain where the poet's castles shine.

This being understood, then, that the leaders must have the mind to work first, we reach the very practical direction that *proper methods, instruments, appliances, must be provided* for the congregations.

Associations of every name, each with a specified and definitely announced aim, ought to be organized and equipped all at once. If one Christian prefers Home missions to Foreign, he has a right so to do in every case. If one likes the Bible cause more than he does the Tract, he should be met with a chance to push his wishes into success. Taste and enthusiasm have a positive market value in Church work. The times of holding meetings should be carefully chosen; the form of management should be wisely considered; the officers ought to be distributed prudently, so as to lay responsibility on each man and woman that has already "a mind." These Associations must imperatively, from the Sunday-school down to the Sewing Society, be under the control of the supreme religious officers of the Church. Any jealousy between Boards, secular or organic, will ruin everything at once the moment interference is attempted. Let full authority be established, and fixed orderliness required. Louis XIV. methodized all his time and all his action with an unalterable rule of routine. It seems to hinder, but red tape in most cases helps. To his grandson upon the throne of Spain this Grand Monarch of France once wrote: "If you desire to have your will habitually respected, you must show that you yourself are a slave to it."

This once done, all other forms of association should be promptly put down. Often those who are not officers according to their wish or ambition have a weakness for starting something else, in which they can personally figure. Some want a new name; some plead a fondness in behalf of a fresh field; some talk loudly about trammels, and ask that wider scope may be allowed. There is always harm in such divisiveness in any church. It is ruinous to anything like united zeal, and eventually exhausts itself in a vapid deluge of unmitigated talk. I really cannot conceive of a greater disaster than a set of "swallow" associations let loose on a helpless community of believers. It is taken for granted that every one knows what a "swallow association" is. Most of us have seen them. When I was a little fellow, nine or ten years old, living in the country, there was a swallow association that held vociferous assemblies every night between five and six o'clock. The hundreds of members, all together, fiddled around an unused chimney, right at the side of the road in the village, as if they had ever so many aerial circles to compass before sunset or die

in the act. They accomplished nothing that I ever knew of; and they went down into the hole, without any adjournment. And then the ungracious night seemed to feel immensely relieved, being just permitted to go about its regular business, unharassed and undisturbed by the fussy commotion. We have seen men and women, who spent valuable hours in frittering away energy with precisely such demonstrations. A little work, that one of each was able to do, excited a score to go out, elect a president, two secretaries, an advisory committee, a treasurer (of course), and so constitute a Swallow Association. Then every evening they would come forth in an illustrious fuss, flutter and fly, jabber and twitter; and at last very benignantly go into their chimney. The relief was indescribable in that it suffered two or three efficient people to do something worthy. Such things will have to be suppressed suddenly, kindly, but firmly.

Of course, this is a matter of supreme delicacy. People who are headed off from what they think promises success are apt to forget the covenant they made with the Church, and glide away into opposition, so that they can show grievance. But kind words and gentle dealing ought to win them back; and let them be cheered for any good they have done.

There remains only one thing more: the leaders of the Church all alive and active, the appliances furnished so as that every one can be invited to a place of work, what is left? Only *that the motives of an honest Christian experience be pressed intensely and eagerly at once.*

There cannot possibly be anything new to urge. What Christ, the Head of the Church, has done; what He is doing; what He expects of us; what hopes He holds out in the distance: this is all there is. The amazing love of God in Christ is the only motive that can be trusted to move converted men. The soul that will not rise to this, will not ever rise to anything. Certain strong emotions are within us that claim worthy excitements before they will stir us to do our noblest deeds in Christian enterprise. Aristobulus relates that some Indian dogs there were in his day, given to Alexander; but they could not be aroused out of their dullness to attack a wild bull; but when a lion was produced, they rushed upon him with eyes red for desperate battle. Tell Christian men and women that Satan is abroad, that vice is rampant and death hastens, that damnation slumbereth not, and the grave cries, "Give." A heart on fire for Christ will respond, or there is no hope for it.

But will this mammon-ridden, blinded generation be moved by the old trite speech? Yes, if the man that makes it is alive himself. It was one of our brightest and most useful men that said to a company of young preachers who stood before him: "Your value as ministers depends not upon the fifty things you do not believe, but on the three or four you do." Let every true follower of Jesus Christ speak for

Christ, in simple conviction that thrills his voice and moistens his eyes, and he will move the hearts that are harder than the stones in the street.

It does not seem to me there is anything beyond this; if any one knows more, there are hundreds of us who would love to sit at his feet as learners. The truth is, the workers of the present day are seeking for ingenuities that are novel and strange. There is too much talk about machinery in the conversion of souls, and in the organization for church growth and duty. Is there a patent process for teaching people to be active? It depends on "the mind," rather than on shrewd methods employed. One who is on the alert will find his place and achieve his success, while the other who is waiting for a process will busy himself in philosophizing. We remember that Gulliver found in Laputa that the tailor was going to measure him for a suit of clothes by trigonometry. If one's soul is aflame, he will go to work without "setting." It was John Foster who gave us the eloquent thought: "An active mind, like an Æolian harp, arrests even the vagrant winds, and makes them music."

We must learn to trust the deep tenderness of Christian love and the delicate sensitivity of Christian conscience. These motives in any case depend upon the sincerity with which they are pressed, and the strong reality of the experience that lies beneath them. They are not like arrows from a cross-gun which a child can spring with a touch upon the button; they are like the shafts from a long-bow which only the arm of a sinewy archer can send singing into the target. If we desire to awake heart and life in others, we must put heart and life into the appeals we bring to them; and then the appeals will surely succeed. A minister needs to work more, to pray more, to give more according to a percentage on his income, than any one else in his congregation; for a deeper responsibility hangs on him; he leads, and he must keep ahead.

How little do we seem to prize even the essentialities of gospel faith! Great things are always simple; but these great things are the very elements of our spiritual being. Recall the historic scene which swayed the world at Clermont, when Urban, then on the throne of the Universal Church, addressed an assembly wherein were gathered the highest and the most chivalrous sons of France; how gently he spoke:

"Jerusalem," said he, "this ancient love of Israel, this nurse of the old prophets, this city of that King who wore a crown of thorns, this cradle of our salvation, the fountain of our faith, Jerusalem, set in the centre of the earth to unite in its bosom the wandering nations, Jerusalem, which ought to attract the faithful, as the magnet draws iron—as the sea woos the rivers—Jerusalem is a prey to the cruel rapacity of an impious and sacrilegious nation! The worshippers of Christ Jesus are driven away from its bounds; it is only by enduring a

thousand injuries, it is only by dint of gold and prayers that they can approach the tomb which has redeemed them. Oh, sorrow, which even tears cannot relieve! Oh, sad prediction of Jeremiah! The places that ought, day and night, to resound with hymns and thanksgivings, hear only imprecations and blasphemy. Even Golgotha is polluted by the followers of an impostor, although it ought forever to be an altar for the universe!"

That was the plain speech of one old man; but it shook Europe to its centre, and flung hundreds of thousands of the world's best men across the continent into Asia, a crusade of flame and fire and martyrdom on a hundred fields of blood for the mere sepulchre of the Lord.

We need never fear that honest heart and simple tongue will fail in winning its way. Come back for a moment to that story of Nehemiah, from which we have caught this motto: "The people had a mind to work." What did this man possess as a fitness or a resource for his task? He must rebuild Jerusalem; how? He had nothing but the gift of speech to use; he could speak to God, he could speak to the people; that was all that was within his reach, for he was only the king's cup-bearer. Did you ever notice that the book in the Bible which bears his name is entitled, "The Words of Nehemiah"? Words, words, this was all; but we know this was enough. Bright, brave, cheerful, honest words were what made Jerusalem grow up anew, and gave the people their "mind to work."

#### IV.—CRITICISMS ON SOME OF THE ABLEST REPRESENTATIVE PREACHERS OF THE DAY.\*

BY AN EMINENT PROFESSOR OF HOMILETICS.

NO. I. THOMAS DE WITT TALMAGE, D.D.

"BROUGHAM is a thunderbolt." So, thunderbolt-fashion, began a passage of description which, a generation or more ago, used to meet the eye of the student in his "Porter's Rhetorical Reader." It was a selection descriptive of the style of eloquence displayed in Parliament by the famous English orator thus startlingly introduced.

To begin similarly here, Talmage is a phenomenon. A phenomenon of success he certainly is, whether or not he be a phenomenon of eloquence. Nobody can wink out of sight the blazing fact that he is, and that for years he has been, the most widely-heard preacher on the American continent; nay, with one doubtful exception, the most widely-heard preacher in the world. He has inherited Mr. Beecher,† while Mr. Beecher is still living, and while that wonderful "old man eloquent" still preaches with little, or at least with singularly little,

\* This series will embrace, besides Dr. Talmage, Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, and Drs. Phillips Brooks, John Hall, and Wm. M. Taylor. The object will be to make appear the *elements* which have given success to the preaching of these divines.—EDS.

† This article was in print before the death of Mr. Beecher.—EDS

diminution of his pristine power. Dr. Talmage has not indeed inherited Mr. Beecher's pre-eminence in the quality, but only in the quantity—the quantity, however, augmented—of audience commanded. If you should count the heads of Dr. Talmage's hearers, in comparison with those of Mr. Beecher's, numbered at whatever point you might choose in the highest prosperity of the latter's career, Dr. Talmage's majority would be immense. If you should weigh the brains, comparatively, of the two audiences, the disparity would be equally immense in favor of Mr. Beecher.

It seems to be by some marvellous, almost preternatural, chord in himself, of intelligence and of feeling, with the overwhelming and outnumbering *average* majority of the human race, that Dr. Talmage wins and keeps his hold on the popular mind and heart. He does not estrange or repel by difference or by superiority. That, Mr. Beecher also does not do. Mr. Beecher's superiority and his difference fascinate and attract. But the fascinating and attracting force in Dr. Talmage is rather the friendly, free-hearted hail and invitation that he sends out to everybody, bidding welcome all alike to feast with himself in perfect equality and good fellowship. He has vitality enough, and complaisance enough, supported by enough of self-complacency, to do this without its seeming otherwise than natural and practicable. The world accordingly takes Dr. Talmage at his word, and throngs to the banquet that he spreads. This is not the most delicate, perhaps, not the most dainty, of refectations; but there is at least always enough, and to spare, and a smiling welcome from the host makes every guest feel himself at home.

If you listen to Dr. Talmage, as you always do so in numerous company, you are, in one way or another, invariably interested. But if you are a homiletic student, or a homiletic professor, hungry for practical hints bearing on your vocation, you are likely to supply your note-book with memoranda suggestive rather of things to be shunned than of things to be emulated. One thing admirable, however, you at once find to be very clearly pronounced in this orator. Dr. Talmage fulfills the first indispensable condition of successful public discourse in making himself heard. Every word, every syllable, from his lips comes to you intelligible to the ear.

Beyond this, what feature is there of Dr. Talmage's elocution that you would seek to reproduce? Well, truth to say, hardly one. For that abounding vitality which beats its strong pulse throughout this speaking, is more an attribute of the man than of the orator. It is less the oratory you hear, than it is the robust physical health, the plenteous physical energy, the free-flowing vital force felt in this personal presence, that so touches you, and so quickens you, with the pleasurable sensation of life. However, to be all-alive, and superfluously alive, also to be absolutely audible in your enunciation, these

are two points in which you may wisely desire and endeavor to resemble Dr. Talmage.

But Dr. Talmage's habit of facial distortion—is that good? Facial gesture is good; for the face may be a vivid pantomime to accompany, illumine, and enforce your speech. In fact, the face should be such—nay, such in a measure the face will infallibly be, if you have learned art enough to be perfectly natural. But facial gesture is not the same as facial distortion. Facial distortion tends to fix the features, or to twitch them, in a certain habitual way. Facial gesture requires, and it encourages, absolute mobility of feature. Mobility, not distortion, not even gesture, should be the habit of the orator's face. The face then can rest placid in comparative repose, if the tenor of discourse make that fittest; or, with equal ease, can fluently play into any expression that best answers the spirit of what is said.

Dr. Talmage's occasional tragic stride across his platform—what is to be thought of that? Well, that, too, has fallen into a habit with him. What might have been a gesture, a powerful occasional gesture, has degenerated into a mere meaningless bodily exercise. A *trick* of oratoric behavior, one could not properly call it; for a trick is a piece of conscious artifice; and Dr. Talmage's start and stride need not be charged with that character. The worst that need be said of the action has already been said, that it has become a meaningless habit—meaningless, and, therefore, hurtful to oratoric effect. Everything that the orator does—posture, gesture, tone—should tell, and tell for his purpose. But the appearance, in Dr. Talmage's case, is often as if the speaker came to a point in his discourse at which he felt that his audience, or perhaps that he himself, would be the better for something to impart a little effect of enlivenment. The instinctive resort then is to a sudden gesture, a somewhat violent gesture, very likely a springing promenade the length of the platform. There is oftenest no discernible relation, other than that which has now been hinted, between the gesture and the particular thing said accompanied by the gesture. Such gesticulation is to be avoided. It would, perhaps, have been very well to write something into the discourse that naturally required the action; but to give the action, without the something requiring it—that, at best, is futile. But, as has been said, it is worse than futile, since it prevents the action, when appropriately employed, from being effective. Besides this, all mere meaningless *habits* of delivery insensibly accustom hearers not to attach significance to anything they see in the speaker, or hear from him.

The same remarks apply, or, at least, the principle of them does, to the sharp changes in rate, or key, or force, of utterance, observable in Dr. Talmage's elocution. These changes are not frequent—on the contrary, the tenor of utterance is faultily monotonous; but when they do occur, they seem to have the same motive, and they are char-



acterized by the same unrelatedness, as have been attributed to the corresponding habits of gesticulation. That Dr. Talmage should not have the sweet, rich, flexible voice of Spurgeon, for example, with that Æolian attachment in it for pathos—this, of course, is a denial to him from nature, for which he is not responsible. The defect may be noted, but it ought not to be criticised. Even the voice, however, at length learns to express, with growing degrees of fitness, the sentiments and emotions most natural, most habitual, and profoundest, in the subject.

So much for the manner. The manner certainly, in Dr. Talmage's case, does not make the man. It is not because of his manner, it is in spite of his manner, that the man succeeds. The writer once heard a sincere admirer of this preacher say that he did not like to look at Dr. Talmage while listening to his sermon. "I would rather read him," the same gentleman added, "than hear him." From Dr. Talmage's manner, then, let us go to his matter, and make some study of that.

The first thing that strikes you here is Dr. Talmage's orthodoxy. This preacher does not trim his sails to catch the breeze that blows from the breath of the "liberal" in religion. If there were to be suspected any trimming at all of the sails, it would be rather to catch favoring breath from strict, straightforward, old-fashioned Christian believers. No "advanced" religious views, of whatever sort, get the smallest countenance from Dr. Talmage. He is perfectly square-toed and flat-footed in pronouncing for the faith exactly as it was once delivered to the saints; and that faith, according to Dr. Talmage, is well enough expressed in the definitions of evangelical orthodoxy, uninfluenced by the speculations of "progressive" theologians. No doubt it is this staunch fidelity, on Dr. Talmage's part, to the old gospel that has so won Mr. Spurgeon's heart, drawing from the great English preacher those warm commendations of his American brother in the ministry.

The next thing that impresses you in Dr. Talmage's sermons is their directly evangelical aim. This preaching is not an end in itself, but a means to an end beyond itself; and that end is to save the souls of men, by persuading them to simple trust in the One, All-sufficient, Atoning Redeemer. The relation of adaptedness in the means used to the end sought, may not always be clear; but the end itself, at least, is always clear. And for a preacher to have that end, and to make that end clear, is much. This condition alone, fulfilled in Dr. Talmage, goes a long way toward solving the problem of his success.

Advancing beyond these two salient, most salient, features of Dr. Talmage's sermons, namely, their orthodoxy and their evangelical character, what do you next find? What you next find depends much upon you, the finder. If you are one sort of man, you will find



next—a fertile imagination, and a vivid. You will say: “Dr. Talmage describes so beautifully, calls up such images, makes such life-like scenes pass in vision before me.” If you are a different kind of man, harder to please, more critical, trained in a nicer school of taste, familiar with more classic models, you will shake your head and say: “There is no real imagination here, only a wild, unbridled fancy. I see no picture presented anywhere, nothing but splashes of bright color, laid on without form, mingled without harmony. It is confusion worse confounded.”

These two observers, it was said, find different things. But the different things found are, after all, the same thing seen differently and differently named. Certain it is that an ostensibly pictorial and scenic style is a very marked peculiarity of Dr. Talmage’s preaching. Such imaginative quality is good, if it be genuine. Is it genuine, or is it spurious with Dr. Talmage?

Take a fair specimen, and apply a fair test. The text of the sermon is: “Thy word is a lamp.” “How will all these scenes of iniquity in our cities be overcome?” the preacher asks. (“Scenes” are sometimes “overcoming”; but hardly are they things to be “overcome.”) “Send the Bible down that filthy alley, if you would have it cleansed,” is part of his answer. But the Bible was a “lamp,” to spread light, not a river Alpheus, to “cleanse.” “Send it against those decanters, if you would have them smashed.” But the Bible was a “lamp,” not a missile—club, for instance, or stone. “Send it through all the ignorance of the city, if you would have it illumined as by a flash of heaven’s morning. The Bible can do it, and will do it.” Such are the next sentences in order. Here the Bible is a “lamp,” as it ought to have been throughout. But even here that propriety of conception which true imagination instinctively produces, is wanting. For “ignorance” is not a thing to be “illumined,” but, like darkness, a thing to be dispelled. Darkness does not stay to be “illumined” by the morning sun. It disappears before the morning sun; and that is what should have been conceived as happening to “ignorance,” under the influence of the Bible as a “lamp.” But the next succeeding sentence caps the climax: “Gather all the ignorance and the wickedness and the vice of our cities in one great pile—Alps above Alps, Pyrenees above Pyrenees, Himalaya above Himalaya—and then give one little New Testament full swing against the side of that mountain, and down it will come, Alps after Alps, Pyrenees after Pyrenees, Himalaya after Himalaya.” The word “swing” suggests that perhaps the preacher here conceived the “New Testament” as wielded like a form of the ancient battering-ram, against the supposed “pile,” to overthrow it. But the conception may have been that the “little” volume was as a smooth stone from the brook flung from David’s sling. One finds it impossible to be sure. By the way, are the three

different classes of mountains, Alps, Pyrenees, Himalayas, to be imagined, as piled Pyrenees on Alps, and then Himalayas on Pyrenees? If so, the idea is not expressed; and if *not* so, why is the aggregate mass called "that mountain," in the singular number? Again, if so, the toppling down of the mountain would take place in the reverse order, Himalaya falling first instead of last—which also would happily allow the pleasing figure of chiasm to be employed in the construction of the sentence.

Now who would have conjectured that this mountainous rhetoric of the preacher's was suggested by the metaphor of the text, "Thy word is a *lamp*"? The sense conveyed is all good and sound and wholesome. The way in which the sense is conveyed—that is the only distressing thing about the matter. But we, perhaps, concede too much in conceding that the sense is unobjectionable. For who can be entirely sure what the sense is? One would like to see Dr. Talmage put in a corner, to be kept there till he should set down in strictly literal language exactly what he meant by saying that "one little New Testament" given "full swing" against the accumulated moral evil of "our great cities" would tumble it all down. Did he mean that there would be no moral evil "in our great cities," if there was but perfect obedience in them to the New Testament precepts? Then he might have made both his statement more sweeping and his contrast more striking. He might have said that there could be no moral evil left in the *universe*, if "one little" *text* only of the New Testament, namely, the Golden Rule, for example, were everywhere obeyed.

The fact is, Dr. Talmage does not take care enough to think truly and to speak truly. This is evident in particulars that possess greater moral importance than do points of propriety in rhetorical figure. Naught to extenuate, as also to exaggerate naught—Dr. Talmage is incredibly careless in his statements, his incidental statements, those *obiter dicta* which he was not bound to furnish at all, but which, if he did furnish them, he was bound to make reasonably exact. Adequately to illustrate this would require a large amount of room. Only a few examples can be admitted here. But, let it be understood, the fault thus found with Dr. Talmage is a fault whose name is legion; for it cries out, almost as with a voice, and, using the plural of majesty, says: "We are many." The references in the present article are all to Dr. Talmage's latest volume of sermons, that numbered "fourth." This collection may be supposed best to represent the preacher as he now is. On p. 321, Dr. Talmage says: "Charles Lamb could not endure Coleridge." He might nearly as well have said: "David could not endure Jonathan." It was possible for Dr. Talmage very easily to check his misleading memory, on a point of biographical history like that. If he had but glanced at Allibone's "Dictionary of Authors," he would have found Coleridge

called Lamb's "most dearly loved friend." The "International Cyclopædia" would have spoken to him of the "affectionate intimacy" between the two men; the "Encyclopædia Britannica," of their "close and tender life-long friendship." "Waller warred against Cowley," says Dr. Talmage. The encyclopædias know nothing of this state of belligerency between the two royalist poets. Johnson, in his "Lives of the Poets," is, if the writer's memory be not at fault, equally silent on the subject. Dr. Talmage says: "The hatred of Plato and Xenophon is as immortal as their works." This, until Dr. Talmage divulged it, was an extraordinarily well-kept secret between the two haters. The inaccuracies now noted appropriately cluster on a single page and in a single paragraph.

"You are unsatisfied," Dr. Talmage says, p. 313, "because you do not know who Junius was—whether John Horne Tooke, or *Bishop Butler*, or Edmund Burke." Bishop Butler—that is, the only man in history identified by that title—died in 1752. It was 1769 when the first "letter" of Junius was published.

On p. 306, Dr. Talmage says: "I give you the appalling statistic [*sic*] that in the last twenty-five years, laying aside last year—the statistics of which I have not yet seen—within the last twenty-five years the churches of God in this country have averaged less than two conversions a year each. There has been an average of four or five deaths in the churches. . . . We gain two, we lose four." Here is an appearance of unwonted scruple on the preacher's part. He excepts a year, and takes pains to say that he does so. But what a result proclaimed! Does Dr. Talmage really think that the American Christian churches have during twenty-five years steadily lost in numbers more than twice what they have gained? A yearly net loss of two members or more to a church would mean a serious yearly *percentage* of loss—hardly less than two per cent probably. This continuing uninterruptedly twenty-five years, would reduce the numerical strength of the American churches by near one half. Does Dr. Talmage, we ask again, really think that there are only about half as many Christian professors now in this country as there were twenty-five years ago? The preacher should have thought this thing out more conscientiously. There is nothing more needful for the pulpit than to cultivate the *habit* of truthfulness.

On pp. 294, 295, occurs this interrogative sentence: "What ruined the merchant princes of Tyre, that great city of fairs and bazaars and palaces; her vessels of trade, with cedar masts and embroidered sails and ivory benches, driven by fierce blasts on northern waters, and then dropping down on glassy Indian seas; bringing wine from Helbon, and chariot-cloths from Dedan, and gold and spices from Rahmah, and emerald and agate from Syria; her waters foaming with innumerable keels," etc. A rich sentence, well fitted to make a strong impression of

ample knowledge and pictorial power possessed by its preacher, but—inaccurate. Those “vessels of trade,” “innumerable keels,” did not “bring wine from Helbon,” Helbon (near Damascus) being situated far from the seaboard, and transportation between Damascus and Tyre being exclusively overland. “Dedan” is not the name of a place, but rather a tribal designation—the Dedanites being caravan, not maritime, merchants. From Rahmah, too, the carriage was overland to Tyre.

It is hardly necessary to say that such a preacher as has here been described, will commit offences against good taste, will even sometimes wound reverent feeling. Dr. Talmage, on p. 40, makes “corn” a symbol of the bread of God. But corn must be “threshed and ground and baked,” he says. Dr. Talmage makes his allegory go on all fours, to the extent of saying, “When Jesus descended into hell, and the flames of the lost world wrapped him all about, was not the corn baked?” The revised version, with “Sheol,” or “Hades,” for “hell,” should have saved Dr. Talmage from *that* dreadful rhetoric—and from that sad unintentional heterodoxy as well. From many, however, of his lapses in propriety, nothing except surer taste and finer feeling can save Dr. Talmage.

It has hardly seemed worth while to say that in the organization or plan of a sermon, Dr. Talmage is almost entirely wanting. As a rule, there is no order, no progress, no unity, no cumulative effect. There is a series of more or less interesting and striking passages, and the sermon ends. It might have ended before, or it might now go on, with equal fitness, so far as concerns any accomplishment of a purpose in the unfolding of thought. The sermon is a mere loose concatenation of paragraphs. True, the paragraphs—often faulty, no doubt—are seldom without their interest, their value, and their life.

These pages will seem to many to have presented a disparaging, and, perhaps, to some, an excessively disparaging estimate of Dr. Talmage's merit. In the aim of the writer, the estimate has been loyally candid and just. It was not the conception of the present series of such estimates of preachers that they should be either mainly eulogistic or mainly destructive. Equally remote from their design was the idea of their being neutrally nugatory. To be fair, to be effective, to be useful, is the common object in which editor and critic agree.

Dr. Talmage himself will not be affected in his preaching by what is here set down about him. His pulpit habits, for better or for worse, are permanently fixed. He will go on to the end in the gait which is nature, or which has become a second nature, to him. The writer of these words would not lay a straw of hindrance in his path, but would rather heartily bid him God-speed. If, however, it should turn out that some preachers of the gospel, not as yet unalterably

fixed in their ways, should, on the one hand, be deterred from following the lure of false example seductively set before them in the dazzling success of this great preacher; and should, on the other hand, be incited to emulate him in those respects in which he is truly deserving of emulation, then the present critic will be glad, and then the leading purpose of his paper will have been fulfilled.

## V.—HOW CAN THE PULPIT BEST COUNTERACT THE INFLUENCE OF MODERN SKEPTICISM?

NO. III.

BY PREST. HENRY A. BUTTZ, D.D., DREW THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

THE topic under consideration assumes that the pulpit is neither to be silent nor indifferent towards Modern Skepticism. The first paper on the subject by Dr. West, shows that the sacred writers took cognizance, not only of the actions of men, but also of the currents of thought of their time and occupied an attitude of defence and attack in relation to them. They were aware that the Skepticism of their age, so fully in accord with the natural tendencies of the human heart, needed to be carefully watched and prevented from spreading its baneful influences. Although the limitation of the question is to the pulpit, *i. e.*—to the ministers of the Gospel, yet it may, without undue stretch, be applied not only to the preacher in his pulpit, but to the minister as he engages in the propagation and defence of the truth, through the printed page.

This duty, which Paul enjoins upon the Church (Col. iv: 5, 6), is especially incumbent upon the pastor of the people. The Apostle's injunction is: "Walk in wisdom towards them that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."

The topic also assumes that it is the duty of the pulpit to counteract modern skepticism. Skepticism is aggressive, bold, and as far as possible, is extending its influence in all directions. How shall its advance be checked? How shall the Gospel take its place? These are questions that men cannot fail to ask.

By skepticism we understand every kind of doctrine which proposes to set aside the Word of God as the sole rule of faith and practice, whether it be the philosophy of our time, or the so-called higher criticism which would undermine the very foundations of our faith.

The influence of modern skepticism is chiefly shown in attempts to overturn the evidence for the Sacred Scriptures. It includes all these books and writings and lectures devoted to the destruction of the credentials of our religion. It is the application of what is called the critical and historical method to the study of the Bible. Those who do it are destructionists. Their object is not to build up, but to de-

stroy. This rejection of the Bible as the word of God has various degrees, from those who reject the whole book, as such revelation, to those who reject parts of it; from those who find no fault in it, to those who accept it as the best religious guide now accessible, but neither perfect nor inspired.

The indirect influence of this skepticism takes mainly two forms. It produces indifference to all religion. It is strange that any one could be uninterested and indifferent to a subject which has been uppermost in the minds of men through all the centuries. A subject which the most advanced nations have considered most critically—a subject, to which the most mature minds have given most profound discussion and meditation—a subject which has become more interesting as men have advanced in intellectual and moral grandeur. It also produces an aversion to the church as the representative of Christianity.

These influences are specially effective on two classes of people— young men in the process of education, and the working classes of our large cities. The extent of skepticism among professional men, business men, and educated men generally, is overestimated. Investigation will show that the tendency of profound study and of growing years is toward faith more than toward infidelity.

Among the laboring classes skepticism is most frequent. This tendency is shown by the belief which prevails among them that the church which represents Christian truth is hostile to their interests, and that Christianity is the symbol of bondage rather than of freedom. It is the laboring classes of Northampton, England, which have, in opposition to the wishes of the House of Commons, persisted in returning Mr. Bradlaugh, an avowed atheist, to parliament. If the writer is not misinformed, it is the same element that gives such a cordial greeting to his chief co-worker in this country. How shall the pulpit then best counteract these skeptical tendencies of our times? That it is a duty to do what it can to arrest it, is admitted by all who love the great doctrines and influences of Christianity.

If the pulpit proposes an aggressive attitude, it must have a thorough comprehension of the views of those whom they would convert, and of the reasons which are alleged in their support. It is not meant that all the opinions and doctrines held by individuals must be subjected to a critical study, but that no opinion which has gained wide currency and acceptance should be lightly passed over. The vagaries of a few individuals need not demand the time or the attention of the pulpit, but those widely received cannot escape his thought if he would meet and overcome them.

One of the charges often and justly made against those who reject the Bible, is their want of thorough study of the book itself and of its doctrines. Dr. Nelson, in that admirable book, "The Cause and



Cure of Infidelity," charges much of the infidelity of his time to ignorance of Bible facts and Bible language. If we demand of those who oppose us a study of the Bible which they reject, before they sit in judgment upon it, so we ought to study the prevalent doctrines of those whom we oppose before we undertake in a formal way to discuss them. The ignorant discussion of skepticism is more damaging to truth than to the error, for it promotes antagonism and furnishes no antidote.

It is not here argued that such discussion is generally desirable; in fact it is often mischievous in its tendency, but that he who assumes to speak on these critical questions from the pulpit or through the press should do so after such a thorough mastery of both sides of the question as will enable him to speak with authority. A distinguished professor of theology, lately called from labor to reward, Dr. A. A. Hodge of Princeton, is reported to have said in a lecture on a subject which had not been a specialty in his studies, that on other occasions he had spoken with full confidence and as an expert, but at this time he stood side by side with his audience, as an investigator, not as a specialist. In the nature of things it is impossible for a preacher to understand all subjects. He may not compass the whole field of skeptical inquiry, but when he appears as a defender of the faith, and an antagonist of error, his knowledge should be accurate if not profound. This inspires confidence on the part of believers, and commands respect on the part of opponents.

The pulpit should wait patiently, and investigate the effects of the statements of supposed antagonists before concluding that they are destructive of the truth. It is a common assumption, and a safe one, that the Christian religion is the absolute and complete truth, and that nothing that is true can be antagonistic to it. When any scientific or metaphysical truth has been fully established, the church can rest in quietness and confidence, knowing that it will prove to be for the advancement of the religion of Christ.

It is not strange that the first promulgation of a new science or doctrine should provoke antagonism. It has been said that advances in knowledge come in waves. Sometimes they appear after a short interval, sometimes after longer ones, sometimes a hundred, sometimes hundreds of years apart. At this point patience is a most valuable quality for the pulpit. Many truths, which at first seemed absurd and destructive, have proved to be valuable, why may not this one. A little waiting before judgment is passed is not out of place. It is unwise to assume in the outset that any doctrines which have gained currency, and which on the surface are opposed to our convictions are therefore untrue. What then shall be done? Give a fair hearing to the honest investigations and conclusions of responsible men whoever they may be. In the empire of freedom established by Christ, liberty



of inquiry and of expression is fundamental, and the pulpit should demand this freedom, and also grant it. If the conclusions of modern criticism have any elements of truth, we should cherish them, knowing that they will prove to be for the maintenance, and not for the destruction of Bible truth.

Patient observation will show that we need not fear such advances if they be true advances, and that to such apparently hostile movements, we are indebted for some of the best contributions to the defence of the Bible. It is within the memory of many that the contest growing out of the rise of Geological Science, threatened permanent damage to the doctrine of the inspiration of the Scriptures. It was held by many that Genesis and Geology were wholly irreconcilable, and that the Pentateuch had been practically driven from the field. There are few, however, that will maintain that extreme view to-day, and there are those in the front rank of scientific scholarship who maintain a beautiful harmony between the book of Nature and the Book of Revelation. This warfare is past, and we read the chapters in Genesis with as much confidence as ever. The wrecks of the evolution storm have not all been found. There are still vessels cast on unknown seas, because of it, but practically it is no longer recognized by those best qualified to judge as an antagonistic force to the Christian religion. It may even prove to be one of the most helpful truths in the elucidation of the Scriptures. While in its extreme form it is a virtual negative of God, in its essential principles, so far as demonstrated, it contains nothing that the pulpit needs to antagonize.

We would, therefore, urge upon the pulpit a careful sifting and patient waiting in all matters of genuine criticism for which real scholarship offers apparently satisfactory reasons.

This remark applies to those works which are put forward, with fair show of truth, as investigations of great problems of life and destiny, and not to such as are avowedly and necessarily destructive. The latter must be met from the start, if demanding public consideration, with direct opposition and emphatic protest and disproof.

There must be also a loyal adherence to Christian truth and a thorough exposition of it. The pulpit must believe thoroughly, and maintain clearly and decidedly. He who is to proclaim the words of the Lord must not hesitate or apologize, but announce: "Go preach the preaching which I bid thee," was God's command to Jonah, and "if any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God," is the forcible utterance of St. Paul.

The pulpit must not "sit down and first count the cost" in the sense in which Rev. Geo. Herbert Curteis, M. A. suggests in his work: "The Scientific Obstacles to Christian Belief," Preface p. vii., "Above all the Christian leader—if he is to win, not merely a skirmish, or even a battle, but the whole campaign—must "count the cost"

in another sense. He must know what to surrender. It is merely brutal and useless strategy to defend everything without discrimination. In every age some points become of less vital importance than they were before; some breastworks are found to be incompetent to resist improved methods of attack; and some outlying defences to every eye, but that of their passionate defender, have manifestly become worse than useless, mere traps for impounding and wasting the force urgently required elsewhere, mere gratuitous invitations to the foe to effect a lodgment and to proclaim a victory, if not actually to gain one."

But what can the pulpit surrender? What ought the pulpit to surrender? It cannot surrender any part of the sacred volume that has come down to us. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." It cannot surrender the first utterances of Genesis, that "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." It cannot surrender the account of the fall of man as it stands in the very beginning of history, for Paul in his letter to the Romans has put the seal of his authority upon the record in Genesis. It cannot surrender the great doctrine of the atonement, the Holy Spirit, forgiveness of sins, sanctification, glorification. These are its essentials. For their maintenance and propagation the Christian religion exists. Whatever is opposed to these must be overcome. But how? The most effective method of preventing the spread of error is by setting forth the truth. The spread of Bible religion will be promoted best by a faithful portrayal of it. Christianity will be accepted in proportion as it is understood, and it has often suffered more from the misstatements of its friends than from the attacks of its foes. It is a great system of truth, harmonious in every part. It is adapted to the mind and heart of man. It appeals to his better nature. Strongly and clearly to state it is to convince men of it. A careful discrimination between the essential and the non-essential, between the truth itself and the interpretation put upon it, is of prime importance in its presentation.

This clear presentation of Bible truth will be helped by a plain statement of the views of its opponents. Much of what is called modern skepticism owes its influence more largely to its setting than to that which it contains. Its form of statement is generally scientific. It bears the marks of learning. It is generally put forth with much literary and scientific pretension. In fact, almost all the books which are influential in spreading skepticism do so largely in virtue of the popular belief in the superior abilities and learning of those who write them. Modern criticism affects scholarship, and is largely dependent upon that impression of its scholarship which has gained wide currency. The *Life of Jesus*, by Strauss, which caused such widespread alarm, owes much of its power to the imposing scholarship with which it was presented. The best method of counteracting its influ-

ences and that of many similar works is to state in clear language its positions and arguments. They are much less formidable when dressed in the plain language of the people. On the other hand, the truth of the Word of God is the more acceptable the more clearly it is presented. When free from adulteration, when fully and clearly stated, it bears with it its own evidence. Skepticism would rapidly disappear if the skeptic would but read, ponder and practice the life and teachings of Christ, which is the centre of all evangelical doctrine.

The pulpit can most effectively counteract modern skepticism by strong statements of the evidences of its historic facts derived from the Scriptures themselves. The negative side of the argument is better understood than the positive side, the defensive than the offensive. Men often ask, "What is the evidence for the personal historic Christ." A noted lecturer in England said: "The difficulty is not to prove that Christ was believed to be an historical personage after the fourth century, but to bridge over the years between A. D. 1-300. You cannot carry the history of Christ and the history of the Gospel over that terrible chasm of three centuries." (*Reasonable Apprehensions and Reassuring Hints* by Rev. Henry Footman, p. 111). A comparison of Christ's Life as portrayed in the four Gospels compared with the acknowledged Epistles of St. Paul will compel the conviction, "that the Jesus of the four Gospels cannot be the creation or the result of the various myths floating about, and ultimately in the second or even third century crystalized around the figure of Jesus of Nazareth. The historical Christ of St. Paul as discerned through these Epistles makes the mythical theory absolutely incredible" (Same, p. 116). Much work remains for the pulpit in counteracting skepticism, and this old method of scriptural arguments is still the most promising.

The pulpit will further accomplish its task by addressing itself to the conditions and circumstances of those who reject its beliefs. A broad charity for those whose views differ from our own is of primary importance. When men think differently from us it is because of some reason, which to them at least is satisfactory. It may be, and often is, wilful and unreasonable, but it is nevertheless to be treated with Christian forbearance. We must take into account temperament, tendency and training. One who has been trained to skepticism, who has breathed its atmosphere constantly, to whom God is scarcely a name, and Christ unknown, demands careful consideration and kindly dealing. Then, too, the professional training, which many have received, demands attention. Studies which have no direct relation to God's truth, but which involve only scientific methods, call specially for careful modes of address. Little is gained for truth by attack, much by appeal; little is accomplished by sarcasm, much by kindly sympathy. There need be no lack of loyal maintenance of our doc-

trines, while we approach with interest and regard those who are opposed to us.

The most powerful method of counteracting modern skepticism, and indeed all skepticism is by an example corresponding to our faith, and the personal influence which grows out of such a life. The life which Christianity produces is its highest evidence. In the character of the Christ, delineated in the New Testament, there are no defects. The Christian is the acknowledged ideal man. "By their fruits ye shall know them," was the Savior's test. The pulpit must maintain the highest standard of living. In the minister and in his people must be reflected the life of Christ. In the proportion in which the spirit and life of Christianity are embodied in the Church will skepticism disappear.

Cardinal Newman, in one of his University sermons, in answering the question how the Truth has been propagated says: "I answer that it has been upheld in the world, not as a system, not by books, not by argument, nor by temporal power, but by the personal influence of such men as have already been described, who are at once the teachers and the patterns of it." "Here first is to be taken into account the natural beauty and majesty of virtue, which is more or less felt by all but the most abandoned. I do not say virtue in the abstract, virtue in a book, virtue in a man. Men persuade themselves with little difficulty, to scoff at principles, to ridicule books, to make sport of the names of good men; but they cannot bear their presence; it is holiness embodied in personal form, which they cannot steadily confront and bear down: so that the silent conduct of a conscientious man secures for him from beholders a feeling different in kind from any which is created by the mere versatile and garrulous reason."

It is this personal, silent influence, going out from every church, and from every Christian home through the influence of the pulpit, that is the last resort, the final method of counteracting modern skepticism. Beautiful living is a more powerful demonstration of the truth than strong thinking. In training men and women to the highest forms of spiritual truth, and to the noblest living the pulpit will find its loftiest sphere and its most lasting influence. There is danger lest the other and more popular methods may overshadow this one, and it needs special emphasis now when the polemical method is more popular and therefore more likely to be adopted.

This is well illustrated in the method of Paul. When before Festus, how appropriate his appeal. He addressed himself to the character and mind of the man to whom he appealed. When before Agrippa, expert in Jewish customs, how suitable his masterly question and answer. "King Agrippa believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest." When at Athens, he turns their thoughts from the unknown God whom they ignorantly worshipped, to the living God,

with a tact and fitness that fills us with admiration and surprise. No one will question the wisdom of Paul's methods or the grandeur of his teachings. His writings are the depository of the best thought of his age and of all ages. But his life, travels, and sacrifices, these have made him immortal. His words without his life, would have been inspiring, but with his example they are irresistible.

So of the Master himself. He was the great teacher. No instructions like his. But O that wonderful life. It "is the miracle of history." Men have tried to show how other teachings have resembled his, but no one ventures to compare any other life with his. In the midst of the world's questionings of thought, in the midst of its turmoils and struggles for place and power, the pulpit proclaims a single life, the life of Jesus, a single death, the death of Jesus, a solitary resurrection, the resurrection of Jesus. He is the best antidote to the skepticism of this age and of all ages. The verdict of all investigation, must ever be in harmony with the utterance of Paul: "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." His own declaration is the best expression of the duty of the pulpit. It is to exalt Christ. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto me."

Other methods may be in their measure effective, this method, accompanied by the Holy Spirit, must be triumphant.

## VIII.—GEMS AND CURIOSITIES FROM A LITERARY CABINET.

NO. IV.

BY REV. ARTHUR T. PIERSON, D.D., PHILADELPHIA.

56. *Blessed and Blessing.* Gen. xii. 2. Grass-feeding animals while cropping their pastures are scattering and disseminating the seeds of the grasses; and the birds and insects while thrusting their beak or proboscis deep down into the nectaries of the flowers, are gathering and depositing again the fertilizing pollen.

57. *Thos. Chalmers.* Guthrie said: "Men of his calibre are like mighty forest trees, we do not know their size till they are down."

58. *Evolution.* Prof. Dana is reported to have stated in a recent lecture that "No evidences have ever been found of any inferior race from which men could have sprung. The similarity between the recent study of Nature and the Mosaic law ought to satisfy the doubting students of Nature of the truth of the creation as related in the first chapter of Genesis."

59. *Betterton's Epigram.*

"You in the pulpit tell a story;  
We on the stage show facts."

This is the original, which Whitefield used to quote as follows: "Betterton, the actor, said to the Lord Bishop of London, 'We actors speak of things imaginary as though they were real; you clergymen speak of things real as though they were imaginary.'"

60. *The Wonders of an Egg.* Mr. Matthieu Williams, in one of his lectures, says: "Every one who eats his matutinal egg eats a sermon and a miracle. Inside of

that smooth, symmetrical, beautiful shell lurks a question which has been the Troy town for all the philosophers and scientists since Adam. Armed with the engines of war—the microscope, the scales, the offensive weapons of chemistry and reason—they have probed and weighed and experimented; and still the question is unsolved, the citadel unsacked. Prof. Bokorny can tell you that albumen is composed of so many molecules of carbon and nitrogen and hydrogen, and can persuade you of the difference between active and passive albumen, and can show by wonderfully delicate experiments what the aldehydes have to do in the separation of gold, from his complicated solutions; but he cannot tell you why from one egg comes a ‘little rid hin’ and from another a bantam. You leave your little silver spoon an hour in your egg-cup, and it is coated with a compound of sulphur. Why is that sulphur there? Wonderful, that evolution should provide for the bones of the future hen! There is phosphorus also in that little microcosm: and the oxygen of the air, passing through the shell, unites with it, and the acid dissolves the shell, thus making good, strong bones for the chick and at the same time thinning the prison walls.”

61. *A Fable about Preaching.* “Once on a time the Christian faith heard of the threatening and formidable incursion of her foes, so she determined to muster her preachers and teachers to review their weapons, and she found beyond all her expectations every thing prepared. There was, namely, a vast host of armed men; strong, threatening forms, weapons which they exercised admirably, brightly flashing from afar. But as she came nearer she sank almost into a swoon; what she had thought iron and steel were toys; the swords were made of the mere lead of words; the breast plates, of the soft linen of pleasure; the helmets, of the wax of plumed vanity; the shields were of papyrus, scrolled over with human opinions; the colors were spider webs of philosophical systems; the spears were thin reeds of weak conjecture; the cannon was Indian reed; the powder, poppy seed; the balls, of glass. Through the indolent neglect of their leaders, they had sold their true weapons and substituted these; moreover, they had sallied forth in their own strength forgetting to take with them the Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God.”

62. *Spiritual Culture and Art.* The Duke of Northumberland, in an address at the Alnwick Art Exhibition, said to the students: “In addition to the cultivation of the intellect, cultivate the *spiritual part* of your nature, without which all art will comparatively assume a low level. It was a devotional feeling which animated all the great masters, who, at any time, have left lasting marks in the history of art, or occupied a great space in history. Whether you take the early Greek artists, the Egyptian, or the Roman, you will find, more especially in the first two, that the great periods in which their art flourished and triumphed were when it was exercised upon devotional purposes. So with mediæval art, wherein all the great works have been made through the means of that devotional feeling; and I think it is the want of this feeling to which, in a measure, the comparative poorness of modern art may be attributed, and from which it arises that so many modern edifices, and so many results of statuary art, are calculated rather to deface than to improve our great towns.”

63. *Death.* The stanza, given below, was written by Mrs. Barbauld in extreme old age. Our admiration grows with every reading, and it seems to us increasingly beautiful. The poet Rogers regarded it as one of the finest things in English literature. Henry Crabbe Robinson says that he repeated the stanza to Wordsworth twice, and then heard him muttering to himself, “I am not in the habit of grudging people their good things, but I wish I had written those lines.” It is stated that in his last moments Dr. Fuller said to his nephew, Dr. Cuthbert, on taking leave of him, “Good night, James—but it will soon be good morning!” Perhaps the echo of this stanza was in the ear of the dying preacher:



"Life! we have been long together,  
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather;  
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear,  
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, a tear;  
Then steal away; give little warning;  
Choose thine own time.  
Say not, Good-Night! but, in some brighter clime,  
Bid me, Good-Morning!"

A lady once asked Mr. Wesley, "Supposing that you knew that you were to die at twelve o'clock to-morrow night, how would you spend the intervening time?" "How, madam?" he replied. "Why, just as I intend to spend it now. I should preach this evening at Gloucester, and again at five to-morrow morning; after that I should ride to Tewksbury, preach in the afternoon, and meet the societies in the evening. I should then repair to friend Martin's house, who expects to entertain me, converse and pray with the family as usual, retire to my room at ten o'clock, commend myself to my heavenly Father, lie down to rest, and wake up in glory."

64. *An Oriental Myth.* When the Creator fashioned the birds they were at first without wings. With gorgeous plumage and sweet voices endowed, they knew not yet how to soar. Then He made wings alone, and bade the birds go take these burdens up and bear them. At first they seemed a load, but as they carried them upon their shoulders cheerfully and patiently, lo! they grew fast. The burdens became pinions, and that which once they bore now bore them up to realms of cloudless day.

We are the wingless birds and our duties are the pinions. When at the beck of God we first assume them they may seem but burdens. But if we cheerfully and patiently bear them we shall find them less and less a load. The yoke will be easy and the burden will be light, till we shall at last discover that we who were once but servants are now freemen, free to rise on wings, as eagles, free to soar aloft toward God and Heaven. To do His will shall thus become our delight.

65. *The Triumvirate of Authors:* Hooker, Barrow, Taylor. "Hooker claims the foremost rank in sustained and classic dignity of style, in political and pragmatical wisdom. To Barrow must the praise be assigned of the closest and clearest views, and of a taste the most controlled and chastened; but in imagination, in interest, in that which more properly and exclusively deserves the name of genius, Taylor is to be placed before either. Hooker awes most, and is the object of our reverence; Barrow convinces most, and is the object of our admiration; but Jeremy Taylor persuades and delights most, and is the object of our love."—*Dr. Rust's Sermon at Taylor's Funeral.*

66. *We Must Consider Times and Seasons.* George Müller says that he first asks and settles this question concerning any proposed measure: "Is this the Lord's work?" Then, "is it my work?" Then, "is this the Lord's way?" And last, not least, "is this the Lord's time?"

67. *The Train is moving.* Dr. Withrow tells an interesting story of the Union Convention called by G. H. Stuart, in Philadelphia, years ago. D. L. Moody, after an hour of dreadful distance and coldness, said, "Let us pray!" and prayed with mighty force and fire that God would melt all hearts and fuse His thought into them. Dr. Charles Hodge and Dr. Musgrave, walking out together, both old men, Dr. Musgrave said: "Charley, this train is moving, and if you are going to get aboard you'd better hurry."

68. *The Perversion of the Press.* "The English Society for the Suppression of Vice destroyed 129,681 indecent prints, 16,220 illustrated books, five tons of letter-press of same sort, 16,000 sheets of songs, besides copperplates, printing-presses, etc. Each prosecution cost \$150."



## SERMONIC SECTION.

## SANCTITY OF VOWS.

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

*I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people.*—PSALMS, cxvi: 14.

A vow is a solemn engagement or promise made to Almighty God, either positively of things which are known to be agreeable to His will, or negatively to abstain from things which are believed to be offensive. Vows may be displeasing to God for several reasons. For example, a vow may promise that which is in itself sinful; as when the conspirators among the Jews "bound themselves under a curse, that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul." Such a vow is both an injury and an insult to God. It is an insolent attempt, by counter legislation, to cancel the eternal law of right. Or a vow may undertake that which is impossible; as when a man engages that henceforth he will never have an ill thought—whereby he converts what is an infirmity into a positive crime. Or a vow may be frivolous, undertaking to do that which is useless, or something entirely outside of the sphere of obligation and duty—in which case it becomes an act of will worship, and is an impertinent trifling with God. Or without entering into these minute specifications, I may say in general, that the disposition out of which a vow springs may itself be displeasing to God; as when we engage to do something by way of compensating God for a lack of service in the past; or when we offer a consideration to Him for blessings He shall confer. In all such cases we betray an unworthy conception of God, pointedly rebuked by Him in the fiftieth Psalm: "thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as

thyself; but I will reprove thee and set them in order before thine eyes."

Vows of this description are to be discountenanced as constituting a system of mere will worship, and as being filled with the spirit of self-righteousness. And it is a curious fact, well worthy of our remembrance, that every form of self-righteousness, though it wear upon its front such an air of goodness, is nothing but a bribe to induce God to enter into a compromise of His own solemn and eternal claims. We can afford on this ground to take our self-righteousness and trample it in the dust, and make it our glory, that if we rejoice it will be in the imputed righteousness of our Redeemer.

You perceive from these instances that vows incautiously made may prove a snare to the soul; and, therefore, it is that the Hebrew ritual, which, as a grand collection of symbols descended into the details of religious life, undertook so carefully to regulate this matter of vows. There were statutes determining when the vows of a minor were lawful, and under what circumstances he might be discharged from the same; and there were statutes concerning the redemption of vows, exhibiting a complete tariff of valuation. All which was designed to be restrictive and cautionary: showing even under that imperfect Dispensation how careful we must be as to our vows in the presence of Almighty God.

On the other hand, there are vows which are right vows, and which ought to be made; vows that engage us to do things that were originally binding upon us; vows made under a sense of the Divine presence and the Divine authority. Hence, in Deuteronomy it is written. "When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not

[Many of the full sermons and condensations published in this REVIEW are printed from the authors' manuscripts; others are specially reported for this publication. Great care is taken to make these reports correct. The condensations are carefully made under our editorial supervision.—Ed.]

slack to pay it; for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee." And so in Ecclesiastes. "When thou vowest a vow unto God defer not to pay it; for He hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldst not vow, than thou shouldst vow and not pay." And so the Psalmist, under inspiration of the Holy Ghost, again and again declares his purpose to pay unto the Lord the vows which he has made—to pay them in the sanctuary, and in the presence of all the people. You will find it in the 22d Psalm, in the 66th, in the 76th, and in the 116th Psalm, twice repeated: "I will pay my vows unto the Lord in the presence of all his people."

LET US THEN INQUIRE SOMEWHAT MINUTELY INTO THIS OBLIGATORINESS OF THE VOWS WHICH ARE VOLUNTARILY MADE.

I. *They are distinct and conscious assertions of our religious nature.* This religiousness of nature forms the characteristic feature by which man is distinguished from the brute creation. The higher forms of instinct and the lower processes of reason shade into each other, until it requires the microscope of a subtle dialectic to discriminate between the two. Undoubtedly there is in the brute a natural affection founded upon blood relationship, which is wonderfully similar to that class of affections in man founded upon the same tie of kindred. The brute has passions which marvelously resemble the passions of the human heart, such as anger, resentment, and even gratitude. So that when you seek to put your finger upon the exact line of demarcation between the man and the brute, you find it only in the principle of worship. Man is religious, the beast is not. Man has a conscience—recognizes right and its opposite, wrong—feels the obligation to practice the one and abstain from the other; while none of these utterances of conscience, none of these exercises of a purely religious nature can be detected in the brute.

It is true, this religious element in

man oftentimes exhibits itself in a dim, inarticulate way: for instance, in the dissatisfaction with the very blessings and joys of our earthly life. A strange restlessness often mars the happiness of those most favored by fortune: for it is a singular fact, open to daily observation, that the prosperous, even more than the unfortunate, exhibit the peevish fretfulness which springs out of this chronic discontentment with life. Yet, how few analyze this discontent and trace it to its source! How few recognize in it the spiritual hunger of the soul, the Divine principle in man, which craves an angel's food and cannot be satisfied with the serpent's dust! It has riches, riches that it cannot count—yet it is restless and unhappy. Flowers wreathed in garlands round the brow, wither at last into crowns of thorn to pierce with pain and shame. All this is of the earth, earthly: whilst man needs the divine, to feed the divine—the spiritual, to feed the spiritual—that which is soul-like, to feed the soul. In all this longing for the spiritual, the immortal, and the divine, we trace the outworking of that religious element which makes a man akin to his Creator.

This religious nature exhibits itself in another form, in the dim sense of sin and guilt. Man falls below his own ideal. He looks into the chambers of his soul and finds its walls covered with inscriptions of evil. Execrable thoughts, which have never been embodied in act, or formulated in speech, disclose the vileness of his spirit, and he turns away with unutterable disgust from himself. In this deep humiliation, however, there is no humility. No penitential sorrow bows the soul before the Throne of Grace, with sincere and honest confession of sin. This self-loathing is nothing more than the shame which is felt when one discovers his spiritual nakedness in the presence of a Holy God.

So, too, in the apprehension of the beautiful and the sublime, as man wanders through the earth and feeds upon the types of beauty and of grandeur

which exist in nature. What are these apprehensions of taste but the reflection, in the material or intellectual sphere, of the higher forms of beauty and glory which reside in the moral? Though but the shadow of the true, it proves the substance to exist by which the shadow confessedly is cast. If man had not a soul, there would be no taste for the beautiful upon earth; a taste which ought to rise to a higher plane, and see the beautiful in God. The highest conception of beauty is only reached, when we can look upon the face of Him who is "glorious in holiness," and "fearful in praises;" and all the forms of loveliness on earth, which gratify the sense of taste, are but the faint types of the spiritual glory in which a spiritual taste is to find its joy forever.

But, far above all these indistinct betrayals of a religious sentiment in man, is that deep confession of obligation which is recorded in the vow. It is made with the most perfect consciousness of personal responsibility, in the presence and under the authority of that august Being to whom all obedience and worship are due. And it is void of all significance and solemnity, if the whole religiousness of man's nature does not find expression in it. To this the solemnity of the vow is due, which must be felt by him who does not wish to become guilty before God. It cannot be violated or ignored without crucifying the better instincts of our nature, and without spunging out God's image impressed upon the human soul. Such, then, is the obligation of the vow taken before God, as founded in the conscious exercise of the religious principle planted within us by the Creator himself.

II. *A vow is the acknowledgment of moral responsibility, and a confession of guilt before God.* There is a vast deal of shuffling amongst men, as to this matter of responsibility before God. You approach a sinner, and, in order to make him rely upon the power and grace of God, you remind him of his helplessness. He takes issue with

you at once, and resents it as a personal insult. Because you seek to convince him of his dependence upon divine grace, he asks with scorn if you desire to convert him into a senseless machine. You approach the same man a second time, and press upon him the obligations of duty—the things which he ought to do, and the things which he ought to abstain from—the virtues he should practice, and the vices he should forsake. He turns upon you with the plea of inability, and confesses that very helplessness which, when charged upon him before, was considered a personal indignity. I am not presenting to you a metaphysical abstraction, but that which practically meets us in daily life. I call to mind, in the early years of my ministry, a young man who came into my study one Monday morning with flushed face, and burst into the following invective: "You preachers seem privileged to utter palpable contradictions in the pulpit. You, yesterday, declared the inability of the sinner, and then turned right around and urged him to repent and believe, under the peril of final perdition." I had been over that ground too much myself, not to know every foot of it. I understood the case. I did not raise my pen from the paper upon which I was writing, but said quietly to him: "If you can repent of sin without any help from God, all I have to say is go and do it." Instantly the confession burst from his lips: "I have been trying to do it all the morning, but I cannot." Then said I, "let us go to Him who can;" and we knelt down together in that study, and laid the case before Him who is able to take away the heart of stone and to give the heart of flesh. That young man, now gray with age, has been thirty years preaching the gospel of gracious help to sinners perishing in their helplessness.

I give this instance, for the simple reason that I do not intend this morning to argue the case at all. I am willing to carry it by appeal to the bar of your own conscience and await its reply. That reply will be given; and it

is always given with greatest emphasis, whenever a vow is made. In this vow it is confessed that God holds man responsible for what he does. There is no significance in the vow, if it is not based upon the recognition of his individual responsibility before the law. And as this springs from a conscience under the pressure of guilt, it is a confession of judgment identical in character with that which will be made by the sinner at the bar of God in the last day. On this ground also I base the solemnity and obligation of the vow; that it is a distinct acknowledgment of individual responsibility under the law, and is therefore a confession of guilt.

III. *The vow is a voluntary act of the will, and is, therefore, of the nature of a covenant with Almighty God.* When I first came to this city to live, a prominent banker said to me: "I have transacted business in large cities before, but never in a place where the sense of commercial honor was as strong as it is here. A man comes into my bank, throws upon the counter a roll of money, and says count it and put it to my credit. There is not present a witness to the transaction; he takes not a stroke of my pen in acknowledgment of that roll of money, but turns upon his heel, walks into the street and engages in his business."

You gentlemen who are engaged in commercial business, can better say than I whether the same sense of honor obtains to-day which obtained twenty-five years ago. "It is not," said this banker, "because men are more honest here than they are elsewhere, but because the unwritten law is more stringent than the law that is written: and the man who is unprincipled cannot afford to be dishonest, because he will lose more by the fall of his credit than he can hope to gain by the most successful fraud." But for all that, an agreement which is written upon parchment, and signed with the names of the parties, and attested by witnesses, is beyond question a more binding and reliable instrument, than any engagement purely oral can possibly be.

For this two reasons can be assigned: one is that the engagement, when written, is in a form to be issued before a court of justice, and carries the proof along with it; another is, that the transaction itself is more deliberate, entered into between the parties with a greater degree of circumspection, and is, therefore, acknowledged by them as more binding upon the conscience.

So a vow, when made with due deliberation, whether written or unwritten, is recognized before the bar of conscience as having the force of a written contract. It is an agreement between the soul and the maker of the soul. It bears the signature of the parties to the contract, and is, therefore, of the nature of a covenant. The man who violates his vow, has broken his covenant with God, and has falsified his word in the form which was most impressive and most solemnly given. Upon this ground then is based the solemnity of the vow. Being a solemn covenant between the soul and God, it cannot be broken, if you will not think the word too severe, without the guilt of perjury.

IV. *Every proper vow is in the direction of original duty, as well as in the direction of offered grace.* A vow is, therefore, doubly binding. It has absorbed into itself an obligation that existed before. It has embodied a duty which was in itself binding, and by its form ratifies, endorses and strengthens that obligation under the sanction of an oath. A voluntary pledge to perform that which is in itself a duty, rivets the obligation upon the conscience, and leaves no loophole for escape. But the vow is also in the direction of offered grace. Being made to Almighty God, with entire reliance upon Divine aid in its fulfillment, it is clearly in the line of the grace which is offered to man.

From this aspect of the case, all the difficulties which threaten to arrest the fulfillment of this vow, instantly disappear. No plea of inability can avail where a man has promised to do that which he ought to do, and where the promise is conditioned upon the

strength which invariably accompanies a hearty reliance upon the Divine Covenant. Almighty God never issued a command which did not contain within itself a draft upon the power which shall enable the creature to do all that it is his duty to do. In all cases, therefore, the inability is taken out of the way, whenever we attempt what God plainly commands, and with reliance upon the Divine strength and proffered grace.

Here, for example, is the man with the withered hand, standing before the Savior. The command goes forth, "Stretch forth thy hand." The paralytic can, of himself, as soon create a world as control that lifeless limb. But the command of Him who has the power to enable, is the sufficient pledge that life will issue from the Giver of life to that withered arm. It is stretched forth and becomes whole as the other, simply because between the lines of the commandment was contained a check upon the bank of Divine strength for all the ability which the man had not in himself, but which grace would communicate. Do you desire a stronger instance even than this? There is Lazarus, four days in his tomb—and there is the Almighty voice which says, "Lazarus, come forth." How absurd this call upon a corpse, except that it issues from the lips of Him who is the author of all life. It was the life going out with the command that animated the sleeping form, brought back the soul which had escaped, bound together the constituent parts of the human being; and the reunited soul and body came forth from the prison of the grave. No plea of inability avails where Jehovah commands. To him who undertakes, in the Divine strength, to do that which is enjoined by Divine authority, there comes a grant of power by which to fulfill the obligation. For the reason then that the vow lies in the line of original duty and of offered grace, it is doubly binding upon the conscience.

V. *The vow is made under the sanction of the eternal world.* I suppose it is wrong—but I have not been able to

help wishing that I could have just for two minutes a view of the realities of Eternity; and then come back to my work, under the pressure of this knowledge. It is probably a wrong thought, for the simple reason that it contravenes the fundamental law of this dispensation, which is unquestionably the law of faith. Now, when a vow is rightly made, the soul must feel, to some extent, the powers of the world to come. For a moment the spiritual eye has been opened to catch a partial glimpse of all that is blessed in heaven, of all that is dreadful in hell, of all that is awful in the judgment day, of all that is sublime in the vastness of the silent eternity to which we are hastening. How solemn the obligation becomes under the pressure of such a sanction as this!

My hearers, there are few men who have not vowed more than once in their lifetime. There are few in this audience to-day, who have not, once and again—in times of serious illness, in times when death was threatening to invade their home—entered into solemn engagements with God. Do all these vows bind us? The question must be asked at the bar of conscience, as it must be answered at the bar of final judgment. How careful then should we be in this making of vows! It is a fearful dilemma when a man finds that whether he keeps or violates the vow, he is held guilty before God. How careful should we be to assume only such obligations as are sustained by the authority of God, and which we know will be discharged in the strength Divine grace will impart! And yet, my brethren—oh, that I must say what is so sad to say—in religion, where the vow is the most solemn, the vow is the most thoughtlessly taken and oftentimes the most sadly violated. Men who would cut off their right arm before they would falsify their word to a fellow man, will oftentimes turn away from the most solemn engagements which they have made to Almighty God. It would not be difficult to put the finger upon the names of those on our Church rolls, who solemnly vowed to be the Lord's

for time and for eternity—and where are they to-day? All that can be said of them is that, like Demas, they have “forsaken us, having loved this present world.” They never appear in the sanctuary; they never sit at the communion table; they make no pretension to the religion they once so solemnly professed. They have not even the courtesy to say to the Church they have forsaken, “I was mistaken, I had not the change of heart that I thought I had.” They just go away and toss these solemn vows as pieces of unwritten paper behind their backs. Those vows will remain a burden upon their hearts, as surely as they live. A vow, solemn as this, cannot be openly violated, without drawing upon the soul a deeper guilt than that of simple neglect. Parents, too, come into the house of God with their little children for baptism, and promise, as solemnly as a human soul can promise anything, that they will train these children for God; and then turn from the sanctuary to dedicate them as absolutely to the world.

There is need of much searching of heart in this matter of covenant keeping with God: as there will certainly be inquisition at the last day, into the fidelity with which those vows have been fulfilled. And long before this last account is rendered, we may be made aware of the evil resulting from this culpable indifference to most sacred obligations. Scarcely anything is more injurious to personal piety than the habitual levity which trifles with the interests of the soul. Even the profaneness which tramples them in the dust with a total disregard, deadens the sensibilities no more than the flippancy which can sport with the awful realities of Eternity and God. In view of the worldliness which is sweeping like a flood over the Church, we may well ask whither we are drifting. It is no slight cause of alarm when no visible line of conduct separates the Church from the world. We have need of tears when the testimony of God’s people, which used to bow the wicked in deference to its authority, is either unheeded, or re-

ceived with mockery and taunt. May God give to each of us grace to look after the vows we have made—lest they rise only to reproach us when the day of redemption and forgiveness shall have passed forever!

---

#### GOOD FROM EVIL.

BY EUGENE BERSIER, D.D. [REFORMED CHURCH], PARIS.\*

*The evil you thought to do me, God changed into good* (French translation).—Gen. 1: 20.

BRETHREN, when Jacob died in Egypt his sons were afraid lest their brother Joseph, no longer restrained by their father’s presence, would now proceed to take his revenge. This page of the Bible creates a painful impression. The fact was, many years had elapsed since Joseph had been sold by his brethren, and since that time he had granted them the most generous forgiveness. How, under such noble appearances, was it possible for them to believe that he had been concealing implacable, personal malice within the depths of his soul? How could they think thus of him? Nevertheless, the author of Genesis declares, with the homely frankness often so striking in these narratives, that the sons of Jacob were in dread of resentment from their brother. In reality, this is not so surprising. Complete forgiveness of injuries is a superhuman virtue. Not one of the pagan moralists ever enjoined it except for reasons of policy. Buddhism alone forms an exception, and it is in one of its books that this sublime saying is found: “Imitate the sandal-wood which perfumes even the axe that smites it.” But the passive sweetness required here by Buddhism does not yet attain unto Christian love for one’s enemies. The men of the Old Testament almost all pursued their dreams of vengeance without a scruple. Jesus Christ was the first to make of love an active power which should consume all hate; but you know how rarely His thought was

\* Translated from the French for the HOMILETIC REVIEW, by Mrs. J. H. W. Stuckenberg, Berlin, Germany.



comprehended and His will put into practice. We might even state, with some show of right, that of all rancor, the religious is the most unyielding; it is in harmony with the principle that there is nothing worse than the corruption of what ought to be best.

Joseph, however, who appears to us one of the purest characters of the patriarchal epoch, had entirely forgiven the crime of his brethren, and now when they make a new appeal to his mercy he explains the motive of his pardon by this profound reply: "The evil you thought to do me, God changed into good."

To-day, while considering these words I desire to show the unceasing process by means of which God brings good results out of the evil committed by man; in this divine course of action we shall discover first a light to illumine the ways of Providence, and next, an example we ought to follow.

God permits evil. The holy Being permits pollution, the righteous Being permits iniquity, the Being who is love itself permits revolt among His creatures. This fact is for us an occasion of trouble and offense that recurs constantly. Take ten atheists, and nine will inform you that it is this that prevents their belief in God. And yet, as we reflect upon it, we are forced to acknowledge that absolute impossibility of evil in the creature would be the negation of all liberty. God, in His infinite wisdom, has decided that liberty with all its consequences, even the most terrible, is worth more than the absence of liberty.

God permits evil, but from this evil He constantly is extracting good; such is our belief. Acknowledge boldly, that if good were not to overcome evil God would be vanquished, or, rather, there would be no God; there would be no providential purpose in the world's history, no longer any order in the world, nothing but capricious alternatives of light and shade, joy and suffering, justice and arbitrariness succeeding each other over the surface of our planet throughout the centuries until that day

when, like a used-up star, it will flicker out in the skies. The good must overcome the evil, perhaps not during the limited space of the life of one generation of men, or of one nation—God's measure is not our measure, and centuries to Him are but as minutes to us—but during the total history of humanity; the ultimate purpose of the world, the only one which explains to us its reason for existing, ought to prove the divine goodness. Just as Balaam, the untrue prophet, sent to curse Israel was obliged to bless it, so this world, whose blasphemy has mounted to the skies throughout hundreds of years will join its voice to the universal concert of creatures who will exclaim through all eternity, "Glory be to God!"

This law by which God extracts good from evil seems plain to us when we read in sacred history of those in Israel who were the servants of Jehovah; we are struck with the manner in which a superior wisdom directs the slightest incidents of their lives, turning to their advantages the obstacles, the persecutions and the griefs that often fell to their lot. In the life of Joseph we seem to follow this providential leading with our eyes: his abandonment, the slander touching him, and his captivity, all served only to prepare his glory. The proscription which was to destroy Moses is the very cause of his extraordinary greatness; the exceptional trials which burst upon David, his elevation followed by so much bitterness, the poignant contrasts in his destiny, set all the chords of his soul to vibrating and produced those marvellous hymns that have consoled and strengthened so many thousand souls under every sky. It was in the crucible of trial that the divine gold of prophecy was purified, and Solomon, in all the glory of his earthly prosperity, never found the accents of the true servants of God. Israel was trampled under foot by the nations, scattered like dust to every wind by exile, and it is by this calamity without a parallel that it became throughout the ancient world the witness for Jehovah.



Happy Israel would have slept under its vine and fig tree; a martyr, it carried the name of the Eternal to all parts of the world.

But the providential law we are studying never seems more evident than in the life of Jesus Christ. Here it is that evil assumes its most frightful intensity, and it is from out of this very excess that the salvation of humanity was wrought. Recall to your memory all the humiliation, all the suffering, of which this existence was so full: material poverty, the profound ignorance and coarseness of those who surrounded Him, the fanatical prejudices of the people, the malignant cunning of the Pharisees, the abandonment by His disciples, Peter's denial, Judas' treason, Pilate's dastardly conduct, the insults and humiliation in the pretorium, the mortal anguish of Gethsemane, the crown of thorns, the purple mantle, the brutality of His executioners, the curses of the priests and the crowd, the darkness in that supreme hour—oh the frightful array of evils! What of it all! Not one, from out of which some blessing has not been the result; from out of this incommensurable abyss of woe, God, for nineteen centuries, has kept flowing a never failing stream of consolation, joy and hope. From that cross salvation issued; from that death, life eternal.

Such is the divine method. Thus God is extracting good from evil every hour. The old confession of faith of our fathers expresses this truth in simple, rugged language: "We believe," are the words, "that God governs and manages everything, disposing, ordering according to His will all that happens in the world; not that He is therefore the author of evil, or that the defilement of sin should be imputed to Him, seeing that His will is the sovereign and infallible rule of all righteousness and equity; but that He has admirable ways of making such use of the devils and the wicked that He knows how to convert into good the evil they do and of which they are guilty. And thus, while confessing that nothing takes place without the provi-

dence of God, we adore in humility the secrets concealed from us, not demanding to know anything beyond our measure, but rather applying to our use what is revealed to us in Holy Scripture in order to give us certainty and rest inasmuch as God who has all things subject to Him watches over us with a paternal care, so that not even a hair of our head may fall without His will."\* This language is antiquated, but the doctrine it expresses is always effective and thrilling, and I know of nothing which can afford the heart more strength and consolation.

There is in this creed a great light. We also find there a grand example for us. Since the Scriptures require us to imitate God, we ought, like Him, to extract good from evil.

During the Middle Ages alchemy, a strange science, was practiced. Men, often remarkable for intelligence, were carried away by the insane notion that they could transform crude, gross matter into gold. There they remained stooping over crucibles, while without was all the heart-rending misery of those wretched times, poverty, famine, oppression, the gibbet, torture; but they were oblivious to all that, and to the long winters and the cold rains; their fevered imagination was absorbed with the intoxicating dream; liquid gold ran in rivers before their disordered vision.

My brethren, for believing souls there is a divine alchemy that is able to transform evil into good. Evil, viewed as trial, comes to us from three sources: from God, through the afflictions of our life; from men, through their hostility; from ourselves, through our faults.

Afflictions we can meet with revolt, violent or sullen; we may accept them apparently, but with a gloomy apathy that proclaims by our manner what was once inscribed by a widow upon her coat of arms: "Nothing more for me, all is over." We can defy God, or inscribe in place of His august name that name accursed, "Fatality." Or, we can bow our heads and strive to

\*Conf. de la Rochelle, art. VIII.

understand it, seek the divine lesson contained in the trial, the light to illumine the darkness, and find in the midst of the chaos the blessing concealed within, a more vivid realization of our dependence upon God, our delivery from evil, the sanctification of our will and the enlargement of our hearts opened up to sympathy and profound piety.\* There are souls passing through this school every day; by means of the night they attain light, by means of bitterness, the sweet, by means of delusion, hope which no longer deceives. In sickness of the body they find health for the soul, in the most terrible affliction, true love, God, for them, had changed evil into good.

There are trials which come from men, and often they are harder to bear than those coming from God; criticisms, hasty judgments, ill-will, spite, slander, perfidy. Ought all this to be received with a haughty look? Is there no gold in this offensive rubbish, no truth in these attacks? Pride alone can persuade us to believe that: Rest assured that we have much to learn from our enemies.

Let us illustrate that from a different province.

Coming to political affairs, we recognize that free discussion of the acts of government is the very condition of modern society. Woe to the blind powers which suppress it! Woe to those who desire around them none but adulators! Respect for liberty obliges us to accept the opposition of parties in spite of their prejudice, narrowness, ignorance, passionate calumny and ill-will often amounting to fanaticism. Prevent all that; shelter the political arena from every stormy blast, and the nation you have screened from all external agitation will still not be spared; for within that narrow, low hot-house where you will force it to grow, within that moist, close atmosphere, behold what numberless abuses will shoot forth like unwholesome vegetable abominations, wreathing about it until they choke out the very life.

\*See, upon this point, the sermon on The Fruits of Affliction, which appeared in the HOMILETIC REVIEW for December, 1886.

Do you think it is any different in matters pertaining to religion? I will acknowledge my firm conviction, the Church needs discussion, needs attack. Everything is better for it; even slander than content with what she has already attained, or than servile adulation. With what frightful rapidity spiritual abuses germinate! How the passions run free course justifying themselves by invoking the interests of God. How easily truth yields when it is to attain some good end, since the end justifies the means! Greed becomes legitimate when it acts upon pious grounds; shrewdness, a ruse even, seems almost a virtue. Must we discredit an adversary, suppress an importunate voice? It is so easy to mistake violence for zeal, and the adhesion of numbers for the approbation of God. The history of all churches affords illustrations, often heart-rending. Opposition, attacks from men and their fierce criticisms, serve the Church as a warning and prevent her from hedging herself round with pride, or of falling asleep in slothful inertia. It is by means of trials that the Church has grown. Often enemies have been her benefactors. For her, as for her Master, the cross is the instrument of her triumph, that intended for her destruction is the means of her elevation.

Believing souls always have comprehended that. They often express it in admirable terms; take for instance an ancient poem, entitled "Complaint of an Afflicted Church," which our fathers were accustomed to recite two hundred years ago on the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, when they were obliged to flee from France. "Where shall we find the favors divine? Have they quit us never to return? They shall be, O God, the objects of our love. What a flail this Thou hast designed for us! Henceforth, as we implore Thee, we shall approach Thy feet expecting a blow; if perish we must under Thy justice, we shall perish adoring Thee. Thy wrath, would it extinguish us? Then we shall flee to Thy heart. Is extermination Thy design for us? We shall

make that new cause to fear Thee. In spite of ills, in spite of death, we shall bless the stroke Thy hand applies; they are the blows of a tempest, but they bring us into port."

My brethren, that which is true of the whole of a body is also true of the members composing it. Hostility can operate for the good of an individual soul as well as for the Church. For us all, there is a certain profit to be derived from severe judgments, from backbiting, and even from the slander and ill-will of our enemies. We ought to demand of ourselves, first, whether we have not afforded our accusers some handle, since it is rare for a charge to prove all imagination. Enmity is clairvoyant, it has the eyes of a lynx when it comes to discerning our faults and our nothingness; slight indications are enough. Confronted by such criticism, it is a great temptation to retire upon our dignity and raise the cry of slander; upon our power of ignoring that wherein our accusers may be in the right, or that there is a propensity of which they can cure us! Not that the Christian should have little regard for his reputation; that is a trust over which he is obliged to stand guard, and the Scriptures require us to avoid all appearance of evil and to seek those things that are of good report. But whenever a righteous man finds it impossible to please the world in following his conscience, then our Master has said, "Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you." We ought to expect attacks and from these attacks we ought to extract all the profit they may happen to contain. And if slander should prove absolute, and the ill-will without any pretext for it, do not regard it as wholly without blessing. Just as obstacles accumulating in the course of a stream raise its level and give it a more imposing and magnificent flow, so all injuries, all the lies by means of which malevolence attempts to impede true holiness often only assures it a flight of unexpected loftiness. Without the ignominy and the curses of Calvary the world would never have heard that sublime cry, "Father, for

give them, for they know not what they do."

I come finally to the evils resulting from our own faults, and of which we are the responsible authors. Now, I affirm, that even in these humiliating trials there is some good to be attained. Let it be understood that this point does not justify our faults by showing any happy results they can produce. By no means; never, never, can any evil naturally, or directly, bring forth good; we do not gather grapes of thorns, nor draw wholesome water from a poisoned spring. The logical result, and the terrible wages of evil, is evil; a lie engenders greater duplicity, impurity renders lust the more ardent, and the will more feeble, the first movement of vengeance opens the soul to a malignity often infernal, each new fall betrays us more feeble, more disarmed before the power of the tempter, and the last halting place in this frightful progression is the absolute moral servitude expressed by the words of Scripture as "sold unto sin." But when an act of sincere repentance transfers a man from this slavery to the divine domination, then God, in His infinite wisdom, can extract from the evil committed lessons that will be plain to us, and admirable fruits within the interior crucible where the soul renews itself, the faults and crimes of the past will then set free from their impure dross the pure gold of a regenerate will and a heart of humility. It is from the polluted lips of David that those songs of repentance were first let fall, a voice without a parallel for all the believers of the future; it was from the broken heart of that ancient persecutor of the Church, Saul of Tarsus, that there issued that magnificent exposition of the work of grace; and throughout all the centuries of history we may see thousands of souls obedient to an instinct of justice, impelled to repair a past which condemns them by a new life that will glorify God.

Receive instruction from your very faults. Recall your errors in order to prevent spiritual pride, your feebleness and your temptations that you may be

more vigilant in the future, and that the memory of your falls may inspire in you that spirit of mercy which ought to be a distinguishing characteristic of the redeemed of Jesus Christ. May thus the new man in you acquire liberty and strength, and the powers of evil seeking to sweep you over into the abyss oblige you to seek refuge in the haven of eternal salvation.

### AN EASTER SERMON.

BY REV. D. O. CLARK [CONGREGATIONAL],  
WARREN, MASS.

*Why seek ye the living among the dead ?  
... He is not here, but is risen.*—Luke  
xxiv: 5-6.

THE mission and divine authority of Christ are so linked together that without his resurrection His life and death would be shorn of their supernatural power. The Apostle Paul, with his deep insight into the redemptive scheme, bore witness to this fact when he exclaimed: "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching void and your faith is also void." In the mind of Jesus His victory over death was evidently regarded as the climax of His earthly work. Out of His suffering and seeming defeat, were to spring an occasion whereby He could prove the impotence of His enemies and His own unconquerable power. Skeptics have not been slow to recognize the resurrection of our Lord as the great touchstone of Christianity, and hence they have assailed this doctrine most fiercely.

#### I. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESURRECTION.

1. *If Jesus really died and then rose from the dead, Materialism is completely overthrown.* Materialism finds the source of what we call life or spirit in matter and its varied relations. Mind is not a distinct and independent existence apart from matter. The reason there has been only one Socrates or Angelo or Webster, is that no two bodies have ever been formed of like particles, holding the same relations to each other. The great mysteries of the human soul are mysteries which would be solved if we could master the problem of atom-

ical selection and adjustment. On this theory it is evident that that active principle which we are wont to call *man* cannot exist when such a change is wrought in the material organism as to produce the decomposition called death.

If, then, the death and subsequent resurrection of Christ are proven, these ultra views of materialism are completely overthrown.

2. *Pantheism receives its death blow with the establishment of Christ's resurrection.* If the records that bear testimony are true, the risen Christ was identical with the crucified Christ. This memory reproduced the past in a way which made it impossible that he could be other than the one who knew their lives so perfectly. Thus, Pantheism, which makes immortality at best an indistinct, impersonal thing, and even puts an interrogation point after that, finds no foothold, if Christ was raised from the dead.

3. *All far-reaching skepticism is undermined.* Christ pointed to His miracles as proof that He was clothed with Divine authority. No one can deny that as recorded in the New Testament, they are sufficient, in every respect, fully to attest His claims. If we admit this greatest miracle, we may as well admit the minor ones, for there is no room left for a skepticism sufficient to affect the essentials in Christ's character and mission.

We are looking this morning at a question, the magnitude of which should awe every thoughtful mind. Upon its issue hinge eternal interests. If Christ be not raised from the dead, then is our faith void—mere emptiness. He has failed in the supreme test which He himself proposed as proof that He was from God. Not that all His teachings would necessarily be false; the devil, even, sometimes tells the truth—but all his teaching would not be true. He, toward whom is turned the longing gaze of believing millions, would be an impostor.

II. THE FACT OF THE RESURRECTION.  
As to the death of Jesus, there have

never been many so blind to the logic of facts as to claim a doubt. His crucifiers were men who would make sure their work. Pilate had the body officially examined, and, as if to remove all possibility of doubt, one of the soldiers thrust a spear through the heart which had already ceased to beat. That the dead body of our Lord was taken from the cross, placed in Joseph's new tomb, hewn out of the solid rock, the huge stone put in its place and sealed, thus closing the only aperture to the tomb, and a Roman guard, which usually consisted of sixty soldiers, stationed to guard the entrance, are simple historical facts, which also must remain undisputed. It was easy enough to disprove these claims at the time if they were untrue, and the Jews would certainly have done so had it been possible.

Furthermore, that on the third day some remarkable phenomena occurred, chief among which was the disappearance of the body of Jesus over which the Roman soldiers were keeping guard, is a simple fact witnessed alike by friend and foe.

What became of that dead body so securely entombed? By what agency and power was it removed from its rocky fastness? There are only two views which are worthy examination and only one of them can be true. *Either this body was taken away by human hands, or it was raised to life by supernatural power! Which?*

1. Let us first examine the supposition that the work was that of human agency. If so, then it must have been done by either the friends or the foes of Jesus. Allowing that His friends would have done it, the question arises, could they? They had shown themselves to be weak and timorous, having fled as soon as they saw Jesus arrested, and the boldest having denied Him with curses. It seems incredible that they should undertake such a task as overcoming a strong guard of armed soldiers. But no claim was made, by either the soldiers or the Jews, that there was any attempt to use force. That the task could have been done so quietly as not to

alarm the sentry, seems an impossibility. The stones used for such sepulchres were of great weight, and the seal could not be broken and the stone rolled away without a considerable noise. If we suppose that the soldiers all fell asleep and the disciples took advantage of this time to steal the body, we are plunged into a series of difficulties. For a Roman soldier to sleep while on guard was death; that the entire sixty should sleep under such circumstances is preposterous. To be sure there was such a story set afloat by the enemies of Christ, but it bears a falsehood on its very face. "Either," says St. Augustine, "the soldiers were asleep or awake. If they were awake why should they suffer the body to be taken away? If they were asleep how should they know that the disciples took it away?" And if the disciples had removed the body, it is most remarkable that no account of its capture and disposition ever leaked out, especially when to maintain the resurrection meant persecution, imprisonment and death. That such a theft was committed by the friends of Christ is entirely without support.

But that His enemies did it, is, if possible, still less credible. It seems that the Jews understood the words of Christ, that He should rise on the third day, even if the disciples did not, for that is the reason they alleged for demanding a guard. Then why should they do the very thing which would spread the report that He had risen? And, again, if they possessed the body they would certainly have produced it to silence the claim of the disciples that Christ was alive.

The theory that the tomb was robbed by either the friends or foes of Christ, is so entirely without support and involves so many absurdities, that no honest, practical mind can accept it. If this view falls, there is nothing for us to do but accept the only alternative.

2. Christ rose from the dead by supernatural power. And a careful examination of this view brings to its support evidence complex and cumulative.

The death, burial and resurrection of Christ as recorded fulfil even in minute particulars, which are easily traced, a long line of prophecy. Since Christ foretold the fact, if fulfilled, it makes Him stand forth an honest man and what he claimed to be; to reject it gives us the still more wonderful thing—an impostor, living such a life as we know He lived. The New Testament view is the only one which accounts for the action of the Roman soldiers.

Consider the witnesses who bore testimony. There was a vast number of them, many of whom knew Christ intimately and, therefore, could not be deceived. He was recognized and revered by clear sighted, loving women who had often ministered to His wants and had found higher and better lives through His teachings. He was recognized by the apostles, who had been His body guard and were perfectly familiar with His appearance. Thomas put the risen Lord to the severest test which modern science can conceive, and only after every shadow of doubt was removed, fell before Him, exclaiming: "My Lord and my God." At one time He was seen by above five hundred, who, as eye-witnesses gave their testimony. It was a mere question of fact—of identity. Had they seen Christ? Had they touched Him? Had they talked with Him? Had they walked with Him? Had they sat at meat with Him? In all this they could not be mistaken. It is impossible to conceive how evidence could be stronger.

Standing by the open sepulchre in the garden to-day, and lifting my eyes to trace the mass of evidence, the hope that is within me swells as the great mountain of facts rises higher and higher, until its peak is lost, above the gold-fringed clouds. Jesus Christ did triumph over death, and as a risen Savior, goes before His followers in matchless power and glory.

In conclusion, I would urge a few practical thoughts suggested by Christ's resurrection.

1. *We should live less in tombs.* "Why

seek ye the living among the dead?" said the angel to the women who were at the tomb, expecting to find there the lifeless body of Jesus. They had overrated the power of the grave and underrated the power of Christ. With many, the tomb is the supreme ruler of the world, and contains almost everything they value. In our despondent hours how many and how large are life's tombs into which have gone our ambitions, our hopes, our struggles and our joys. It is easy to form a habit of living in our disappointments, brooding over our wrongs, fancied or real, and making dolorous sounds, rattling the dry bones of "It might have been." Really, the grave is not half as large as we think. The spirit of Christ was not laid there, and the grave is not large enough to contain much, nor strong enough to hold much, that is Christ-like in deed, or purpose, or spirit. No life is buried there.

What if the long line of the sainted dead, whose life marches have been hallowed to the world, had gone into the tomb of some bitter disappointment and refused to come forth! What if the loss of departed ones, whose company was almost heaven, had crushed much of the brightest genius—genius whose torch has instead been lighted by the risen spirit power that no grave could hold? Ah! we must away from the tomb. Nothing really noble is there. Nothing immortal is there. Everything Christ-like is risen. Let life, not death, be our companion.

2. *We must trust Christ implicitly.*

Are we to go through life with no living faith? Or are we to hope in that which will prove only a delusion? God forbid. The living way has been set before us. He who is the life of the world has lighted its highway from the cradle, not to, but through the tomb. Down through the valley of the shadow of death He has gone. The rod and the staff, which never failed Him, will not bend beneath our weight, they will support all our sorrows and our fears, for the road and the staff are mighty to deliver.



The resurrection of Christ assures us of our own. "Because I live, ye shall live also," comes to us with no idle meaning. What was once only a savage instinct is now an assured fact. The horizon of our vision is expanded in Christ. Death does not end all. It is but the bursting of the chrysalis which has fettered the soul and forth from its tenement of clay, the undying spirit rises into a more glorious existence. The triumph of Christ, manifest to the world, is His perfect title to be our teacher. And those who learn of Him can never sorrow as those who have no hope. Paul learned of Christ, and life became a grander, diviner thing. "He saw our grave in the furrow of the plough; our burial in the corn dropped in the soil; and our resurrection in the grain bursting its sheath to wave its head in the summer sunshine." John bowed his head on the Master's breast, and caught the true spirit of the Prince of Peace. He saw love enthroned as the soul's monarch. On Patmos he caught glimpses of the hither shore, glorious in eternal light and beauty. Verily, there are mansions there! Have we registered our names in the Book of Life? Then should fear flee away like the dark birds of night before the sun-rising.

O man! why seek ye the living among the dead? Why forget that death is asleep? That "tired we lay our heads on Jesus' bosom and awake in heaven":  
 "On the cold cheek of death, smiles and roses  
 are blending;  
 And beauty immortal awakes from the tomb."

### THE LAW OF CHRISTIAN LIFE.

BY REV. JOHN MATTHEWS, LONDON,  
 ENGLAND.

*Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?—*  
 Acts, ix: 6.

THERE can be no doubt that the peculiarities of Paul's conversion permanently influenced his whole religious life and thought. He was not induced to accept Christ by the teachings of apostles. He did not begin his Christian history by following the unfolding of Christ's life from Bethlehem to

Olivet. At the height of his hostility to the Gospel, he is arrested and smitten down by the glorified Christ. His pride and resistance are overcome by the majesty and gentleness of Jesus. He is convinced that his action against the cause of Christ has been wrong and unwise. He is confident that the despised Nazarene, whose followers he had persecuted, is the Messiah of his race, and the Son of the Highest. All his past life is shattered to pieces before that vision that broke upon him. He is not yet free from the burden of guilt and remorse that sight produced. He is on his way to rest and joy and the light of God's countenance. This result cannot be explained by the events of that hour taken by themselves. All Paul's previous life led up to this, and prepared him for it. His very zeal for Judaism, and the miserable satisfaction he got out of it, convinced him that it was insufficient. He prayed, and studied, and occupied himself on its behalf, and yet he found no peace, no consciousness of God's Fatherly love, no joyous assurance of His favor. Surely God must have designed a more perfect answer to his needs than a system that did so little for him. No, the knowledge of the new faith his contact with Christians gave him, imparted elements of peace, sanctity, and hope he never knew before. He began dimly to see that the facts of Christ's history were not so contrary to the Messianic predictions as he thought at first. The death of Stephen was the sharp arrow that pierced him. A character and end like that could not be based upon a falsehood; and, in the silent meditations of the journey to Damascus his soul wrestled with these doubts and found no resting place until the voice of Christ turned the scale, and the Apostle's heart was won. Paul's whole nature was ever marked by downright earnestness. What had been seen and known by him became at once the law of his life. If Jesus was the Messiah, then His authority must be supreme over his whole career. The ambitions



he had cherished to become the leader of his countrymen, the champion of the ancient faith, perhaps their liberator from tyranny and decay, a successor of Elijah or some ancient prophet, must be given up. He who had come from heaven, and had stooped to conquer the heart of the proud Pharisee, must have a purpose in all this. To know that purpose is Paul's chief desire. His whole heart went out in the cry, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" That cry is the criterion of all true conversion. Some suppose they are converted, because they have had great emotions, have accepted orthodox opinions, and cherished good aspirations. These experiences are only the accessories of conversion. It is only when the will is surrendered to the will of Christ, and Christ is taken as Savior and Lord, that the life of God begins to grow in us. No matter how simple the accompaniments may be, if the will is turned to the Divine, there is the essence of the great change. All ways that do not lead to that lead astray; until we reach that point God's Spirit is in negotiation and controversy with us. If that object be reached, we may have great ignorance, much infirmity, many doubts, but we are in the road to the solution of all. Certainty, holiness, usefulness will be granted to obedience. If any man do my will he shall know the doctrine. Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord.

Viewing this subject broadly in relation to ourselves, let us learn first:

I. *How desirable it is that we should all have from the beginning the plan of our life clearly before us.* No work of any kind can be effectively done without a plan. The mind necessarily proceeds to action after processes of thought, prevision, anticipation of results and foreseen obstacles. Instinct acts from immediate impulse. The man who dispenses with purpose in action, and lives for the occasion, has no certainty, or consistency, is the slave of every passing impulse, and accomplishes little in the battle of life. We want carefully and deeply to look forward, and then to regulate

our action by a well-considered, flexible plan to be gradually filled up and finished. If all Nature were not bound together by a plan, it would be a chaos, in which kingdom would war against kingdom, and all would end in disaster. If the history of a country do not proceed upon a plan in which successive generations co-operate, there is no cumulative progress in its life. The Hebrew race followed a plan. The Greek race had a history which is an epic whole. All great personalities that have blessed mankind have recognized in their life a strategic unity, and have followed their ideal to the end. Why was Carlyle able to accomplish so much and so well as a historian? Because in early days he selected his precise vocation as a historian, and settling down in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, he, year after year, with growing power and speciality, dealt with the events of those times in his lives of Cromwell and of Frederick, and his history of the French Revolution. Why was Darwin able to effect so much for science? Because he recognized early in life as his special destiny the study of living forms, and the conditions of their existence, and gave all his life to that branch of science. Mozart, Geo. Stephenson, Prince Bismarck and German unity. Such a habit saves us from the weakening effect of distracting aims. It raises us above the power of opposing circumstances. It stimulates activity. It produces dependence upon God. It develops energy. It increases gladness by the sight of some good work done. It unites us to all other workers and to the Divine work. Such impressions affected Paul. Consciously and unconsciously as he recognized the new centre and working power of his life and prayed, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

II. *The plan of our life is in the mind of Christ.* He alone has the knowledge, power, all-embracing sympathy, patience, and perfection to make the plan blessed for us and for all.

III. *Jesus Christ progressively unfolds to His disciples His life-plan for them.* He

did so to Paul. But it was revealed through Ananias, a general outline—the details after. Christ's plan is adapted to our capacity—as strength grows we grasp it more clearly.

IV. *The will of Christ may be certainly known by us.* Paul in this case did. In most of his subsequent experiences he knew the mind of Christ in truth and conduct.

May we know the will of Christ certainly in these days? Yes! We have the words of Christ. We have the Spirit of truth. We know certain facts in nature and laws in science. We may also have spiritual certainty. All that we recognize as duty in our clearest moods; all that is in harmony with enlightened conscience; all that is in accord with the word of Christ Himself; all that is productive of deeper spiritual life, is the will of Christ for us.

V. *Times when we should specially breathe this prayer:* 1. *When burdened by sin.* 2. *When seeking the blessedness of a higher life.* 3. *When our way is uncertain.* Such prayer will be answered. God's will be made plain to obedience. When we know that will, however blind or weak, let us seek to do it. All that we ought to do, we can do.

---

#### WORSHIP AND WORK.

BY GEORGE R. VAN DE WATER, D.D.  
[EPISCOPAL], BROOKLYN, N. Y.

LET me on this anniversary, in this informal discourse, direct your serious thought, first to the importance of placing the Eucharistic Feast in the forefront of worship as a means of grace, outranking all others. Without attributing to it any miraculous power, this sacramental service is a means to an end, and that end is to promote a more vital union and fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ in life and works. We worship every Lord's Day in the breaking of bread. We are praying for the general resumption of this ancient usage. The Protestant Reformers saw the abuse of the Supper in the Popish Mass, in the withdrawal of the cup from the laity, and kindred evils. Hence the

infrequency of the Eucharist. But the true idea was, and is, that this is the Lord's Day, the Lord's house, and the Lord's feast. There must be a good reason for it, if any Christian absents himself from this weekly service. Once a month is not enough. We speak of "staying at" the communion, instead of "coming to" it. It is the prominent, conspicuous act of divine worship, to be entered up after repentance, fasting and prayer. So may we come worthily, not "worthy," for none are worthy. As the bread and wine nourish and quicken the body, so may we receive the body and blood of our Lord to our souls after a spiritual manner, even "as oft as we take" these sacred emblems.

Every follower of Christ knows his obligations to his family and his business. He individually is responsible to God; but let me urge upon you the importance of the early morning mid-week celebration of the Eucharist as a privilege not to be undervalued. Do not rest in a merely monthly service. Do not imagine that the frequency of the exercise will rob it of impressiveness. No, we would not go back to the Puritan custom, but we would pray that the time might soon come when this service shall form a part of the worship of every Lord's Day. It restrains from sin as well as incites to holiness. Due preparation for it will alone make its grace efficacious. This exercise of meditation, repentance, prayer and fasting brings a blessing, too, as well as the Holy Communion.

It is now seven years, almost to a day, since I first came to you. It was at an early Eucharist that I met you. That honored man of God aided, our spiritual father [Rev. Dr. Diller] who for thirty and eight years ministered here in all fidelity. He said that he hoped that the weekly communion would continue to be more and more appreciated. It has been. I have had greater pleasure in seeing so many young men present, and also at the meeting of the *Navaniskoi*, where recently I heard a paper from one of them on the privilege and blessing of this weekly service, at which, of

all places, Christ is nearest and most real in His presence.

Now for Parish Work, for the blessings of the Eucharist are nothing unless they inspire us to work for Christ. Our time is short. Our talents are many. In this great city wickedness abounds. Many who name Christ have but a name to live. Only as we live in Christ do we truly live. For what is the world dying? For more churches? No, there are more accommodations than worshippers. More sermons? No, those already preached we do not heed! More eleemosynary institutions? No, there is already too great proportionate interest, perhaps, paid to the temporalities of society as compared with labor for the salvation of souls. We have elaborate theologies, novel though weak creeds, and pedantic philosophies, but what we most need, my brethren, is honest and earnest testimony before men as to what Christ has done for our souls. The theatres, drinking saloons, dancing places, and other hells, are drowning men in perdition. Within two blocks of this church I could show you those who never hear of Jesus, only as they hear His name in oaths. Some of us who enter these courts may be, possibly, no better than those who never come. Are we witnesses for Christ? Do we bear testimony for Him in the parlor as well as in the meeting for prayers? I never could see the point of the story that has gone the rounds about the man who said that he had "no religion to  *speak of.*" If you are a real disciple you will testify both by example and words. What supremely interests you will prompt conversation. Some are content with church going and do nothing to save souls. So called Christian families live without prayer at the domestic altar, or at the table of God's bounty. They talk of everything but religion.

A mother once came to me to converse about the wordly prospects of her son. When I suggested solicitude as to his religious prospects and immortal welfare conversation halted. Later on, that frivolous mother came to me again.

She begged the prayers of the church for the life of that son, dangerously ill in a distant city. Even then she thought of his recovery rather than of his soul. He died. But to the praise of divine grace be it said, both he and she were converted to Christ.

Were the plague to break out would you withhold your succor from the perishing or imperilled? And will you neglect souls lost in sin? As I review these seven years in this parish and think of the large opportunities of Brooklyn, I fear that we have all of us left undone more than we have done. If all the church were at work here; all zealous and anxious for the temporal and spiritual welfare of our neighbors; ready to welcome the stranger, white or black, within this sanctuary; if the ministry as well as the laity were awake, might we not expect a second Pentecost? Our Sunday-schools would be crowded, scores would be waiting confirmation, and people would come to the house of God, moved by other motives than curiosity. Let us not mistake idleness for dignity. Let us not think that it is anything other than "churchly" to be zealous.

Now let me say, on the other hand, that few know how much we really are doing. Let us be grateful that God has helped us to do as much. Guilds of various kinds draw many to our parish hall night after night. Thousands of dollars are spent in charities. We are educating youth in collegiate and other schools. Three are preparing for holy orders, and one is to be soon ordained. Lectures and sermons are nourishing souls in Christ. We have opened another chapel in which the parent church takes just pride, in fact our cup runneth over. Let us not withdraw our hand till our work is done. Ours is a free church, surrounded by sanctuaries where pews are rented. We need a new parish hall, larger Sunday-school accommodations and a mission hall. Work on every hand presses and calls for new consecration. No amount of loyalty to a "church" can supply a lack of service to Christ. As we have been sealed His

in baptism by the sign of the cross, let us be branded as "slaves of Christ," working together on the same "plantation" for a common Master. Let us show men that we not only "have been with Jesus," but that we are with Him all the time. As *Ebenezer*, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us" is a fitting motto for the past, so let *Jehovah-jirah*—"Jehovah will provide" be the motto of an auspicious future now opening to our view.

### JOSEPH, THE CARPENTER.

By REV. FRED. M. PREBLE [BAPTIST],  
PITTSBURGH, PA.

*Is not this the carpenter's son?*—Matt.  
xiii: 55.

OF Mary, the Lord's mother, there is no lack of attention. She fills the pages of history, the measures of song, the works of art. But of Joseph, her husband, the Lord's reputed father, little is thought, little is said. He shall furnish us a subject to-day. Our thoughts are started by the question in the text. This question suggests several others. Who is this carpenter? Where did he live? What did he do?

1. *Where he lived.* Christ had been out in His ministry a little while. He returned to Nazareth, the place of His boyhood. He went to the synagogue. He turned to the Scriptures and read. The old neighbors were astonished at His wisdom. They knew His family well. His brothers and sisters, His mother Mary, His father, Joseph. Half in earnest, half in contempt they ask: "This is the carpenter's son, isn't it?" The villagers of Nazareth ask each other about their fellow-villagers, Jesus and Joseph. Nazareth was the home of Joseph, the carpenter. History tells us little about this place. But the houses and the people, the gardens and the pastures, the flocks and the herds, everything in and about the village ought to interest us as the home of the good man Joseph. Nazareth, "the village of the incarnation," ought surely to be thought of, and always with Joseph as living there.

2. *What he did.* He was a carpen-

ter, thus his neighbors called him. Men are known by their trades. This one, the shoemaker; this, the blacksmith; this, the tailor; this, the merchant. So among the peasants of Nazareth, Joseph was known as the wood-worker. His work must have been unlike the carpenter's of to-day. The tools which he used must have been rude and heavy. He had to make benches for the synagogues, shape poles for tents, cut lintels for doorways, make shelves and lamp-stands. He, no doubt, was sent for to patch a leaking roof, to mend a broken plow, to repair a chair, a table or a stool. The children knew him and played about the good man's shop. To my mind, he was one of those characters which many a village holds, a plain-hearted, unassuming man, supporting his family with the work of his hands. Of him the Savior learned His trade, for He himself is called "the carpenter." David was a shepherd, Paul, a tent-maker, Jesus a wood-worker.

Yes, Joseph and Jesus have forever dignified manual labor. That little carpenter's shop in Nazareth has thrown out its nobility upon the sons of toil. Labor is honorable. The divine Savior has exalted it.

3. *Who Joseph was.* We would like to know something about his parentage. We learn that Joseph was humble enough in position, but he had a royal ancestry. He was of the house of David. Bethlehem was the city of his fathers. He was legal heir to the throne of David and Solomon. In his veins flowed the blood of patriarchs. Faithful Abraham, and godly Enoch were his kindred. His was the case of reversed fortunes. The storms of centuries had swept over his nation. Joseph's royal family had lost prestige. An heir of Margaret Plantagenet followed the trade of a cobler. Among the lineal descendants of Edward I., there was a keeper of a toll-gate and a village butcher. The green turban, which marks the disciples of Mahomet, is seen in the East on the head of beggars. So Joseph, of illustrious family, had found a home in Nazareth, and was himself the village carpenter.

4. *What his character was.* On this point the sacred narrative has but little to tell. We learn of Simion who was just and devout; of Cornelius, a devout man and one who feared God; of Ananias, a devout man according to the law. Matthew says of Joseph: "He was a just man." Out of that one word we can get a great deal. He was a godly man. His faithful heart had drank in the promises of a coming Savior. He looked and prayed for the Kingdom of God. He was a religious man, a truly pious man.

He must have been a wise man. He knew the history of the Jewish people. On their way to Bethlehem, he, no doubt, would point out to Mary the historic places. He knew the site of the old battle-grounds of the kings. He knew about the places once so familiar to his great kinsman, David. Thus, he was able to teach the Holy Child who lived in his household and worked in his shop.

Then what secrets Joseph must have held. He had seen in vision that Mary should conceive a son by the Holy Ghost, and that he should be called Jesus. He was at the birth in Bethlehem. He heard the shepherd's story; had learned of the angel's song. He had heard Simeon's declaration of the fulfillment of prophecy. All through the subsequent years, the carpenter carried the mighty truth that the Son of Mary was the Son of God. He knew that the boy who walked and worked at his side was the divine Savior of the world.

Surely, he must have been no ordinary man. No common man would be entrusted with such a charge. No inferior man could carry such vast secrets. For my part, I think Joseph was a wonderful man.

Not as Joseph did, do we know Jesus. But we have not found the meaning of the incarnation if we do not find Him to be Emmanuel, God with us. He may be even more to us than Joseph found Him to be. We may hold mightier secrets. (1) The secret, which is not a secret, of forgiven sin. The blood of Jesus Christ

cleanseth us from all sin. (2) The secret of the new birth. "The wind bloweth where it listeth . . . so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Through faith in his name, each of us may discover and hold these profound secrets. Shall we not by faith let Jesus into our hearts? Let Him live there, even as He lived in the house of Joseph. Let Him stay with us in all our lives, and we with Him. So shall it be for us all, "Christ in you the hope of glory."

#### WHY AM I SAVED?

BY GEORGE E. REED, D.D. [METHODIST],  
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

*To make thee a minister and a witness of the things which thou hast seen, etc.*

"They that be wise (or teachers) shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."—Acts xxvi: 16-18.

THE purpose God has in view in calling men into His kingdom—this is the theme this morning. Let us first look at a concrete exhibition of this purpose in the case of Paul. If we fully realize his experience, we shall better understand God's purpose in relation to each one of us, for He has a definite end in view as regards every man.

1. Notice the swiftness of the revelation of God's purpose as to the Apostle of the Gentiles. An ordinary call to the ministry usually involves long processes of self examination and observation of God's guiding providences. Besides introspection and the study of one's surroundings, counsel is ordinarily taken of Christian men and ministers as to whether one is called of God to be a preacher. But there were no such preliminaries in the case of Paul. Prostrated by a sudden brightness above that of the sun, and confused by a voice of loud expostulation, he asks: "Who art thou Lord?" Quick and imperative comes the Master's message: "Arise! stand upon thy feet! for to this end have I appeared unto thee to appoint thee a minister," etc. One hour a most malignant persecutor, and the next a commissioned ambassador of Christ, Paul receive his orders.

2. The distinctness with which Paul

comprehended his mission is notable. He continually declares his one, only aim in life to "apprehend (or lay hold of) Him" he says, "who has laid hold of me." Then, and ever after, he delayed not to "confer with flesh and blood," but straightway co-operated with God in the accomplishment of what was so distinctly before his eye.

3. This obedient spirit deserves distinct mention. "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision." He never was. At the end of his life he wrote, "I have kept the faith." This means more than doctrine. Paul kept faith with God. He maintained his persistent, personal fidelity of heart. A conception of life like this gives breadth of vision and inspiration to effort. Without it, human lives fall short of their real, plenary and opulent measure.

But turning away from these and other lines of discussion, let us accentuate the proposition that God has a purpose in our salvation. We ought to know what that purpose is. Am I saved merely to have my name entered on a church roll? to keep up a form of godliness? No, I am saved for a two-fold purpose, viz., to glorify God's grace in my personal salvation and sanctification, as an individual, and also to advance the kingdom of God in the world, composed of loyal subjects, not of an earthly church, so much as of the Prince of Peace, Himself. I am, in short, to become an active propagator of the Gospel, the truth which is to spread and multiply as the mustard seed, till it fills the world. I am an integral part of the Redeemer's kingdom. I am a co-worker with Christ and all His illustrious saints of every age, confessors and martyrs of whom the world was not worthy. Therefore the characteristic work of the believer is clearly seen, when once this primary idea is grasped. Only they shine forever and ever who, as wise winners of souls, turn many to righteousness.

We infer, first of all, the need of the illuminating light from heaven to make us realize our high calling of God. Why is it that the chariots of God have been

dragging so slowly these centuries past? Why have not the millions of pagans heard "the old, old story"? We say too often that it is the business of the ministry. Is that scriptural? If one Christian brought his neighbor to Christ and each the next year brought two more, and so on, the world would be converted in half a century or sooner.

Again, we see our obligation to fulfil Christ's purpose in our salvation as Paul saw the purpose of his salvation and accomplished it. This was not by his discourses to great multitudes mainly, but by personal contact with men by the wayside, in his shop as tent maker, on shipboard, in a captive's prison cell. Early Christianity was a *religio illicita*, a prohibited worship, and not till A. D. 270 did Christian sanctuaries begin to be used. The Church labored "publicly and from house to house." Richard Baxter at Kidderminster, and Edward Payson at Portland, labored thus, and each could say truly with Paul at Miletus, that he was free from the blood of all men. What a field is given us in this, the grandest century the world ever saw! Steam and electricity have brought together the ends of the earth. I believe ere long that these and other agents of secular enterprise will all be consecrated to the service of Christ's kingdom and hasten the time when the song shall everywhere be heard, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace."

The Sabbath-school is a fruitful field. The domestic circle is another alluring place of labor. Every household should be a saved household and every child a Christian! The Gracchi, Augustine, Humboldt, John Quincy Adams, and other men of eminence, eulogize a mother's example and a father's prayers. Tasso, Schleiermacher and uncounted scholars and teachers tell of sister and wife who have by precept and example inspired and guided them to success. I am looking now into the faces of some who will be remembered through all eternity as wise and toilsome teachers and winners of souls. Let me urge all of you to put this above every



other ambition, above the thought of worldly popularity, wealth and social influence. I may humbly say that this has been my ambition, not to be known as "a great preacher" so much as a successful winner of souls. May God help us all to make a cordial consecration of ourselves to Him for time and for eternity, saying without reservation "*Here am I, send me.*"

### TWILIGHT AHEAD.

By CLERICUS.

*Until the day dawn.*—2 Peter i: 19.

Life, under the law of sin, is a sort of twilight condition. Under the gospel it cannot be called darkness, nor is it light. The sun is in the heavens: but alas! thick clouds obscure his light and fogs cause us to lose our way. It is at best but twilight: error, sin, sorrow, discipline, suffering, conspire to shut out the light of Heaven and cause us to lose our way thither. But, thank God, to the Christian it is the twilight of the *morning* and not of the evening. Quickly will the "day dawn."

### THEMES AND TEXTS OF RECENT LEADING SERMONS.

1. Taking Pains to be Lost. "He [Pharaoh] pursued after the children of Israel."—Exodus xiv: 8. Rev. J. G. Fraser, Madison, O.
2. The Perils of the Strong. "His strength went from him" [Samson].—Judges xvi: 19. Rev. Frederick Hastings, England.
3. Shaven and Shorn, but not Beyond Hope. "Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven."—Judges xvi: 22. Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, London.
4. A Family's Glory, at Home and Abroad. "That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones polished after the similitude of a palace."—Ps. cxlv: 12. C. F. Deems, D.D., New York.
5. Birds more sagacious than Men. "Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird."—Prov. i: 17. Arthur T. Pierson, D.D., Philadelphia.
6. Striking Back Forbidden. "Say not; I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work."—Prov. xxiv: 29. J. L. Withrow, D.D., Chicago, Ill.
7. The First and the Last. "I am the first, and I am the last, and beside me there is no God."—Isa. xlv: 6. Eugene Bersier, D.D., Paris, France.
8. The Polished Shaft. "He hath made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me"—Isa. xlix: 2. Charles Cuthbert Hall, D.D., Brooklyn.
9. The Absolute need of Jesus Christ in Life and in Death. "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how

- canst thou contend with horses," etc. | Jer. xii: 5. T. De Witt Talmage, D.D., Brooklyn.
10. Put Yourself in His Place. "Judge not that ye be not judged."—Matt. vii: 2. Rev. H. Jordan, Taylorville, Ill.
  11. Deficient Impulses. "And he answered and said, I go, sir, and went not."—Matt. xxi: 30. Charles Cuthbert Hall, D.D., Brooklyn.
  12. Might have Been, or May Be. "And some of them said, could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?"—John xi: 37. Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, London.
  13. The Church One Body. "Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular."—1 Cor. xii: 27. Howard Crosby, D.D., New York.
  14. The Love of Christ, its Proof and its Purpose. "Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it."—Eph. v: 25. William Ormiston, D.D., New York.
  15. Revealed Immortality. "If a man die, shall he live again?"—Job xiv: 14. "Who hath abolished death and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."—2 Tim. i: 10. Geo. Dana Boardman, D.D., Philadelphia.
  16. The Kingdom that Earthquakes Cannot Shake. "Wherefore we receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace," etc.—Heb. xii: 28. T. W. Chambers, D. D., New York.

### SUGGESTIVE THEMES.

1. A Perpetual Flame. ("The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out."—Lev. vi: 13.)
2. Select Literature for the Home. ("Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds."—Deut. xxii: 9.)
3. The Lord's Release. ("It is called the Lord's Release."—Deut. xv: 3.)
4. A Silver Lining in the Cloud. ("But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me."—Ps. xl: 17.)
5. The Insolence of the Sinner. ("Hath lifted up his heel against me."—Ps. xli: 9.)
6. Filling by Emptying. ("I pour out my soul."—Ps. xlii: 4.)
7. Obedience the Path to Liberty. ("I will walk at Liberty, for I seek thy precepts."—Ps. cxix: 45.)
8. Care for the Body. ("Hast thou found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled and vomit it."—Prov. xxv: 16.)
9. The Fatal Power of a Doubt. (*If* thou be the Son of God."—Matt. iv: 3.)
10. One May go a Long Way in Religion and yet be Lost. ("Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you," etc.—Matt. vii: 22.)
11. The Gospel Brings about Strange Things. ("We have seen strange things to-day."—Luke v: 26.)
12. Character and Circumstance. ("I tell you in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken and the other left," etc.—Luke xvii: 34-36.)
13. An honest man. ("In whom is no guile."—John i: 47.)
14. The Secret of the Church. ("I have manifested thy name unto the men whom thou gavest me out of the world."—John xvii: 6.)
15. The Hindering Power of Satan. ("We would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us."—1 Thess. ii: 18.)

## THE PRAYER-MEETING SERVICE.

By J. M. SHERWOOD, D.D.

APRIL 6. — GOD'S WORD THE ONLY MEANS OF SANCTIFICATION.—John xvii:17.

The fact that these words form a part of Christ's Intercessory Prayer for His Church, lends additional interest and force to them.

We have a petition and a fact to consider and apply.

I. THE PETITION: "*Sanctify them through thy truth.*"

1. "*Sanctify them.*" Personal holiness is the supreme subjective end of Christ's coming into the world. He came to save men from their sins. "His blood cleanseth from all sin." He enjoins purity: "Be ye perfect," etc.; "Without holiness," etc. It is not enough to be converted and join the church and outwardly lead a Christian life. Holiness is a positive element—a personal, moral and spiritual trait. "*Sanctify them.*" "Ye must be born again"—not of water, not by a process of church ordinances, but of the Spirit of God. There is no salvation without this personal sanctification.

2. "*Sanctify them through thy truth.*" God sanctifies His people in a *rational way*—i. e., through the intelligence, by means, means adapted to the end to be attained, means chosen by His wisdom. He does not act on them as machines, by arbitrary force, but as moral and intelligent free agents—through motives. "*Truth,*" His own chosen means—*thy truth*—is the instrument, the vehicle. He honors the truth which He has made known to man, by giving it a purifying as well as enlightening effect on all who truly believe and obey it. *Nothing but the truth of God*—the revealed moral and spiritual facts and doctrines of the Bible—will make sinners holy and fit them for heaven. All the philosophies and teachings of men cannot do it.

This is a broad and practical truth, and of the utmost consequence. We cannot, as preachers, as lay-workers for Christ, as Christians, be too deeply impressed with it. Our only hope in

trying to save men is to get *God's truth* lodged in their hearts. That, and that only, "is the wisdom of God and the," etc. Ordinances, measures, methods, rituals, preaching—all are of no use, save as they contribute to give the simple truth of God abiding effect on sinners' hearts and minds and lives.

II. WE HAVE A FACT TO PONDER—a tremendous fact in its significance—"Thy Word is Truth." By "Word," Christ unquestionably means the Holy Scriptures—the mind and will of God as contained in the Jewish Scriptures and in his own teachings and that of his inspired apostles, as we now have them in the New Testament. And He asserts without qualification, "THY WORD IS TRUTH." We need and can have no higher authority. The Bible, as we have it, is the one God-ordained instrument of salvation. Only through and by means of that are men converted, sanctified and saved. The power is not in the *Word itself*, but in the *Word as quickened and made effectual by the Omnipotent Spirit of God.*

## APPLICATION.

1. If God puts this supreme honor upon his own Word, let His ministers see to it that they do not sparge or belittle it.

2. The sanctification of believers will be perfected only so far and so fast as the Word of God has "free course and is glorified" in their minds and hearts.

3. The reason of the failure of so much preaching and so much effort is because so much philosophy and human device is mixed in with the Word, and so little real dependence is placed on the simple, unadulterated Scriptures.

April 13.—GOD'S SERVICE AS A CHOICE.—Joshua xxiv: 15.

The choice itself and when to make it are the two points for consideration.

I. THE CHOICE. "*Choose* you this day whom ye will serve." The choice is between God's service and the Devil's; but that point we assume and will not

dwell upon. The other two points are quite sufficient for the present topic.

"Choose." God speaks this word to every man amid the thunders of Sinai and the pleadings of Calvary. The whole Bible may be compressed into a single word—*choose*. After all that God and man have done and can do, this one word, *choose*, must and will determine the infinite issue. The sinner himself may tremble, weep, confess, but at last he must *choose*. God has shut him up to it. He can't evade or lay the duty upon another.

1. Christianity is a religion of reason, intelligence, not of authority and force: it appeals to motives: it sets right and wrong, life and death, before every man's mind and calls upon him to choose between them.

2. The choice is *voluntary*. No deception is used, and no compulsion of any kind. The mind is left absolutely free to decide. God never coerced a creature's will, and He never will, even to save him!

3. The choice in all cases is a *personal* one, in view of motives. "Choose *you*," etc. Each soul will decide his course and destiny, and will be required to give account of himself at the judgment. This fact is one of momentous bearing.

4. Every one is at *liberty to decline God's service* just the same as he is to enter it; but to refuse is to choose. "He that is not for me, is against me." Not to serve Christ is to serve the Devil.

5. Hence the entire *responsibility of choosing rests on each individual's mind*. He has unlimited power of choice, and will exercise it. His will is able to defeat all God's merciful intentions, and all Christ's sufferings looking to his salvation. It is a fearful fact to dwell upon. God never betwined on a creature a graver responsibility. We often feel it in relation to this life, and know that the whole future of it hangs on the decision of a moment. Well, *eternity* itself, heaven or hell, hangs on your choice! The choice must be made, each for himself, and it will be final.

II. WHEN WE ARE TO MAKE THIS CHOICE.

The Bible, from Genesis to Revelation,

recognizes but *one time*, and that is *now*: "Choose *you this day*," etc. And this is the uniform *tenor* of Scripture. It knows no to-morrow. There is not a promise in the Bible conditioned on to-morrow. It is ever and always "now," "to-day." And every day is the issue forced upon every gospel sinner, and he can and does meet it in only one way—*choice*. His will acts—it chooses—it chooses life or death eternal. And every choice he makes may be *final*. God *may* give him another chance to-morrow; I know nothing about that; but he has not promised to do so and he has no right to count on it. On the choice *you this day* make may depend your soul's eternal destiny! O choose wisely! choose with eternity in full view! choose with the fires of the judgment day flashing up before you!

April 20.—THE SECRET DESIRE OF THE RENEVED HEART.—Job xxiii: 3-10.

"Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat! . . . Behold I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, and I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him." So testifies Job in the day of extreme darkness and desolation; and he but voices the experience of multitudes in similar circumstances. God's hand was heavy upon him. His friends tried to comfort him by their presence and sympathy, and by every argument which human reason suggested. But they failed utterly. They only "darkened counsel," and increased his perplexity and distress. His heart, in his groaning, cried out for HIM; he longed to "come even to His seat;" to put his cause into His hands and be judged by Him and know just what He would say.

Job thus appealed from man to God; from his fears to his faith; from his perturbed and darkened understanding to his heart or Christian consciousness. He did not distrust God, even in his most bitter experience; he was conscious of his own integrity: if he might

but find God amid the darkness of His providences, come to His very throne and lay his whole case before Him, as a child would come to an earthly father, he would find the relief and comfort he needed and longed for.

Not only is this the experience of the true child of God under the dark providences of life, but equally so in regard to matters purely spiritual.

1. The *natural* cry of the human heart is for God. God alone can satisfy and fill it. God alone can give it rest. It roams creation; it sighs, and aspires, and is lonely and desolate, till it finds God. So it is under all systems of belief, and in all conditions of life and experience. Give it of the creature even to satiety, and still the cry is, "Oh that I knew where I might find Him!"

2. The cry of the *renewed* heart is stronger, intenser still for God—for "the living God"—for the God "who gives songs in the night"—for the God who forgives sin and imparts life to the soul, and clothes the naked spirit with the robe of Christ's righteousness, and fills the heart, desolated and riven by sin, with the joy and peace of salvation.

It is not enough that the convert gives good evidence of conversion, and is approved by the Church, and enjoys the confidence and esteem of the world. His heart craves, aye demands, more than this. "Oh that I knew where I might find *Him*" whom my soul loves! I long for *His* presence, the covert of His wings, the light of His countenance!

It is not enough that the word and ordinances and privileges of the gospel are all his: these are desirable and necessary. But there is something better still. These are the means, he seeks the end; the letter, he craves the spirit; the vestibule, he longs to enter the Holy of Holies and "come even to His seat" in heaven, and look on the Ineffable Face and hold personal and intimate communion with God in Christ! And blessed be God, it is his privilege to do so.

April 27. — THE RADICAL DEMAND OF CHRIST.—John iii: 7.

We use "radical" in the sense of thorough, complete. And there is no religion on earth so radical in this sense as Christianity. It goes to the root of the matter. It embraces the whole man—the intellect and the heart, the will and the affections, the physical and the spiritual, body, soul, and spirit, for all time and for eternity. It spares no sin. It exempts no power or function. It marks no limits in love or service, save capacity and opportunity. And so reasonable and proper is this extreme requirement in itself—in the eternal fitness of things—that the Divine Teacher in expounding the law of Christian requirement to Nicodemus, says: "*Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.*"

Let us briefly consider this radical demand of the religion we profess; let us try and enter into the spirit and full significance of it.

1. My first remark is, that we *lamentably fail to take in and appreciate practically the full meaning of this law*. Nicodemus, though he heard it from the Master's own lips, and himself was "a master in Israel," failed to comprehend its true import and immense scope. And so do we. It is so radical in character—a "new birth"—so all embracing in its scope, that we fail to grasp the idea and feel the full force of it. How few Christians give evidence that they understand these words of Christ and strive to live up to their requirement!

2. Radical as the law is, it *does not go beyond the actual requirements of the case*. "Ye must" etc. There is no other way to be saved. There can be no compromise; human nature is corrupt and unclean to its core in every member, function and power, and the necessity of a thorough cleansing, a total moral change, is absolute. Education, culture, discipline, a correct outward life, will not do. The *fountain* must be purified, all the courses of nature must be changed, and all the elements and conditions of being transformed by the Spirit of holiness, or

salvation is impossible. O how little is this great truth comprehended! How formal, how outward, how ceremonial a matter, the religion of most men is, instead of being an experience of the inner life, transformed by God's renewing grace and working itself out naturally and Christlike in the outward man!

3. *The Pulpit fails in its duty and becomes a snare, if it fails to present and emphasize the radical character of the Gospel.* Compare much of the preaching of the day with Christ's positive, impera-

tive, authoritative words: "I say unto you, ye must be born again!" "Prophecy-ing smooth things;" preaching culture, ritualism, ceremonial cleansing, and the like—what a sham, what a deceit and snare they are, looked at in the clear light of the Master's teaching!

4. It becomes each one for himself to inquire, with anxious solicitude, have I been born again? Is my religion the work of the Spirit of God—inward, spiritual, radical, making me indeed a new man in Christ Jesus?

### HOMILETICS.

CONDUCTED BY PROF. J. M. HOPPIN, D.D.

*How may we use such a truth and class of truths as Christ's temptation in the wilderness, belonging to his supernatural nature, for instruction in the pulpit? Was He a subject for such temptation as assails men, or could He have yielded to temptation like others?*

THESE questions are quite deep and it would take long to answer them. I can only assert the general principle that what our Lord was, while in this world, was meant for our instruction in righteousness, and that nothing is affirmed more clearly in the Scriptures. Nothing happened to or was allowed to be recorded of Him that was not designed for the imitation of the human soul, for the redemption of men from the power of evil, and for their culture in the spiritual life. His were the acts of the ideal man who gathered humanity into Himself, as a perfect example, and who came into the world to manifest God in humanity, and to enshrine Himself within the human spirit; the kingdom He founded was within man; and even in the unique events of His supernatural manifestation, in the baptism in which no man could be baptized, He never removed Himself entirely out of the sphere of that humanity which He took that He might be a high priest who could be touched with a feeling of our infirmities. The Lord's temptation though alone in the wilderness in conflict with the principle of evil does not take itself out of this category, and is one of the noblest and even most prac-

tical of truths for the Christian pulpit, though it cannot be treated in a common and hasty way, and with little thought. It peculiarly adapts itself to the profound meditation of young ministers about to enter upon their life-work, and is fitted to search the motives of ministerial character beyond almost any portion of the New Testament. It is history and likewise symbol. It is fact and also spirit. It occurred between the baptism and the entrance of Christ upon his public ministry, and it sets the moral standard for the trial and establishment of that ministry, and, indeed, for the kingdom of God in the world, without which neither of them can make headway or prove successful. While we should strive to be careful in our reverential respect for the divine nature of Christ, yet we may lose even the divine lesson of His life if we lose the great lesson of His humanity, as the emptying of Himself (*κενωσας*) of divine power and riches, to prove the power of entire dependence of the human upon the divine will, such as every man may realize who follows Christ.

The decision of the second question whether Christ could have yielded to temptation, and if not, would it have been a real temptation such as comes to men, is predicated upon the truth that if Christ could not sin, He was free to sin, and though there was a necessity

for him not to sin, yet He had the freedom to do so. Our Lord, as a man, was temptable, or else the idea of His being the Redeemer of all men could not be true; and temptability is not sin; for what is temptation? It is that evil power which appeals to a free personality in such a way as to give it a direction from good toward evil, and when the evil presented becomes a real influence in the heart, though not necessarily so that the heart consents to it, it forms a temptation. Christ truly was tempted; but it is said of us that we are tempted when we are drawn away of our own lusts and enticed. Was Christ thus tempted? Or did Christ have a sinful nature? Did He have a fallen nature like that derived from Adam? Some go so far as to believe even this, and see in it a mighty truth that, in spite of this tremendous fact of His assumption of a sinful human nature, He did not sin, but so went down to the depths of our fallen nature to raise us up entirely, completely. But we are not called upon to believe this incredible thing, that Christ shared our sinful and depraved nature. The new Adam was the seed of a new spiritual race that rose from the estate of sin into newness of life in Christ Jesus, but He, the unfallen Son of God, stooped very low to raise us up. He put on the weakness of humanity. He was tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Temptation came to Christ, as to every man, in two ways, from without and from within. He was tempted from without by the condition and circumstances of his earthly life. He was a true man and suffered trial by hunger, thirst, cold, poverty, bodily injuries and mental griefs, or (1) the bodily and mental trials belonging personally to himself. (2) The allurements of the world, and their appeal to human ambition, power, and pleasure. He was also capable of being tempted, as a man, from within, by spiritual appeals to evil, call them from the evil one, but these temptations which in ordinary men appeal to disorderly and ill-regulated desires, found nothing to lay hold of in His perfectly

pure nature. It was then from without, from the wants of the bodily nature and the allurements of the world, as in the actual temptation recorded in the New Testament, that the Son of Man seems to have been approached. Here he was tempted like unto us. His temptation, therefore, though unique, was a true and universal instance of human temptation. He was here also our brother and our example. He alone, however, exhibited divine virtue under human conditions. He showed that sin is not an essential condition of our human nature, but only an incident that springs from our own abnormal weakness and fault. Sin does not "have its ground in the organism of human nature, but is the rebellion of a created will against the divine law, as an act of free will not otherwise to be explained." Thus evil is not a human development but a human choice. While Christ, as a true man, endowed with free will, was temptable, yet he sinned not, and in a true man, like Christ, there need be no sin in his human nature. He overcame temptation *as a man*, through relying upon divine help, and, therefore, He can help those who are tempted, for all can find encouragement in trial and victory in temptation in Him who met in fair conflict the very power and principle of evil. And thus in the beginning of doing Christ's work, the temptation coming to his ministers to take up the work in their own strength say of reason, or scholarship, or character, or intellectual and moral power, or lower forces even than these, and not in the divine will and power. The temptation of Christ speaks to the ministry as with a voice from heaven. The Apostle Paul in Arabia, John in Patmos, Luther in Wartburg Castle, met the same temptation in the earlier stages of their public ministry and overcame it by looking to Christ and His victory. If there be anything in which I have noticed in others and myself as the ground of failure or of small success in the ministerial work, it has been this failure to bring the work into subordination to the divine conditions of power and suc-



cess—the total surrender to the will of God; and not only this, but the willingness to do His work in His way, and not in our own. The ministry is an intellectual profession, calling upon the fullest energies of a consecrated manhood; and ministers, as a class, are men of mind, else they would be engaged in some lower and less taxing work; but the exercise of mental power gives a sense of power, and this awakes a reliance upon self, and sometimes a feeling of independence of God. This selfishness in his work is a minister's shrewdest temptation. Power in himself tempts him to love power for power's sake. To be weak is to be miserable—this is human sentiment—and to be a powerful man, and preach powerful sermons, is commonly held to be the highest praise that could be bestowed; but the apostolic sentiment was "for when I am weak, then am I strong"—strong in a divine fullness of power that pours into a human mind which empties itself of self-confidence and self-seeking. Not that mental forces, such as stalwart reasoning and scholarly knowledge, are of no account—this would be fanaticism—but that they are not those divine qualities of power in the pulpit by which the greatest work man can do is done. A London paper commenting upon Henry Ward Beecher, says: "Mr. Beecher leaves no system of theology or church government, and his influence therefore ended with his life. He was a great preacher, but nothing else." If he were a great preacher, his influence is eternal, and will endure when systems of theology and church governments have faded into nothing; but to be this, and to do this greatest work, a man must learn somewhat of that true humility comprehended in Thomas à Kempis' wonderful words, "*ama nesciri*." In doing God's work, a man cannot grasp for that kingdom of the world which Satan ever promises him. The struggle surely will come to the best, and the choice will be seductively presented when he must decide whether he will work by his own power and in accord with his own

will, or in self-denial and submission to the will of God. He will choose between the kingdom of the world or the kingdom of God. The tendency that corrupted the apostolic church, and reared in its place a vast system of worldly power, was this departure from the original idea of the ministry as a pure instrument of the will of God. To preach the Word in the wisdom of men, and through learning, eloquence, logic, authority, riches and power of the world, was not for the building up of a spiritual, but of an external kingdom, false to the core, whether in the fourth or nineteenth century. If ministers show themselves as greedy for power, place, fame, honors, emoluments, as men of other professions and the world, they may gain their reward, but they bid adieu to the advancement of the gospel through their agency. Christ's work must be kept pure from the world. This was the teaching of Christ's temptation, and it revealed the divine foundation of His spiritual kingdom of faith, love and righteousness. "Not by might, nor power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Christ conquered evil by refusing to use any worldly weapon in a spiritual warfare. His children were not to strive. They were to lose their life. They were to give up the world. They were to overcome evil with good. They were to suffer persecution. They were not to halve power with Cæsar. They were not to be great in the mere worldly sense. They were not to seem, but be devout. They were to seek not the praise of men but of God. They were to bear reproach with meekness. They were to meet opposition with gentleness. They were to preach the gospel of repentance and reconciliation. They were to subdue the world with love. They were, like Christ, not to do their own will, but the will of Him who sent them; and then the tempter would no longer assail them, and angels would minister to them, and they would be nourished by the bread of God, and be able to feed others with that bread which came down from heaven.

## PASTORAL THEOLOGY.

CONDUCTED BY PROF. WILLIAM C. WILKINSON, D.D.

## THE PASTOR IN HIS CLOSET.

A DOUBTFUL perhaps—at any rate, almost a presumptuous topic—to broach. Its importance, however, and a hope that, we trust, is not wholly presumption, of being useful, lead us to broach it. But we must divide it for treatment, and at present consider only the point of the pastor's devotional reading. What book, or books, may the pastor most profitably read in his "still hour"?

Hardly any question could be asked to call forth a more "subjective" reply—that is, a reply necessarily more affected by the personal character and experience of the man replying. Conscious of this, we shall try, nevertheless, to be perfectly simple and frank in what we say.

We ask our readers kindly to assume that we are so, in naming, first of all, and above all, the Bible, both the Old Testament and the New. We mean, of course, especially select portions of the book. We say "especially," though we sincerely believe that all Scripture, being given by God, is profitable for devotional purposes. But there are some portions more directly profitable than others. These we refrain from specifying—not because they are immediately obvious to anybody's choice; but rather because the enumeration would necessarily be somewhat long and detailed.

That the Bible is the best of devotional books follows inevitably from its intrinsic character. What is devotion—genuine devotion? It is self-surrender to God, it is conscious identification of your will with God's will. This is the ultimate idea of devotion. It is an act, or a process of devoting yourself. The Apostle Paul very well describes it when he says: "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." True devotion cannot, therefore, be wholly inward. A full hemisphere of it must be outward. The

globe entire is absolute conformity to the "perfect will of God."

Now no book originally reveals the will of God but the Bible. No other book reveals it so fully, so livingly, so life-givingly. Go, therefore, straight to the fountain-head. Read to learn for yourself the will of God, and to obey. Say "Amen!" consciously, perhaps even audibly, to every hint found of God's wish and will. Make your reading a continual process of bending your will, actively or passively, as each particular case may require, to the will of God. Pause at any point at which you feel conscious of remaining resistance—or even of dull apathy—pause and pray, until from the depths of your heart you can utter that formula of supreme devotion consecrated in Gethsemane, "Thy will be done." Devotional reading cannot be done genuinely except with interjaculated prayer.

The minister finds it especially difficult thus to use the Bible aright, as a manual of personal devotion. To him, the Bible tends naturally, almost necessarily, to become a book of texts to preach from, rather than a book of precepts to live by. This tendency, bred by his vocation, must be sedulously guarded against by the minister, or his reading of the Bible will insensibly become professional, instead of devotional.

There is no real and valuable devotional quality in any thought of the mind, or any feeling of the heart, that does not issue, or tend to issue in some corresponding direction of the will in the way of obedience to God. The difference between pietism and piety is, that pietism is subjective only, and piety is subjective and objective both; and at least as much objective as subjective. You wish to be, not a pietist, but a pious man. There is no way of feeding piety except in connection with practical obedience. Pietism is a fungus, an excrescence, that will thrive, and thrive luxuriantly, on mere meditation, misnamed devotion. As we

have said, we say again, in mere meditation on whatever subject, apart from practical *conformity in will to God*, there is no sound, no acceptable devotion. Nothing can be more idle than the idea of added degrees of sanctification in character to be obtained from listlessly reading so many verses, or so many chapters, each day, of Holy Writ, in much the same way as the Romanist counts the beads of his rosary. The thought of God in His Word must be received, judged, accepted, approved, agreed to; the will of God in His Word must be adopted for your own will, incorporated with your character, transformed into your life—we do not, of course, mean completely and perfectly, but at least incipiently and in a degree—or you will not have read the Bible effectively as a book of devotion.

We have already spoken of the minister's natural tendency to treat the Bible as a treasury of texts for sermons. There is another mode of Bible study to be carefully distinguished from devotional study of the Bible. We refer to the exegetical and critical scrutiny of Biblical text. Exegetical examination of the Bible will not, more than will the homiletical, answer the ends of personal devotion. Still you ought to know the meaning of what you read. The right devotional spirit will make you justly anxious not to misunderstand any revelation of God. Do not be a mystic. Do not foist a foreign sense, your own or others', upon a text of Scripture. There is much subtle and insidious self-pleasing, disguised to itself, and disguised to many observers, to be found in that bibliolatrous pietism which plays fast and loose with Scripture texts, texts chosen far more with a view to express its own ideas, than loyally to find and to set forth the ideas of the Divine inspiring Spirit. Healthy devotion will abhor violence put upon the sayings of God to make them express any sense save that which is properly their own. Conscientious exegesis may, therefore, properly, and properly it should, accompany and guide devotional reading of

Scripture. But you need to take vigilant care lest unawares you let the intellectual interest get the better of the spiritual. So, likewise, you may properly light upon a text for a sermon in the course of Scripture-reading pursued for devotional purposes. Here, too, as we have already intimated, you must be careful to keep the homilist from superseding the Christian.

We are fully persuaded that the Bible thus employed as a manual of devotion, will yield to the minister employing it, a harvest of results both for the exegete and for the preacher, that will be to him a perpetual surprise and delight. For in knowledge of the things of God, the docile and obedient heart is always deeper and wiser than the curious and inquisitive head. But every pastor is himself also a soul to be saved and to be sanctified; and what now we chiefly seek is to prompt our brethren in the ministry to become wise and faithful pastors to themselves.

We have got no farther than the Bible, and we have not got through with that, in suggesting a course of devotional reading for the pastor; but we must stop. We hope hereafter to carry our line of suggestion farther; for the Bible, though so much the best of books, is not the only good book. We know an excellent educated minister who, with a gentle, loving humor playing over a depth of solemn earnest in making the remark, would point to his shelf of Bibles, issued in various forms, and say, "There is my library!" But we do not believe God meant His book to displace all other books. Nay, we think that even for the purpose of promoting personal piety, other books than the Bible may profitably be used. This, when opportunity serves, we purpose, with some exemplification to show.

## II.

### HINTS TOWARD MAXIMS RELATING TO THE QUEST OF THE WORK.

1. Find out, as exactly as you can, with what degree of unanimity and heartiness the church have acted in calling you.

2. Do not regard absolute unanimity on their part as indispensable.

3. Regard the decided opposition of a minority, however inconsiderable, as a reason for deliberating seriously before accepting a call.

4. If your accepting promises to heal a breach in the church, regard that as a strong reason for accepting; if it threatens to make a breach, regard that as a strong reason for declining.

5. If you are a young minister, seek to go where there is a chance of expansive growth for the church; if you are a minister of some experience, consider that you may therefore the more safely go where the church must necessarily decline in numbers and strength.

6. Do not wait to find a church where there are no difficulties to be contended with. Such a church will not need a pastor. But if they did, it would be a pastor without any faults, and that is not you.

7. Finally, be sure to make your *first* settlement over a church in the spirit of self-denying consecration to Christ. And then make all your subsequent settlements in the same spirit.

### III.

#### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

1. "You have stirred up at least one to ask you for an illustration or two, by example, of the 'flashiness' you complain of in the Moody and Sankey hymns."

We cannot, perhaps, better respond to the request implied in the foregoing, than by pointing out a contrast between the true and the false that happens to exist in the case of two hymns standing next to each other in the "Gospel Hymns Consolidated," pp. 52, 53. Of these, the first is that well-known hymn by John Newton, beginning "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds," That is a true hymn. The second is a jingle by somebody not named, beginning, "Take the name of Jesus with you." Ostensibly the subject and motive of the two pieces are one and the same. But in fact a whole heaven divides the one from the other. The second is a spurious hymn, unfit to be sung. We do not refer to the rhyming, though that, too, is bad enough to

correspond—for example, "with you" and "give you," "ever" and "gather," "Jesus" and "receive us"—but to the sentiment and the expression. There is, however, no real sentiment, and there could not, therefore, be any good expression. The whole thing is a senseless jumble of jingling words, which would only be judged worthy to escape censure, for the reason, forsooth, that it purports to be about a sacred theme. But, for that very reason, it is the more censurable.

In the first place, there is no proper sense in which you *can* do what the hymn exhorts, namely, "Take the name of Jesus with you." "Child of sorrow and of woe," is self-evidently just a tautology of stereotyped phrases, without living thought in it, fresh-born either from the heart or from the brain of the verse-making machine that produced it. "It will joy and comfort give you," is like in character. "Take it, then, where'er you go," is a barren echo of the first line, thrown in to complete the stanza. The "chorus" is emptiness itself—unless, indeed, there be already present in the heart of the singer, quite independently of the hymn (there is nothing whatever in the hymn to excite it) a warm effusive affection for the Savior that will fill *any* form of words, be they ever so vacant of thought. The fundamental difference between Newton's lines, considered as literature, and the nameless jingle we condemn, is that Newton's lines have thought in them, while the jingle has no thought in it, but only words. The fundamental difference between the two productions, considered as Christian hymns, is twofold: First, the one is scriptural, the other not; second, the one tends to *awaken* loving emotion, the other, at most and at best, serves only to *utter* loving emotion supposed already existing.

The second stanza begins, "Take the name of Jesus ever." The address was to the "child of sorrow and of woe." There is no address now. You are to use the name of Jesus as a "shield." "Shield" against what? Fiery darts? Not at all. "Shield from every *snare!*"

And so forth, and so forth. "Oh! the precious name of Jesus; How it thrills our souls with joy, When His loving arms receive us, And His songs our tongues employ!" What a hodge-podge of sacred nonsense! "The name of Jesus," it seems, "thrills our souls with joy," at the particular moment "When His loving arms receive us!" One would suppose that at such a moment the Divine embrace itself ought to be the occasion of the joy experienced. But no, you have to think of the name of Jesus! "And His songs our tongues employ." A true and reverent imagination would surely not conceive of vocal singing, on our part,

as proceeding at that select instant when we were folded on the breast of Jesus in His "loving arms." We should then, if ever, be silent in speechless awe.

It may be said, But of these faults in the hymn most of those who sing it never think. Probably. But there is not, therefore, no mischief done. The hymn teaches, and it teaches *not* to think, but to vapor and to rhapsodize. It feeds mawkish pietism, not sound piety. A generation of Christians brought up on such hymns would be like the conies, "a feeble folk," compared with a generation that sing Watts, Wesley, Newton, Doddridge.

### THE STUDY TABLE.

CONDUCTED BY JAMES M. LULLOW, D.D.

#### PULPIT ILLUSTRATIONS DRAWN FROM NATURE.

THERE is great power in illustrative preaching. Truths are reduced from the nebulous state into stars by an apt instance or analogy. Yet the habit of illustrating is liable to abuse. The discourses of some of our ablest men are "sicklied o'er" with rhetorical tropes, hiding from the hearer the really strong analytical and practical thoughts they contain. Many young preachers, aiming at popularity with the masses, divert the listener's attention from the solemnity or grandeur of the theme by the swash of commonplace stories, which tickle the otherwise listless ear. The sermons of the great divines of the olden time, which did so much to bring the faith home to the common heart, differed from the typical sermon of the recent school in a rarer use of illustration; rarer in respect both of frequency and of quality. The current newspaper reports of the sermons of a single Sabbath often contain more rhetorical analogies than you can find in a volume of the masterpieces of pulpit eloquence collected from many generations. The power of Chrysostom and Augustine, of Luther and Calvin, of Barrow and Baxter, of Bossuet and Massillon, of Edwards and Wesley, was in their keen

appreciation of the mind of the Spirit, their knowledge of the subtle movings of the human heart, their almost infallible logic, and their passionate sympathy for the men and women they addressed. Their eloquence poured through a deep and straight channel, and was seldom diverted, by even the most brilliant analogies. What few illustrations they used were in themselves dignified, drawn from the most ennobling scenes and events, exciting to earnestness and reverence even independently of the religious subject in connection with which they were used. If we are not mistaken, much of the so-called decadence of the modern pulpit is due to a rhetorical demoralization in this respect. An artist cannot paint sunsets and flowers with common dirt and water; he must refine his pigments. Nor can one paint a sacred theme with analogies drawn from the trifling commonplace or grossly secular. The preacher must have refinement of thought in his illustrations; a harmony of color, as it were, with the Divine and spiritual things of which he speaks.

In this respect no field supplies such excellent pulpit illustrations as nature. In the first place, because even the ordinary intellect is *interested* in the

laws of the natural world, the beauties which deck it, and the sublimities which overhang it. The preacher is always sure of appreciation when he paints nature correctly, the very kinship of man with his environment engaging the attention. Art allusions require a degree of artistic culture for their appreciation; references to historical scenes some historical study: illustrations from business or invention some knowledge of these things on the part of the hearer, of which the preacher can never be certain. But nature lies close to the heart of most people.

Besides, the use of nature in preaching is illustrating *one Book of God by another Book of God*. The Creator Spirit inspired the Word. The hand that directed the prophet's pen, also sculptured the mountains. "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge." Bryant, gazing upon the river Arve, cutting its way between the Alpine peaks, pictured his religious impression in the words:

"Here, where with *God's own majesty*,  
Are touched the features of the earth."

And again, in the Forest Hymn, he describes so accurately the spiritual suggestiveness that external nature has to the common mind:

"For his simple heart  
Might not resist the sacred influences,  
Which, from the stilly twilight of the place,  
And from the gray old trunks that high in  
heaven  
Mingled their mossy boughs, and from the  
sound

Of the invisible breath that swayed at once  
All their green tops, stole over him, and bowed  
his spirit with the thought of boundless power  
And inaccessible majesty. \* \* \*  
My heart is awed within me when I think  
Of the great miracle that still goes on,  
In silence, round me—the perpetual work  
Of Thy creation, finished, yet renewed  
Forever. Written on Thy works I read  
The lesson of Thine own eternity."

The preacher who uses most pertinently this Book of God, the unrolled volume of nature, will come closest to the hearts of his hearers, rustic or urban.

What an example *our Lord* set for those whom He commissioned to speak His truth to men! The entire record of what He said during His ministry is very brief—altogether occupying not more space than would be required to report three or four modern sermons. But into how many of the phenomena of the outer world he put the light of some spiritual analogy! The sun's brilliancy is made to suggest to us the glory of a redeemed soul (Matt. xiii: 43): The ruddy glow of the *sky* at night or morning, the western *cloud* and the *south wind*, as weather signs, teach us to look for the premonitions of God's providential and gracious dealings (Matt. xvi: 3 and xii:54): The invisibility and power of the *wind* symbolize the mystery of the Spirit's operations (John iii: 8): The *light* heralds Him who is the spiritual light of the world (John i: 9), and also the beneficent influence of human character when touched by the Christ-ray (Matt. v: 14): The *mountain* barriers, which human enterprise cannot remove, suggest the mightier power of faith (Matt. xiii: 20): The *hills* swelling above vale and plain, the slightly location of so many Oriental towns, remind the Church of its prominence and publicity in the world (Matt. v: 14): The *trees* have their holy lessons; the mustard tree telling of the marvelous growth, through silent process, of Christ's kingdom (Matt. xiii: 32); the fig tree, pressing out its blossoms and new branches, the nearness of the great spiritual consummation (Luke xxi: 29); the varying fruits, the outcome of different characters (Matt. xii: 33); the dead tree, with the ax at its root, the destiny of worthless souls (Matt. iii: 10): The *vine* and its branches beautifully announce the closeness and unity of life which believers have with their Lord (John xv): The *reed* shaken by the wind is a picture of a time-serving man (Matt. xi: 7): The vitality of the *grass* and the beauty of the *lily* lift the thought gratefully to the preserving care and limitless interest which God has in all His creatures (Matt. vi: 28): Even the *thorn* and *thistle* shoot out



their sharp warnings (Matt. vii: 16): The marvels of *seed* development, the depth of *soil*, *stony ground*, the *beaten wayside*, the *feathered raiders*, the *manifold harvest*, all tell their story to the soul (Matt. xiii: 19): The *ravens* scream and the *sparrows* twitter their delighted confidence in the great hand that feeds them (Luke xii: 24-26); The *eagle* (Matt. xxiv: 28), the *wolf* (John x: 12), the *fox* (Matt. viii: 20), the *fishes* (Matt. iv: 19), bring their tribute of suggestion from the wild life of the air and woods and waters: The *sheep*, helpless (Matt. ix: 36), lost (Matt. xviii: 12), found (Matt. xviii: 13), folded (John x.), lure us by the very charm of Jesus' description toward Himself as the Shepherd of Our Souls: *Water* tells us, by its bubbling in the spring, of the wonderful refreshment Christ imparts to His people (John iv: 14). The chemical action of *salt* and of *leaven* (Matt. v: 13 and xiii: 33) opens a whole department of thought relative to the law of Christian influence: The physiological process of the *human body* (Matt. xv: 17), its disease (Matt. ix: 12), its mutilation (Matt. v: 29), its sustenance (John vi: 35), its birth (John iii: 3), its death (John viii: 51), are shadows of phenomena associated with the spiritual manhood. Indeed, the greatest of all preachers gathered illustrations out of all departments of the visible world, from the Oriental park, where art has supplemented nature in making a luxurious resting-place amid beauty and perfume (Luke xxiii: 43), to the wild storm bursting through the mountains, and spreading devastation with tempest and freshet (Matt. vii: 26).

The *Apostles* adopted to an extent this method of the master. Paul drew an analogy—which the development of natural science and theology may yet find to be far more than an analogy—between the evolution of the *seed into the grain* or plant and the evolution of the vital principle sown at death into the spiritual body which the earth shall yield at the resurrection (I Cor. xv: 36). The glory of *sun*, *moon* and *stars* flashed upon his mind sublime, but inexpress-

ible, conceptions of the glory of our renewed humanity (I Cor. xv: 41). He conceived also the unity in diversity of the church as that of the *human body* (Eph. iv: 16).

Peter used with immense force the comparison of certain men to "*wells without water*, *clouds* that are carried with a tempest, to whom the *mist* of darkness is reserved for ever" (II Pet. ii: 1).

James described the doubter as "a *wave* of the sea driven with the wind and tossed" (i: 6); the rich and the poor as *diverse flowers* withered by the same sunshine (i: 11); the inconsistent tongue as both a sweet and bitter *fountain* (iii: 11) and life as a *vapor* that vanisheth away (iv: 14).

Jude, in the brief space of a single page occupied by his epistle, used these tremendous tropes of unregenerate character: "*Clouds* without water, carried about of winds; *trees* whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; *raging waves* of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering *stars*, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever" (vs. 12, 13).

John in Revelation swept land and sea and sky, for his metaphors. His imagination rent the globe with earthquakes, tore asunder the veil of the heavens, tracked planets and meteors; filling the mind of the reader with the sublimity of the sensuous in order that he might more readily impress it with the spiritual.

Surely preachers cannot do better than adopt, so far as they are able, the literary excellences of the inspired Book. Next to the written Word is the Word of God that is stamped upon the outer world. God's handiwork shows much of Himself. The beauties and wonders of nature are the creases of the hand of the Creator, His veritable sign-manual impressed upon His works.

Facility and aptness in drawing illustrations from nature can come only from *familiarity with natural scenery* and the *habit of close observation*. One cannot, from the "bookish environment" of the study, send out at will

and find an appropriate gem with which to embellish a thought. One must have learned in many previous rambles where these treasures are hid. We cannot do better than to quote on this point Charles Kingsley's advice to a young clergyman: "Study nature—not scientifically—that would take eternity to do so as to reap much moral good from it. Superficial physical science is the devil's spade, with which he loosens the roots of the trees prepared for the burning. Do not study matter for its own sake, but as the countenance of God. Try to extract every line of beauty, every association, every moral reflection, every inexpressible feeling from it. Study the forms and colors of leaves and flowers, and the growth and habits of plants; not to classify them, but to admire them, and adore God. Study the sky. Study water. Study trees. Study the sounds and scents of nature. Study all these as beautiful in themselves, in order to re-combine the elements of beauty; next as allegories and examples whence moral reflections may be drawn; next as types of certain tones of feeling etc.; but remain yourself in God-dependence, superior to them. Learn what feelings they express, but do not let them mould the tone of your mind; else by allowing a melancholy day to make you melancholy, you worship the creature more than the Creator. \* \* \* Feed on nature, and do not try to understand it. It will digest itself."

How the mind of Wordsworth must have been enriched when he could say,

"To me the meanest flower that blows can give  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

That is a most exquisite picture, and illustrative of our point, in which he describes the Wanderer.

"A herdsman on the lonely mountain-tops,  
Such intercourse was his, and in this sort  
Was his existence oftentimes possess'd,  
Oh! then how beautiful, how bright appear'd,  
The written promise. He had early learn'd  
To reverence the Volume which displays  
The mystery—the life which cannot die:  
But in the mountains did he *feel* his faith;  
There did he see the writing—all things there  
Breathed immortality, revolving life,  
And greatness still revolving infinite:

There littleness was not: the least of things  
Seem'd infinite; and there his spirit shap'd  
Her prospects, nor did he believe—He saw."

To become familiar with nature one will do well to *make free use of books descriptive of natural objects*. It is a good thing to walk the fields with such an interpreter as Ruskin or Darwin, to say nothing of the poets. Under their magic wand the world widens and brightens and takes on innumerable colors which reflect religious suggestions in upon the soul. Among Americans we have such sharp-eyed observers as Thoreau, Burroughs and Gibson, who will show us more marvels in a winter's walk than most of us would note in a summer's vacation.

For example, turn to that landscape in letters, Gibson's "Happy Hunting Grounds." The author is not a preacher, nor even a moralizer, but a close inspector of nature, lifting the veil of the commonplace which she wears in the presence of commonplace observers. He paints you no moral or religious pictures, but he puts, as it were, rare tints upon the palette, with which the preacher may enliven his own pictures of ethical and theological truth. Do you wish an illustration of design in nature? Take this—The button-balls cling to the parent tree during the entire winter and drop only in the following spring.

"Each one of these balls represents a curious concentrated huddle of seeds; and they are not thus snugly packed away for the winter, with the nicest art, tucked up with warm, dry chaff, and hung up so securely above their groundling neighbors, for mere caprice. No, the button-balls know when they are well off. They rock their cradles in the tree-tops until at last at their own sweet will, they loosen the snug coverlet and launch their broods upon the soft spring breeze. Thus in May, when the new leaves are putting forth, you may see the puffy broods pluming their wings for flight. But it is not until the drooping crimson balls of the new year fairly appear among them that they finally let go their hold. Why?

"I venture the assertion that a button-ball picked in autumn, and laid upon the ground to undergo the lot of acorn or chestnut would succumb to the ice and slush, and become disintegrated, with every vital spark speedily quenched."

As an analogy for the assault of temp-

tation, we might take from the same pages the description of the gall-fly's attack upon a leaf, stinging it, and injecting into the wound a poison which not only transforms the texture of the leaf, but starts within it a new life which produces an excrescence, which excrescence, in turn, hatches the grub, for a ceaseless repetition of the attack in the successive generations of gall-fly life. No less than sixty species of gall thus prey upon the leaf of the oak, each one bringing forth after its kind.

Or as an illustration of the same deadly thrust of a little sin, take the parasite of the Tremex.

"The boring instrument of this insect, while as slender as a horse-hair, often penetrates the solid wood to the depth of two and a half inches—an insidious, destroying thrust which is the means of implanting a voracious foe (from within the body of the insect) deep in the tree trunk."

We leave the reader to take his own illustration from these words regarding the wing-singing of the insect — "that strange symbolic creature, equipped for song only in its final metamorphosis, the perfect being only singing!"

And from this notice of the singing grass-hopper.

"On a cloudy day our fields are almost still. Our musician is a 'lover of the sun,' and revels in midsummer heats. \* \* For look! the long bank of massive oaks at the foot of our sloping pasture is now suddenly darkened beneath a hovering cloud. The daisied white-caps seem to melt among their billows below us, as the soft, cool glamour glides upward into our presence. Hark how the singing wings are stilled, how perceptible the lull even in the brief shadow of a cloud! How transparent now the deeper secret of these sympathetic glassy lyres! They invoke the sunbeams, and what they receive in light they bequeath in song."

How this scene, from almost the humblest life of God's footstool, lifts the thought to the highest life before His throne, where the song never ceases because God and the Lamb "are the light thereof"!

What a pretty analogy of the power of love and sympathy to conquer an obdurate nature when harsher measures fail, one might work up from an observation of Thoreau! He had brought home a handsome pitch-pine cone. It

was so hard that it defied his utmost strength to break it open. He laid it away in a warm table-drawer. A few days later we find in his notes,

"To-day I am agreeably surprised that it has there dried and opened with perfect regularity, filling the drawer; and from a solid, narrow and sharp cone, has become a broad, rounded, open one; has, in fact, expanded into a conical flower with rigid scales, and has shed a remarkable quantity of delicate winged seeds. That hard, closed cone has thus yielded to the gentle persuasion of warmth and dryness."

Here is a hint of the deleterious influence of luxury upon life as respects productiveness of spiritual and moral good. Thoreau's journal notes of flowers:

"When the tapestry (corolla) of the nuptial bed (calyx) is excessive, luxuriant, it is unproductive. Such a flower has no true progeny, and can be reproduced only by the humble mode of cuttings from its stem or roots. The fertile flowers are single, and not double."

Many a man's religion is, in respect to his doctrinal faith, what Thoreau says bald science is to nature, "like a grub which, though it may have nestled in the germ of a plant, has merely blighted or consumed it, never truly tasted it."

We are accustomed to think of spiritual influences as communicated directly to the heart, and thence working out through the life. The reverse is often true; good influences come to the heart through the life. If the purposes be pure, the outflow of our activities becomes a medium for blessings to the soul, as Thoreau noted that the fishes which gladden the brooks are not born in the springs, but run up the currents from their spawning places near the mouths of the streams. Coming from below, they disperse themselves through the fields and woods, imparting new life to them. "The fish lurks by the mouth of its native brook watching its opportunity to dart up the stream by the cakes of ice;" and so, also, do thousands of bright thoughts and impulses dart from the world into every soul that keeps its flow transparent and pure.

Here is a very beautiful commentary on the text, "God so clothes the grass of the field":

"Turning up the thin sod from over the damp cavity of a musk-rat's nest, I was surprised to see what I took to be beautiful frost crystals of a rare form, frost bodkins, which were from one to two or more inches long, reaching down into the dark, damp cavern. \* \* On examining them more closely, feeling and tasting them, I found that it was not frost, but a clear crystalline dew in almost invisible drops, concentrated from the dampness of the cavern. Looking again, I discovered extremely minute white threads or gossamer standing out on all sides from the main rootlet, and affording the core for these drops. \* \* A wonderful piece of chemistry, that the very grass we trample on and esteem so cheap should be thus wonderfully

nourished, that this spring greenness was not produced by coarse and cheap means, but that in the sod, out of sight, the most delicate and magical processes are going on." Etc.

If, to such keenness of observation and love of nature, we add a deeply reverent, spiritual disposition, we can almost say with John Henry Newman, "Every breath of air, and ray of light and heat; every beautiful prospect, is, as it were, the skirts of angels garments, the waving of the robes of those whose faces see God."

#### EASTER AND GOOD FRIDAY SERVICES.

##### Easter Sunday.

##### PAUL'S GRAND CONCLUSION.

*If Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins.*—1 Cor. xv: 17.

Let us analyze the argument for a moment and see how just and irresistible the conclusion is which Paul here states.

I. Christ's advent, life, death, resurrection and ascension to glory and dominion on high, was all matter of prophecy hundreds of years before his incarnation. Now if Christ was not "raised according to the scriptures" the entire Old Testament was swept away, there was no prophetic "Messiah," no historical Christ, and hence no foundation for faith in Jesus of Nazareth.

II. Christ foretold His own death and resurrection in the most explicit manner, in private and in public, alike to His disciples and to His enemies. This prediction was matter of public notoriety: so that it was used by his enemies with Pilate to induce him to make the sepulchre sure. Now if the prediction failed and the grave held its victim, it would of course demonstrate to the nation that He was an impostor and His teachings and claims were all false and worthless.

III. Christianity as taught by His accredited disciples was based on the doctrine of a "risen Savior;" they not only taught it as a fundamental fact of the new faith, but claimed to be eye-witnesses and testified to its verity

before all the people, and made the glorious truth the foundation of the Christian Church, which they organized in the city of Jerusalem soon after His death, and in all the chief cities of the Roman Empire. Now if Christ had not risen, they were publicly convicted out of their own mouths as bearing false witness, as conspiring to palm off on the nation and the world a stupendous imposture and lie, and to be guilty of the extreme folly of sacrificing all worldly prospects and incurring ignominy and death itself in order to do so foolish and mad a thing.

IV. If Christ had not risen, not only was their faith in Him a vain and worthless thing, but *they were yet in their sins*. If the "Messiah" of the old dispensation, and the "Jesus" of the new, were seen and confessed to be an impostor—only one of the many "false Christs" which had risen in Judea—then the last Hope of the world had vanished: no Deliverer had arisen. Sin yet reigned with absolute sway: Death was not conquered: the Devil and Hell were still masters of the situation!

All these dismal and fearful consequences resulted, logically and necessarily, from the premises. On the Resurrection of the Sufferer of Calvary hinged the fate of the world, the destiny of the race of mankind.

Paul was fully alive to the magnitude of the interest at stake. He does not shrink from meeting the momentous issue squarely and bravely. He joins issue with the hosts of inäuels and

scoffers on the very scene of the crucifixion and its attending marvels and while the facts were still fresh in men's minds. He sets forth the argument in his Epistle to the Corinthians with masterly skill and effectiveness and boldly challenges the enemies of the cross to assail it, if they can, and shows, with wondrous cogency and startling incisiveness what must follow if this key-stone of the Gospel structure is taken away.

Thus prophecy and history, fact and logical demonstration, unite to show that our Holy Religion rests on foundations more solid and stable than the everlasting hills.

### Suggestive Themes for Easter Sunday.

#### THE LONELINESS OF JESUS IN HIS HUMANITY.

*I have trodden the wine press alone; and of the people there was none with me.*—Isa. lxiii: 3.

#### THE SUBSTANCE OF THE GOSPEL.

*He preached unto them Jesus and the Resurrection.*—Acts, xviii: 18.

*The Resurrection of Christ answers the burdened cry of the Human Heart. If a man die, shall he live again?*—Job. xiv: 14.

#### THE LORD OF LIFE.

*I was dead, and behold, I am alive forever more.*—Rev. i: 18.

### Suggestive Thoughts.

. . . It was for the glory that was set before Him that Christ endured the humiliation and suffering of the cross. Let us keep our eyes fixed steadily on the crown immortal, and then our sacrifices, and services, and sufferings for Christ's cause, will seem light and trivial in comparison. . . . The seal of the Sanhedrim, a regiment of soldiers from the town of Antonio, floor of rock, roof of rock, wall of rock, niche of rock, cannot keep Christ in the crypt. Though you pile upon us all the boulders of the mountains, you cannot keep us down. The door of the tomb will be lifted off its hinges and flung flat in the dust.—*Talmage*.

. . . The understanding has its joys no less than the heart and a keen sense of intellectual joy is experienced when we perceive truth, or any part of it, resting on a secure basis. A man is happy

when he has attained to know the causes of things. The chemist, the historian, the mathematician, the anatomist, are examples. Christ's resurrection is such a fact to the Christian. It is the foundation on which the Christian creed rests. This was the reason it had such a prominent place in apostolic preaching,—*Canon Liddon*.

### Good Friday.

#### THE SUFFERER OF CALVARY.

*And they crucified Him.*—Matt. xxiii: 25.

Man could do no more. The last act of the most terrible tragedy that Satanic malice ever conceived, or human wickedness ever achieved, was thus enacted. He came to His own nation and people and was rejected by them and cast forth as "a root out of dry ground." He "spake as never man spake" before, but His words were treated with scorn and vituperation. He wrought miracles of wonder and mercy in attestation of His divine mission, but His Divine power was ascribed to "Beelzebub, the prince of devils." He was a friend to the poor; he sympathized with the suffering; He mingled freely with all classes for their good; but was denounced as a "wine bibber and the friend of publicans and harlots." He was betrayed by one disciple, and denied by another, and forsaken by all, in the hour of danger. He was finally arrested and falsely charged and condemned, and then "crowned with thorns and spit upon," and finally "crucified," in the presence of a mocking, cursing rabble, between two thieves!

The malice of Hell and the depravity of Earth *culminated* in the tragedy on Calvary. Through all time, and through all eternity, that act of wickedness will stand forth to the gaze of the universe in all its appalling and unparalleled atrocity.

And this is the nature, the very law, of sin. It stops at nothing possible. It sets no bounds to its desires, its madness, its perversity. Its *constitutional law is the law of progress*—and on and on, to its dreadful culmination in a murdered soul, in a lost probation, and in the lowest depth of hell, it will

go, in spite of human and divine law; in spite of Sinai and Calvary; in spite of tears and pleadings and providential checks — *unless* Omnipotent grace, in sovereign mercy, interpose to prevent.

It is an awful fact. There stands a *Calvary* in the pathway of every gospel sinner, not simply to exhibit the mercy and suffering of the dying Lamb of God, but to show the height and bitterness and hellish wickedness of man when sin has conceived and brings forth death. "The wages of sin is death!"

#### Suggestive Themes.

THE MAD CRY OF IMPENITENT SIN.  
*Crucify him! crucify him!*—Luke xxiii: 21.  
THE WEAKNESS OF HUMAN NATURE  
UNDER TEMPTATION.

*All the disciples forsook him and fled.*—  
Matt. xxvi: 56.

NATURE IN SYMPATHY WITH A SUFFERING  
GOD.

*And a darkness came over the whole land  
until the ninth hour.*—Luke xxiii: 44.

#### Suggestive Thoughts.

To know nothing experimentally of the darkness and agony which conviction of sin produces in the penitent soul, is to know nothing of the spiritual meaning of the crucifixion, and to experience nothing of the surprise and joy of the resurrection morning.

... "Out of suffering have emerged the strongest souls; the most massive characters are seamed with scars; martyrs have put on their coronation robes, glittering with fire, and through their tears have the sorrowful first seen the gates of Heaven."

... What the Church needs to-day is a return to the simple, earnest and intense faith of the early disciples. The Crucifixion and the Resurrection were ever uppermost in their thoughts, living and all glorious realities, and they surrendered their whole being to their sway. We, in these modern days, do not follow their example, although these fundamental facts have the same significance for us that they had for them. We allow speculation, criticism, doubt, unbelief, and worldliness, to dull the edge of truth, to obscure the light, and thus diminish the powers of these essential truths on our faith and living.

## MISCELLANEOUS SECTION.

### THE MISSIONARY FIELD.

By ARTHUR T. PIERSON, D.D., PHILADELPHIA.

#### THE MORAVIANS AND THEIR MISSIONS.

HERNNHUT, about fifty miles from Dresden, is the centre from which radiate the noble missionary efforts of the United Brethren. It is a plain village, of Quaker simplicity and about 1,000 people, where all is neat, orderly, and pervaded by the religious element.

The "House of the Brethren" and the "House of the Sisters" are the homes of unmarried men and women, respectively; the former with thirty and the latter one hundred inmates. No celibate or monastic vows are taken, and the association is voluntary, in the interests of economy and industry, and Christian labor. On the slope of Hutberg Hill, lies the peaceful burial place of the community, with the tomb of Christian David, and slabs of stone, lying flat on the ground and looking eastward, bearing the simplest record of the dead.

The stone building at Berthelsdorf is

the residence of the Elders' Conference. They meet thrice a week around their table, examine the correspondence of the body, and talk over, and pray over all the affairs of the *Unitas Fratrum*. Here is the hub of the great wheel, from which extend to the utmost circumference of their work, the various spokes, financial, educational, evangelistic, disciplinary.

As the Moravian Brethren lead all Christendom in the high average of their missionary consecration and contribution, we may well ask, what is the cause? Their creed does not essentially differ from other creeds of Christendom's reformed churches. They especially emphasize the person and work of the Lord Jesus, as Redeemer, both by pulpit and press. In Him, as they say, they "have the grace of the Son, the love of the Father, and the communion of the Spirit." The Holy Scriptures they cordially accept as the inspired



and infallible Word of God; and the living word, the blessed Christ, is especially in His character as a *sacrifice for sin*, the model for their imitation. They lay stress not so much upon *doctrine as life*.

The body is governed by a General Synod, meeting every ten years, or so, at Herrnhut. Provincial Synods control the three Provinces—Continental, English, and American.

In constitution, their church combines the features of Presbyterianism and Episcopacy. But they are not jealous of "Episcopal ordination" or "apostolic succession." They prize, as of unspeakable worth, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and the apostolic spirit of self-denial and loyalty to Christ.

Their morality is blameless. Capital crimes, divorce, etc., are unknown. Like the Waldenses, they seem to be appointed of God to keep alive the embers of the primitive faith and apostolic spirit, in the midst of the worldliness, extravagance and selfishness that would quench even the fires of God.

Their illustrious "father" in modern times was Count Zinzendorf. But their history in Moravia and Bohemia reaches back, perhaps, even into the ninth century. John Huss (born 1373) was their most famous reformer. In 1457 they organized as a religious society; after years of fierce persecution, in 1467, they held a Synod, and completely separated from the State, and obtained from the Waldenses the "Episcopal succession." Three bishops were consecrated. After a most remarkable history of alternating prosperity and persecution by the Anti-Reformation of Ferdinand II., Protestantism was totally overthrown in Bohemia and Moravia. Over 50,000 people were driven out as the Huguenots were from France, and for almost a hundred years the *Unitas Fratrum* was like treasure hid in a field.

Just fifty years after Comenius, their last bishop, died, two families of Moravian exiles reached Count Zinzendorf's estate in Saxony, *Berthelsdorf*, seeking refuge. There, under his sheltering care, they built *Herrnhut* ("Protection of

the Lord"), and revived their ancient church. Zinzendorf resigning worldly honors and riches, became their bishop, and the new "Father" of this apostolic Church. For over one hundred and thirty years they have been multiplying churches and missions at Gnadenhutten ("Tents of Grace"). In Ohio, one hundred Moravian Indians were massacred in 1782, by suspicious whites. In Lapland, among the Samoyeds; in Algeria, China, Persia, Ceylon, the East Indies, the Caucasus, Guiana, Guinea, among the Calmucks, in Abyssinia and Tranquebar, Greenland, Labrador, on the Mosquito Coast, in the Islands of St. Thomas, etc., in South Africa, Thibet, Australia, and now in Alaska, this feeble yet mighty band of disciples have carried the flag of the cross.

This work of foreign missions chiefly engages and almost absorbs the life of the Moravian Brotherhood. It was begun in 1732, one hundred and fifty-four years ago, when Herrnhut was the only church, and numbered only 600 souls. Within one hundred and thirty years this little band had sent out 2,100 missionaries, exclusive of native assistants. Zinzendorf, at ten years of age, had formed, with youths of like mind, the *Seyfkorn Orden* (Order of the Grain of Mustard Seed), with its covenant of mutual love, loyalty to Christ, and direct aim and effort for the conversion of souls. The badge of the order was a shield with an "Ecce Homo" and the motto: "*His wounds, our healing.*" Their rule of life: "None of us liveth to himself alone." "We will love the whole family of man." Thus while this young count was at school in Halle, he was preparing unconsciously to become the leader of the missionary church of our day. This consecrated count married a godly woman, who with him cast rank and riches to the winds, as inventions of human vanity; and these two took as their sole aim in life *the winning of souls*. They were ready, at a moment's call, to enter on any mission work, and counted that place as home where they could find the widest door open for Christian

labor. And so the *Senfkorn Orden* of the young lad at Halle grew into the *Diaspora* of the Brotherhood at Hernnhut.

The history of this Brotherhood is a modern miracle. While during the eighteenth century, "England was," as Isaac Taylor said, "in virtual heathenism," and as Samuel Blair declared, "Religion in America lay a-dying;" when Voltaire and Frederick the Great ruled Europe, and lasciviousness in novel and drama, and deism in the pulpit and press, threatened alike the foundations of morality and piety; when the whole Church seemed bowing to idols of this world, and scarce the form of godliness was left—even then the Moravian Church remained both evangelical and evangelistic! Probably up to this time, not less than 3,000 brethren and sisters have been engaged in foreign work, beside all that have been helpers in the work of the *Diaspora*.

The Moravians have not been remarkable for rapid multiplication. *Their practical separation from the world* neither invites worldly accessions nor allows worldly conformities. Zinzendorf and his colleagues adopted, as the fundamental principle of the *Church at Home*, Spener's idea of *ecclesiola in ecclesia*, little churches or households of faith, within the Church, retreats for the godly. In the Moravian settlements only church members could own real estate, and rigid separation from the world was encouraged.

Again, the missionary spirit is so fostered that the *church abroad* is more conspicuous than the church at home. Both domestic and foreign missions are carried on by this numerically small body, on a scale proportionally more extensive than any other Christian denomination. The work of *Home Evangelization*, or the *Diaspora*, (See 1st Peter i: 1, Greek, "Scattering of Seed") is very extensive in Europe. It aims to evangelize state churches, without proselyting their members. Missionaries hold meetings for prayer and exhortation, visiting from house to house. In 1862, 120 missionaries were thus employed, male and female, and the enter-

prise reached from Saxony to France, Switzerland and Germany, north to Sweden and Norway, and east into Russia. At that time 80,000 persons were connected with this *Diaspora*, on the Continent. In this country, also, operations were commenced chiefly among German emigrants.

So near as we can ascertain, in the year 1884, this Brotherhood numbered, including all the baptized, over 50,000 at home, and over 110,000 abroad, making a total of about 160,000; and of these, 283 were foreign missionaries, and 1,600 were native ministers and helpers. In other words, one out of every sixty-eight adult home communicants is a foreign missionary; they have one-half more members in their *mission churches* than in the home churches, and actually raise an average of \$4.50 for each communicant, for foreign missions alone. At the same ratio, if the 30,000,000 Evangelical Protestant church members should contribute, we should have \$135,000,000 instead of barely \$10,000,000 as our missionary income, and if the whole Christian church would imitate such personal consecration, the evangelical churches would be sending into the field 440,000 missionaries instead of 5,000.

**The Day of Large Gifts.** "Not only is God opening the world to the Gospel as never before, but opening the hearts of His people in a wonderful manner to furnish the money needed. We give a table of gifts for Foreign Missions in 1878-9.

Legacy to the Foreign Mission work of the Free Church of Scotland, by Hugh Miller, M.D., who lived many years in India .....	\$100,000
From Mr. T. M. Harvey, a merchant of Natal, South Africa, to Wesleyan Foreign Missions .....	100,000
From Mr. Jones, an English gentleman, to the Church Missionary Society .....	175,000
From one of the Secretaries of the same Society .....	25,000
To the London Missionary Society from a friend, for Africa .....	25,000
From the Bishop of Newcastle, Australia, to theological and other schools in his diocese .....	1,250,000
From Mr. Arlington of England, to various societies .....	50,000

Mr. Sloane to the Presbyterian Board . . . . .	30,000
Legacy of Mrs. Lapsley of Indiana to the Presbyterian Board, of which \$120,000 are to be paid soon . . . . .	200,000
From the late Gardner Colby of Boston to Baptist Foreign Missions . . . . .	40,000
Moses P. Page, of Gilmanston Iron Works, N. H., to the American Missionary Association . . . . .	10,000
Deacon Asa Otis of New London to the American Board . . . . .	973,000

"Here is more than three millions of dollars from twelve persons for evangelizing the world; and it is by no means a complete report of the large gifts, to say nothing of the small ones. Who can doubt that He who inspired these large gifts will bring about great results thereby!

There is a choice painting in the Dusseldorf, an "Ecce Homo" with an inscription in Latin: "All this I did for thee, what doest thou for me?" Zinzendorf, the Moravian bishop, was so greatly affected at the sight of this picture that he was overcome. Feeling deeply that he could not make such response as he would and ought to this solemn question, he prayed his Savior to pull him forcibly into the fellowship of his sufferings should he be inclined to remain without.

**Bishop Taylor's Missions.** The "Missionary Review" states that the workers in Bishop Taylor's South American Missions are all self-supporting; that, notwithstanding the outlay in outfits, chapels, schools, and \$50,000 for the college, no money has been drawn from funds contributed for his African work, nor have any expenses been incident to the collecting, forwarding of funds, etc., but all administrative work has been a free-will offering.

**The Price of Delay.** When Miss Crawford went out to Shan-tung, in China, as she talked with the people one old lady began asking her some very intelligent questions. Said she: "How long have you known this word about the Lord Jesus?" "Oh, ever since I was a little girl." "Did your mother know it?" "Yes." "Your grandmother?" "Yes." "How long have your people known about it?" "About 1,800 years." "Then why didn't you

come before? My mother would have liked to know of it, and she is dead."

**British Contributions to Missions in 1885.** Rev. W. H. Scott Robertson has summarized and analyzed them as follows: Grand total, including dividends, interest and rents, \$7,936,870, an advance over 1884 of \$71,990. He includes Roman Catholic contributions, \$33,440. It appears from his tables that the Christian world raises over \$17,000,000 a year for Protestant missions, while Romish Foreign Missions receive but \$1,325,850, somewhat over one-eighth of that sum. [Miss. Review, Feb., 1887, p. 81]. While the Church of England in 25 years has spent on Foreign Missions \$50,000,000, seven times that amount has been spent on Home enlargements, improvements, etc. From a careful examination of statistics of Christian Missions, the "Quarterly Review" states that during eight years the ordained missionaries from Protestant Christendom have increased fifty per cent., and the total income seventy per cent.

#### MONTHLY BULLETIN.

**AFRICA.**—Rev. George Grenfell of the English Baptist Mission on the Congo, sailing in the "*Peace*," found the Kasai, the large southern tributary, navigable for 500 miles. Of the 5,000 miles of navigable waterway, accessible from Stanley Pool, this one mission steamer has now traversed 3,400. Mr. Grenfell has been made a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society of England, in tribute to his services as an explorer. Bishop Taylor reached Stanley Pool last July, having his eyes on Kimpoko at its northeast extremity, and on the junction of the Kasai and San Kurn rivers four hundred miles further on, as his first two stations. We bless God for the faith, courage and constancy of this modern apostle. His fourth reinforcement, which sailed in December last, embraced two carpenters, a physician, school teacher, farmer and miner and local preacher in one, a farmer and medical man in one, and a shoemaker. This is the true way to "*colonize*" Africa.

**BRAZIL.**—Rev. De Lacey Wardlaw, de-

termining to plant a mission at Mossoro, despite the opposition of Romanists, he entered the place at 4 o'clock, A. M., surprising both friends and foes, and succeeded in renting a place to preach in.

COREA.—The Scottish U. P. Mission in N. Corea reports over 100 recent conversions, and the work rapidly going forward. During a recent illness of the queen, Dr. Allen, of the Presbyterian Mission, refused to prescribe for her unless his associate, Miss Ellers, should examine her symptoms and report to him. The king, alarmed, discharged all the native doctors about the palace. After the queen's recovery she gave a handsome sedan-chair to Miss Ellers. Drs. Allen and Ellers will remain the permanent physicians to the royal family.

INDIA.—A Bengali paper, the "*Prabasi*," has been started in Calcutta in the interests of Christianity. The Christian community increases eight and a half per cent. a year, doubling every twelve years.—*Bapt. Miss. Mis.*

JAPAN.—The remarkable reformation spreading rapidly, in Japan, bids fair to give to that country a great superiority over the Chinese, viz., the gradual adoption of the Roman letters in place of the old ideographic characters. An ordinary student was obliged to load his memory with at least 4,000 characters; but, if he wished to graduate in a higher college, he had to learn at least 8,000 characters, which required six years of constant application. The "Society of Romanization" has a membership of more than 1,000, many of whom are princes and government officials; and the government warmly supports this reform. This reform can scarcely fail to have a highly stimulating effect upon Christian missions in the Sunrise Kingdom. The missionaries seldom acquire over 1,000 characters, and they naturally find themselves considerably hampered by their limited native vocabulary.—*Christian at Work.*

MOLAKAL.—Father Damiens, the Roman Catholic priest, who became an exile for the lepers' sakes, is dead of leprosy, but two other priests and as many nuns take up his work.

NEW BRITAIN.—When Rev. George Brown left this island, off the New Guinea coast, some months since, 500 natives met to honor their departing friend. Five years before, when he landed, he was attacked by the natives who slew several of his Fijian helpers.

THE UNIVERSITY MOVEMENT.—The Queen's and Knox Universities in Canada, moved by a missionary spirit, set apart Dec. 4th for discussion and decision as to some practical and practicable scheme for extending missionary interest and effort. Mr. J. F. Smith, who presided, offered himself to the association as their representative to go to the foreign field, and amid subdued but enthusiastic emotion, the meeting unanimously resolved:

1. Recognizing the claim of Foreign Missions upon the Church of Christ, by reason of our Lord's command to preach the Gospel to every creature.

2. The greatness of the need at this present time—hundreds of millions being without the smallest ray of Gospel light.

3. The greatness of the opportunities at this present time for missionary enterprises, almost every nation and tribe being open to the missionary.

4. The fact that some of our own students are longing to serve Christ in the foreign field, but are kept from doing so by lack of funds in the Foreign Mission treasuries.

Therefore Resolved, that we, as the Queen's College Missionary Association, undertake to send to and support in the foreign field an additional missionary.

The association then appointed Mr. Smith its first missionary, presenting his name to the Missionary Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, and pledging its members to his support; and asking that he and Mr. Goforth, from Knox College be sent to China. It seems as though we were entering upon a new era, in which the College Y. M. C. Associations are about to take up Evangelistic work abroad and send forth their members as Foreign Missionaries.

## PREACHERS EXCHANGING VIEWS.

## Christ's Resurrected Body.

In Dr. Sherwood's "Prayer Meeting Service," for February (p. 153), occur the following sentences: "And yet the 'glorified' body of Christ is grander and more beautiful still (than the one he had before crucifixion). In rising from the tomb, all that was mortal, weak, imperfect—all that partook of the 'earth, earthy'—had been left behind, and the body of the God-man put on attributes more exalted and more glorious than matter ever before possessed."

Is this language warranted by the Scriptures? Was the body of Christ "imperfect," "mortal," in the sense we use the term "mortal"? Was not "death by sin, and so death (mortality) hath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans v: 12). Were the seeds of sin sown in His body? If not, how was He then otherwise "mortal"? "No man taketh my life from me," said He. "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." Did Christ leave anything behind Him when He came out of the tomb? Swedenborg says He did; the Bible says, no. Was not the body that came out of the grave precisely the body that went into it? The disciples detected no difference, and testify to none. To my mind this difficulty arises by confounding the "glorified" body with the resurrected body. They are a very different thing. Christ's body was glorified at His ascension. So will be the bodies of His saints. "We shall all be changed," ("both the quick and the dead"—"those that sleep and those that are alive and remain,") "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," not because it is our resurrection, but because it is our ascension. Then shall He "change this vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body."

S. G. BLANCHARD.

*Santa Barbara, Cal.*

## REPLY TO CRITICISM.

We think our brother is "wise above what is written," as well as hyper-critical."

1. As to the living body of Christ, the

testimony of the Scriptures is explicit that it was "flesh and blood," like the body of any other man, born under all the conditions of our common humanity, and while sinless in conduct, subject to all the experiences and infirmities of a common lot. He was not exempt from hunger, thirst, fatigue, sorrow, pain, human friendships, etc., or even death itself, in order to accomplish the end of His mission. He was "tempted in all points like as we are," etc., and how could this be, if, in His physical, as well as moral nature, there was no weakness, no element on which temptation could act? The Devil, in the wilderness, assailed Him through a *bodily* appetite, and if there was nothing in Him that could be responsive to such a temptation, then there could be no resistance offered, and there was no virtue in His victory.

Christ's *body* was of the "earth, earthy"—born of a woman, "grew" to manhood, ate, drank, enjoyed, suffered and died. His moral perfection did not exempt His physical being from the laws which govern every one born under the curse of the law. Hence,

2. His resurrection body differed from His living body in the same essential particulars as does the body of every saint. He is the "first fruit" of them that sleep.

Will the brother tell us where the "Bible says" that Christ's body underwent no change in the tomb of Joseph? Surely he cannot have read Paul's account of the resurrection in Corinthians, to which we particularly refer in the paper criticised. Here we have noted the chief points of the change which the body of the saint undergoes in the resurrection. To say that this is descriptive of our "ascension," and that Christ's body was glorified at His "ascension," and not when He came forth the Conqueror over Death and the Grave and all the powers of Hell, is arrant nonsense. There is not a word of Scripture to warrant it. It is contrary to reason and to fact.

J. M. SHERWOOD.

**"In Our Midst"—A Criticism.**

This objectionable phrase is very common in the parlance of the clergy. It is heard in both prayers and sermons. This phrase, if not positively incorrect, is unpleasantly suggestive; hence it is inelegant. A man's "midst" is somewhere between his neck and loins. A person might properly say, "I have a pain in my midst—meaning in his stomach or bowels. President Brown, of Hamilton College, was wont to dissuade his students from using it. *In the midst of us, or among us*, is far better. An eminent authority says: "The phrase seems contrary to the genius of the language and opposed to the practice of our most accurate writers, and should therefore be abandoned."

*Belleville, N. J.* RALPH W. BROKAW.

**The Great Facts of Revelation.**

In the department of "Pastoral Theology" in the *HOM. REV.* for March, a correspondent asks: "What are the two events of the Bible that transcend all others in grandeur and importance?"

Prof. Wilkinson wisely answers by mentioning one event which, in his opinion, deserves that place, viz.: The Resurrection of Our Lord, and leaves the selection of the other to his correspondent. For the sake of the interest which attaches to such a question, and as outlining, in brief, the divisions of a true biblical theology, may I be permitted to suggest that the apostles of our Lord seem to give prominence to five great facts as the sum and substance of all gospel preaching, all centering, as the importance of the question necessarily demands, in the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ, viz.:

1. Jesus Christ, the eternal son of God, incarnate in human flesh to be the savior of the world.
2. Jesus Christ dying on the cross for the sins of His people.
3. Christ Jesus rising again from the dead for our justification and glory.
4. Christ Jesus ascended and exalted, as our great high priest and made head over all things to the church.
5. Christ Jesus Lord coming again to receive His own unto Himself, and to fill the world with the glory of His kingdom.

Four of these are facts of sacred history and therefore the objects of *faith*. One, the last, is still future, and therefore the object of *hope*, while all the five are strung on *love*, the golden cord, as the brightest jewels of God's grace "unto the praise of His glory."

The two that "transcend all others" it ought not to be difficult to determine with the Scriptures in our hands.

If I may be permitted to express an opinion, I would say, one is that which stands central amid the five—the resurrection of our Lord; the other, that which is the consummation of all—the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Any one holding these two will not be likely to misinterpret or undervalue the other three, nor fail in understanding the sublime trend of the whole Word of God, as it unfolds "the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

*Morristown, N. J.* ALBERT ERDMAN.

**"The Church in the Catacombs."**

In the February number of the *HOMILETIC REVIEW*, (p. 125), in the interesting article on the subject at the head of this criticism, occurs the following: "Still existing baptisteries prove that the sacrament of baptism also was administered. The most remarkable is in the Catacomb of St. Pontianus. Ten steps lead down to a basin deep enough for immersion, and supplied by a spring. On the wall above is a fresco of the baptism of our Lord; who, however, is not immersed, but stands in the pool up to His waist, while water is being poured upon His head."

The "*Catacombs of Rome*," by the Rev. W. H. Withrow, M. A. (p. 537), describes this same basin as follows: "Other fonts have been found in several of the subterranean chapels, among which is one in the Catacomb of Pontianus, hewn out of the solid tufa and fed by a living stream. It is thirty-six inches long, thirty-two inches wide, and forty inches deep, but is seldom near full of water. It is obviously too small for immersion, and was evidently designed for administering the rite as



shown in the fresco which accompanies it." As Mr. Stanton says, the basin is "deep enough" for immersion, but the length is "obviously" insufficient for immersion. If immersion was the Apostolic mode of baptism, and exclusively practiced in the early church, is it not a little remarkable that only one such font, and that in which it seems impossible to have practiced immersion, should have been found in the Catacombs in which more than a million of Christians were entombed, and its streets, to the extent of more than nine hundred miles, have been explored? But why this basin should be characterized by Mr. Stanton as "the most remarkable" does not appear. This basin could easily be approached by a person and its pure spring water be dipped up and carried away for culinary purposes. Obviously this was the original design in the construction of this font. Had it been *designed* for immersion it would have been twice as long. Other fonts are more "remarkable," if we consider the beauty of their workmanship, and their adaptation to the primitive mode of baptism by affusion.

Meadville, Pa. A. J. MERCHANT.

#### Announcement of Subjects.

I have been greatly interested in the discussion of the question whether it is wise for ministers to announce a series of topics. Let me add my testimony to that of Rev. J. M. Frost in the HOM. REVIEW (Feb., p. 174).

During the past twenty years, I have frequently arranged a series of Sabbath evening talks, or lectures, or sermons,

and have had a small card printed, containing on one side an invitation to the various services of the church, and on the other the dates and topics of the sermons announced. Good results have always followed. The members of the church and Sabbath-school have been glad to take these cards for distribution as it helped them to invite people to church. A young man picked up one of these cards in the post-office, and came to church, and stopped after the service to talk with me, and came to my house the next day for the same purpose, before leaving town. A young man picked up one of them in a city thirty miles away, and it led him to come out to church. A series of Sabbath evening lectures for young people has recently filled the church with young men who had been conspicuously absent. The topics were as follows: Dec. 5—A Blackboard Sermon—"The Curious House." Dec. 12—"Success in Life." Dec. 19—An Object Lesson. Dec. 26—A Blackboard Sermon—"The Best Word in the Bible."

Large numbers of young men became interested, and have attended the meetings that have been held since. The first evening that an invitation was given for any to come forward as inquirers, thirty-five came, of whom *twenty-five were boys and young men*. The proportion still continues to be on that side, which, to say the least, is a little unusual.

There need be nothing sensational in this method. It has been to me a *very great* help in several places, and I heartily commend it to others.

Marshall, Mich. H. M. MOREY.

## EDITORIAL SECTION.

### HINTS AT THE MEANING OF TEXTS.

*So slow*

*The growth of what is excellent—so hard*

*To reach perfection in this nether world.—COWPER.*

[We began in the March issue the publication of some of the briefs sent in response to our offer in the February number. They will be recognized by a pseudonym and a \*, e. g. "Salamander."\*]—Eds.

#### Revival Service.

##### LOT'S CHOICE.

*Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jor-*

*dan . . . And Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.—Gen. xiii: 10, 12.*

I. HIS CHOICE.—The historical part.

II. HIS MOTIVE.—1. Not the expectation of better religious advantages. 2. Not the hope of benefitting others. 3.

Evidently to advance his worldly interests.—Here was a grand opportunity to get rich. He could be general purveyor for Sodom, beside being on the direct line of travel between the East and the West.

III. WHAT HE GAINED.—A home in Sodom.

IV. WHAT HE LOST.—1. The helpful influence of Christian fellowship. 2. Moral tone in character—evidently on the down grade. 3. His happiness. Dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, he vexed his righteous soul from day to day. 4. His property; first in war, then by fire. 5. All of his adherents, and part of his own family, in the final destruction of Sodom.

Contrast Lot with Abraham, who was willing to let God choose for him and to suffer any loss rather than have a quarrel.

Shall we choose for ourselves, as did Lot, suffering worldly ideas to control our choice, or shall we let God choose for us, as Abraham did, being assured that He will give us a better portion than any worldly inheritance?

ABRAHAM.\*

#### WHOSOEVER.

*Whosoever believeth.*—John iii: 3, 16.

The word *whosoever* is used over twenty times in the promises and invitations of the gospel—the most indefinite and yet most definite of all words of invitation.

I. WHOSOEVER MEANS THE WHOLE WORLD.

- (a) God's love embraced it.
- (b) His gift covered it.
- (c) His invitation included it.

Christianity glories in being sent to the whole world.

II. WHOSOEVER MEANS FREE TO ALL.

- (a) Equally accessible.
- (b) Equally free.
- (c) On equal terms.

Christianity glories in being beyond price, yet given without price.

III. WHOSOEVER MEANS ONE AT A TIME.

(a) A personal responsibility—"let him will."

(b) A personal privilege—"let him come."

(c) A personal right—"let him take."

IV. WHOSOEVER MEANS THE WILLING.

(a) The gospel respects man's free agency.

(b) It subjects the will to God alone.

(c) Its acceptance is voluntary.

V. WHOSOEVER MEANS THE BELIEVING.

(a) Believe in the Son.

(b) Trust in the Son.

(c) Accept the Son.

VI. WHOSOEVER MEANS THE SAVED.

(a) "They shall not perish."

(b) "They shall have eternal life."

VII. WHOSOEVER MEANS A CHANGING NUMBER.

1. A *contracting* number.

(a) The world, (b) The believing world, (c) The saved world.

2. An *expanding* number.

(a) The part saved, (b) The daily saved, (c) All the saved. Como.\*

#### PLEADING FOR A REVIVAL.

*Will thou not revive us again?*—Psalms cxxxv: 6.

I. A BACKSLIDDEN CHURCH.

1. Illustrated: Dead men manning a ship, so dead men man the church.
2. Church obligations secondary or entirely disregarded.
3. No delight in spiritual exercises.
4. No manifest sympathy for the unsaved.
5. Habitual absence from social services.
6. Private means of grace neglected.
7. Outward life not distinguishable from that of the worldling.

II. IMPORT OF THE TEXT.

1. An acknowledgement that the church is backslidden.
2. An evidence of faith in revivals.
3. An ardent desire for a revival.
4. A readiness to use the means honored of God.
5. An entire reliance upon divine power.

III. CONDITIONS PRECEDENT TO A REVIVAL.

1. Repentance, deep and sincere, on the part of the church.
2. Perfect faith in the power of the gospel.

3. Concerted effort following the leadership of the pastor.

4. Aiming directly at a revival in all work of the church.

5. Mighty, agonizing and ceaseless prayer.

6. The presence and power of the Holy Ghost.

#### IV. MOTIVES CONSIDERED.

1. Actual condition of the church.

2. The enemies of the Cross, number, activity, diabolical work.

3. Sinners going down to hell.

4. The exceeding great and precious promises of God.

A. J. TRENCH.\*

#### Funeral Service.

##### RESURRECTION POWER.

*Give place; for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth.*—Matt. ix: 24.

The ruler's daughter was dead; nothing can keep death from our homes. "It is appointed unto men once to die."

Jesus came to see the ruler's daughter. "Precious in the sight of the Lord," etc.

#### I. THESE ARE WORDS OF COMFORT TO THE BEREAVED.

1. Bereaved friends need comfort.

2. Jesus only can give it.

3. He is willing to come, send for Him.

#### II. THE YOUNG DIE.

1. It seems sad to die in youth.

2. Death respects no age. "Leaves have their time to fall," etc.

3. Why are the young taken away?

(a) To impress the living.

(b) Perhaps to higher and nobler pursuits.

#### III. DEATH IS SLEEP: "The maid is not dead, but sleepeth."

1. If death be a sleep, then there is another life consequent upon this life; there will be an awaking time. "To die is gain." And you will meet your friends again.

2. Then we ought to live earnestly.

How blessed to sleep in Jesus! And we may say to our fears and tears, "Give place; for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth."

Why weep? we may soon sleep.

Are you ready?

APELLES.\*

#### IMMORTALITY AND ETERNAL LIFE.

*If a man die shall he live again?*—Job xiv: 14.

INTRO.—Job had just denied that man would live again in this life (vs. 10-12); that the body, as well as the soul, should live in a different condition is referred to in vs. 13, 15.

#### I. ALL MANKIND WILL LIVE AGAIN AT THE RESURRECTION.

1. The doctrine of the resurrection is not a natural belief of man, as that of the future existence of the soul. Acts xv: 32. The Bible teaches us this.

2. Passages, with distinctive comments: John v: 28, 29, "Marvel . . . forth"; Is. xxvi: 19; Acts xxiv: 15.

3. These will not always live in the same conditions.—John v, 29.

#### II. THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL LIVE, PECULIARLY, IN ETERNITY.

1. There is a difference between "immortality" and "eternal life." Immortality (incorruptibility) is common to all; not so eternal life.—Rom. ii: 7; 2 Tim. i: 10.

2. This life begins on earth.—John v: 24 (see R. V.); vi: 47, present tense; viii: 51.

3. This life signifies a union with God. Christ, as Divine and human, has accomplished this.—Col. i: 21, 22; 2 Cor. v: 18; 1 Peter iii: 18. Union—a coming together.

4. This brings eternal happiness.—Rom. ii: 7; "immortality," plus "glory and honor," constitute eternal life.—Matt. xxv: 34 (see Gal. v: 21, 22); Thess. iv: 15; this because of vs. 16, 17; Rev. xxi: 3, 4.

As true as you die, so true will you live again; but will it be this life of happiness? M. FOUCHE.\*

#### THE GROUP ABOUT THE BARE OF BETHLEHEM.

*When they saw the star they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.*—Matt. ii: 61.

This is the central group of the world, a truly representative picture. In a public gallery at Brussels is a picture of the crucifixion. Its peculiarity is, that all the light which falls upon the upturned faces and on the thieves, comes

from Him on the central cross. So with this group. The light from the manger has made these figures stand out with Rembrandt effect.

I. "The star" voices Nature, and points to the babe as the Christ. Nature demands a Christ, and this is the fulfillment.

II. The "three wise men from the East represents true wisdom, which seeks a Christ and finds it in Jesus.

III. "Herod," the Christ hater, seeking his life, represents sin, which fears while it hates him; its very profanity proves that it believes in, while it derides Him.

"Mary" represents true piety, which clasps him to her heart and is satisfied.

This picture is a portrait of all times. All classes of men find their representative in it. "THEOPHILUS,"\*

#### WHAT MAKES GREATNESS?

*What went ye out into the wilderness to see?  
etc.—Matt. xi: 7—11.*

Jesus, the greatest of beings, here

analyses the character of John the Baptist. What reason has Jesus for saying: "Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist"? It was no mistaken estimate. Christ knew. He tells us that every great man has:

I. THE MASTERY OVER HIS CIRCUMSTANCES. John was no reed shaken by the wind (v: 7).

II. THE MASTERY OVER HIMSELF. John was not clothed in soft raiment. He did not yield to the desires of the flesh (v: 8).

III. GOD'S MASTERY OVER HIM. He was a prophet and more.

These three things make a man, independence, self-control and service to God. There is a climax in the order of thought here. It is easier to master things about us than ourselves, and hardest of all for men in conscious lordship over surroundings and self to become slaves of Christ. Serving God is the greatest of all conquests over self.

COLEMAN.\*

### LIVING ISSUES FOR PULPIT TREATMENT.

#### The use of Money at Elections.

In the January number of this REVIEW we gave a brief article on "Corruption in Politics," showing the character and extent of this corruption as it exists in the City of New York. We are prepared now to supplement the alarming statements then made from a source not only entitled to the fullest credence, but from one who has taken the utmost pains to ascertain the truth of his statements, and has enjoyed exceptional opportunities to learn the exact facts in the case.

The facts and statements we reproduce are contained in a speech by Mr. Ivins, at a recent meeting of the Commonwealth Club, in this City. While he speaks for New York only, yet it is well known that a similar system is practiced in all the chief cities of the land. Money has come to be a leading factor in our elections. Offices are bought. The men who can pay the most in cash down, or be "the most easily and most largely bled when in

office are the winners." The speech of Mr. Ivins furnishes the reason why so few men of intelligence and character enter upon political life—they cannot afford to pay the cost of office.

The facts and figures furnished by Mr. Ivins are interesting, and ought to be known and pondered by every citizen. The law requires the appointment of Supervisors and Marshals in every election district. In the City of New York there are 812 election districts, which, with four inspectors and two poll clerks to each district, gives an aggregate of 4,872 election officers, paid out of the City Treasury; 2,436 of which are Democrats, and 2,436 Republicans. A fund of \$291,000 is necessary for this purpose, which is practically used, "if not to buy, yet to assure and guarantee the votes of at least ten persons in every district, so that about three per cent. of the voters are employed in or about the elections as officers of the law."

The City paid the Assembly district

leaders last year about \$330,000, or an average of \$4,750 for each of the 72 leaders. The amount received at present is \$242,000, of which Tammany gets about \$119,000, the County Democracy \$90,000, and the Republicans \$32,000. This is the permanent investment in the leadership of the machines, while not less than \$750,000 more is invested in "political captains, leeches, and hangers-on." When the County Clerk and the Register were both feed offices, \$15,000 to \$40,000 was not regarded as too high a price to pay for them, and there were three or four persons who received from \$3,000 to \$5,000 each from these offices, who do no service whatever. According to Mr. Ivins' statement, the late John Kelly made each of these offices pay him \$10,000 a year for State election purposes.

Assessments are distinct from the moneys paid voluntarily by candidates, or that furnished through the machine. The Aldermanic office of late has been much sought after. The candidates in good years are assessed from \$15 to \$25 per election district. Assembly candidates, are assessed from \$5 to \$15. State Senators, from \$20 to \$30. Some years the cost of a Senatorial election is enormous. Thus, when Bradley and O'Brien ran, it is believed that each spent \$50,000.

"When Morrissey and Shell were running, Morrissey paid an assessment of \$10 per election district, while Shell paid one of \$50 per election district, and on the night before election paid \$2,500 to each of the Assembly district leaders in his Senatorial district, to guarantee the result. We all know how well he succeeded in guaranteeing it. In the last election at which Senators were elected, the Democratic candidates paid \$15 for each election district to Tammany Hall, and \$15 for each election to the County Democracy, and \$10 for each election district to Irving Hall. Their average assessment was \$500 apiece per Assembly district for the County Democracy and Tammany Hall, and \$10 per election district for Irving Hall. The Democratic candidates for the Senate alone thus paid over \$30,000 in assessments."

"Candidates for Congress are called upon to pay from \$15 to \$20 per election district, and when they are nominated by two or all of the organizations, to make the same contribution to each organization. When there is no union of the Democratic factions for election of members of Congress, each faction taxes its candidate from \$25 to \$30 in an election district. Can-

didates for judicial offices have paid as high as \$20,000. From \$10,000 to \$15,000 is the average assessment for the Superior and Common Pleas bench, while the assessment for the Supreme Court bench has frequently been higher than this. The assessment paid by the Comptroller at his election was \$10,000. Mayor Hewitt paid \$12,000 apiece to the County Democracy and to Tammany Hall, or \$24,000. Mr. Edison paid, or there was paid for his account, \$10,000 apiece to the County Democracy and Tammany Hall, and \$5,000 to Irving Hall, or \$25,000. Mayor Grace paid \$10,000 to the County Democracy when he last ran, and the Citizens' Committee of that year expended about \$10,000 of voluntary contributions. In 1880 Mayor Grace paid \$12,500 to Irving Hall and \$7,500 to Tammany Hall. In 1878 Mayor Cooper practically created a party, at what cost to himself he only knows. In 1876 Mayor Ely is reported not to have paid over \$5,000. John Reilly is said to have paid Tammany an assessment of \$40,000 for the nomination of Register in 1883.

"An average year would show the following assessments on the basis of two candidates only running in each district, and on the basis of the minimum assessment:

Two Aldermanic candidates at \$15 per district for 812 districts.....	\$24,360
Two Assembly candidates at \$10 per district for 812 districts.....	16,240
Two candidates for Senate or Congress at \$25 per election districts.....	40,600
Four candidates for Judgeship at \$10,000 each.....	40,000
Two candidates for Mayor at \$20,000 each	40,000
Two candidates for a county office such as Sheriff, County Clerk, or Register at \$10,000.....	20,000
Two candidates for Comptroller at \$10,000.....	20,000
Two candidates for District Attorney at \$5,000.....	10,000
Or, say a total of.....	\$211,200

At the last election 219,992 votes were polled, and more than 20 per cent. of the voters received money for their election day services.

The moral of all this is evident. State and municipal authorities should provide for the necessary expenses of elections. But candidates should be prohibited from giving money for election purposes. It is a source of corruption. It fills our offices with bad men, men without conscience or character, simply because they have plenty of money to spend. The English law, limiting the amount to be spent and requiring a rigid accounting as to how it was spent, is one that we ought to strive to have enacted here.

### Adulteration of Food.

Although the patient public has heard much about the adulteration of food, it would amaze them, did they know the full extent to which this nefarious business is carried on at present. Take an illustration or two.

Mr. Armour, of Chicago, and his associates, own the largest establishment in the world, it is said, for the manufacture and sale of lard and other hog products. In a recent interview with a correspondent of the press, Mr. A. made some frank admissions in connection with their business, which are of decided interest to the consumers of lard, and go to show how great an evil the adulteration of food in this country has become. Rumor said the object of his recent visit to the South was to form a company with \$10,000,000 capital for the manufacture of cotton-seed oil.

"Mr. Armour stated that the use of cotton-seed oil in manufactures of lard and hog products had grown to such an extent, in late years, that his establishments alone consumed one-fifth of the total cotton oil product of the United States. Hence the cotton-seed oil was an important item to his firm."

He also said that the American Cotton Oil Trust, which now controls almost the entire business of making oil from cotton-seed, had purchased a large packing house in Chicago, in order to become a lard producer, and thus a formidable competitor in the product of sham lard.

Armour & Co. do not sell cotton-seed oil; O, no, they make and sell lard, and by their own showing use as an adulterant one-fifth of the oil made from cotton-seed in this country. And how much is that? It is said that a ton of the seed yields from thirty-five to forty gallons of oil. Persons familiar with the business affirm that 500,000 tons of seed were crushed in the mills in 1886. The oil product from this would, therefore, be from 17,500,000 to 20,000,000 gallons. If Mr. Armour's statement is true, he used in his lard factory one-fifth of this, or from 3,500,000 to 4,000,000 gallons.

The newspapers inform us that a new syndicate has just been formed with an immense capital, which proposes to build and operate a hundred new mills to produce cotton-seed oil, so that the produce in the immediate future will be much larger than in the past. Only one-sixth of the seed crop of 1886 was crushed in the factories.

But this is only one of a thousand forms of adulteration. A single glucose company has a capital of over \$13,000,000. It was testified, in Washington, some years ago, that \$20,000,000 capital was invested, and 50,000 persons were engaged, in the work of making this product. But is it not a fraud equally with the other adulterants?

This sham lard is very much cheaper than the genuine article, and goes twenty-five per cent. further. In 1886, there was exported 6,572,000 gallons of this oil, valued at about forty cents a gallon. A large part of this exported oil comes back, labeled and sold as olive oil. It is also affirmed that this cotton-seed oil is largely used at present in the manufacture of *cheese*, and merchants in the cheese trade declare that this adulteration is injuriously affecting our export cheese trade, which had grown to be very large. The export in 1881 amounted to 147,995,614 pounds, and in 1886 had fallen to 86,363,685 pounds.

We do not know as lard or cheese thus adulterated is injurious to health. But it is as much a swindle to sell cotton-seed oil for lard or cheese as to sell oleomargarine for butter.

"Glucose serves as an adulterant in sugar, syrups, candies, preserved fruits, honey, and many other articles of food. It is sold for honey to persons who believe they are buying real honey. It is sold for sugar to consumers who pay for cane sugar. It is exported for purposes of adulteration at the rate of more than 3,000,000 pounds a year. And so it is with oleomargarine, as everybody knows. Enormous quantities are still palmed off on swindled consumers in this country, and the exports of oleo oil have risen to 35,279,363 pounds, while the quantity of butter exported has fallen from 39,236,000 pounds in 1880 to only 14,404,000 in 1886. Does the gain in the foreign sales of shams compensate for the loss in the sales of honest products?"



## EDITORIAL NOTES.

**Henry Ward Beecher.**

An English writer, speaking of the death of Mirabeau, said, "He sank as an island sinks." The death of Henry Ward Beecher leaves a mighty chasm in the world. For more than a generation he has been one of the foremost men of the age. His sayings have been more quoted, his name more frequently upon the lips of his fellows, than those of any contemporary. His speeches before the war struck like thunderbolts. During the war his words were inspiration to our soldiers at the front, and to the men and women who stood behind the soldiers. By his famous half-dozen speeches, in 1862, in England, he turned the current of English sympathy and compelled the British Government to change its policy. More than "half-battles," more effective than a score of battles won, were these speeches. Never has the world witnessed a greater triumph of oratory.

Take him all in all, measure him brain and heart, Henry Ward Beecher was the greatest man of his day. This we are sure will be the verdict of history. We are too near for a perspective. It will take the perspective of a half-century or more to see him in his true proportions. Too near, we cannot see the mountain; as it recedes, it grows larger and larger to our vision. Fifty years hence the world will count Beecher a greater man than it reckons him to-day.

He had his faults. Many of us differed widely from him on a thousand points. He was original, brave, manly, always magnanimous. He lived near the people. He felt their heart-throbs. Never had the common people a truer friend.

His was a marvellously productive mind—ever ready on any subject, and he always spoke well; sometimes better than others, but never poorly.

Henry Ward Beecher dead? How impossible to realize that! Some brightness has gone out of the day; the

nights are darker. Yet a great man never dies. The mighty dead are ever the mightier living.

Creation seems to be prodigal in everything save in truly great men. Still, when there is urgent need nature is not slack. The great men of the last great crisis of our nation have passed into the invisible. Where are the Lincolns, the Beechers, the Grants, for the coming great crisis? The grave is swallowing up the mighty ones of the past; what is the cradle yielding us for the future? We look upward to the ascending chariots of fire that bear aloft our Lincolns and Beechers, and wait to see upon whose shoulders will fall the mantles of leadership in the world's never ending battles for progress. Honors to the mighty dead! welcomes to the mighty living!

Roswell D. Hitchcock, President of the Union Theological Seminary, speaking of Henry Ward Beecher the day after his death, to the students, aptly pronounced Beecher "the apostle of the humanities."

Dr. Talmage, on the day of the funeral speaking of Mr. Beecher's rare gift in handling illustrations in the pulpit, said:

Of all the metaphysical discourses you ever heard Mr. Beecher make, you remember nothing; but his illustrations live and will live with you as long as your memory continues. His audiences waited for them. The similitude was what most impressed you at the time. That was what you carried away with you. Much of his discourse was employed in telling what things were like. And so Christ moved His hearers. His Sermon on the Mount and all His sermons were filled with similitudes. Like a man who built his house on the rock. Like a candle on a candlestick. Like a hen gathering her chickens under her wing. Like a net. Like salt. Like a city on a hill. Like treasures that moth and rust cannot corrupt. Like pearls before swine. Like wolves in sheep's clothing. And you hear the song birds as He says: "Behold the fowls of the air," and you smell the flowers as He says: "Consider the lilies of the field." The grandest effects produced by Mr. Beecher were wrought by his illustrations, and he ransacked the universe for

them, and he poured them forth in floods. He began the war which I hope will be carried on until everything like humdrum shall be driven from all the pulpits of Christendom. It is complained that the Sunday newspapers keep people away from church. Then we must make our church services more interesting and more helpful than anything the people can get outside the church. We all need in our pulpits a holy vivacity, a consecrated alertness and illustrative facilities that shall be irresistible. From the day that Mr. Beecher came from Indianapolis until his last sermon in Plymouth pulpit it was a victory of similitude. Let all ministers of religion, especially all young ministers, learn the lesson.

#### The Dr. McGlynn Puzzle.

PROTESTANT clergymen find themselves in a strait in reference to Dr. McGlynn: they would commend him gladly and highly for his courage and independence in refusing obedience, for conscience sake, to the Roman Propaganda and to the Pope himself, were it not that by commending him they would seem to endorse what they believe to be socialistic heresies. On the other hand, if they condemn these

heresies they would be thought to be condemning that brave man, Dr. McGlynn. Just how, in this matter, to judge, making a difference which the people will understand, is a puzzle. Mr. Beecher, with that insight and tact for which he was so noted, on Sunday evening, February 13th, addressed himself to this task. Said he:

A man of inner sweetness of life; a man of large imagination; a man of active sympathies with humanity, has taken on himself to declare certain doctrines in New York—the doctrines I don't agree with. They are quite aside, I believe, from the truth. But I love the man that he was ready to extend them, supposing them to be necessary for the welfare of the common, the poor and needy. It is not so much that he is to be admired as having found out a system—a new system—but that, even being mistaken in the thing that he supposed would be good for the world, he was ready to sacrifice himself for the people; and there is more moral heroism in that than to be accounted chief priest in any organization on the earth. It is the fidelity of a man to himself when he believes the way of God among the common people will be advanced by his testimony. Looking at it in a narrower way he has got to be cast out. But, for God's sake, I hope he won't creep out.

### CURRENT RELIGIOUS THOUGHT OF CONTINENTAL EUROPE.

BY PROF. J. H. W. STUCKENBERG, D.D., BERLIN, GERMANY.

#### GERMANY.

##### UNION AGAINST ROME.

THE Kulturkampf is ended and the Catholics in Germany are stronger and more defiant than when it began. Their attitude is that of victors who dictate the terms of peace. The compactness and determination of the Centre, under the leadership of Windhorst, make that party so powerful in politics that Bismarck and the government are inclined to make concession on concession to the papacy in order to gain the support of the Catholics. As there seems to be no hope of winning Windhorst, efforts are being made to induce the Pope to use his authority to lead the Centre to vote for the measures of the government. The problem now seems to be how the Pope can be used against the leader of the Centre. How far Leo will mix in the inner politics of the country remains to be seen; but the disposition of the Protestant government to parley with the Pope and to give new prestige and power to Catholicism for the sake of political advantages, arouses many in Luther's land to seriously consider the injunction of Scripture: "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

While the favorable disposition of the government has exalted the Catholic Church, the Catholic theologians, no doubt the ablest de-

fenders of the papacy in any land, are flooding the country with literature which aims to degrade the Reformation and its results, and to exalt Catholicism as the only hope in view of present infidel and anarchical tendencies. Protestant Germany is so unfavorably contrasted with Germany while still Catholic that the appeal to return to Rome is made in the name of patriotism as well as of religion.

This state of things, in the very birthplace and stronghold of Protestantism, would be less humiliating and less dangerous if the Evangelical Church were prepared to meet these attacks and maintain its rights. Unfortunately, there are many in the State Church whose relation to the government is such that they fear to oppose its policy toward Rome. But a still more serious difficulty is found in the distractions and contentions within the State Church. Such is the animosity of the parties that co-operation against a common foe even has become impossible. As in the days when Jesuitism fomented strifes among Protestants and won back princes, provinces and countries, so now Rome's power is augmented by the divisions in the Protestant Church.

This fact has again been demonstrated in an effort to form a union of all Evangelical Christians to preserve to Germany the treasures of

the Reformation. The Evangelical Union (Evangelischer Bund) was organized at the close of 1886. Among its leaders are Professors Beyschlag and Riehm, of Halle; Fricke, of Leipzig; Lipsius and Nippold, of Jena. The initiative belongs to the Middle Party, but leaders in the Protestant Association are co-operating heartily. Of the more orthodox, the confessional Lutherans and the Friends of Positive Union, but few have indicated their readiness to join, while the rigidly orthodox press has severely attacked the Union because persons not regarded sound are received. At present the leaders of the Right maintain a hostile attitude to the Middle and the Left in the movement; and thus, with a conflict raging, the hosts of Protestantism are not merely divided, but actually warring with one another. The appeal published by the Union says: "Opposite the mighty unity of Rome the German Evangelical Church stands sadly distracted. The State churches of which it consists are so independent and loosely connected that the Evangelical consciousness suffers. Still more destructive is the dissension of parties, which consumes the best forces and prevents a successful positive development of German Protestantism. While we are quarrelling with one another, the enemy, intent on destroying us, moves ceaselessly forward. Besides, he has dangerous allies in our own camp. In an extensive degree the prevalent false conceptions of party and tolerance give him welcome help, and materialism, into which entire classes of our people are sunk, and no less religious indifference, prepare for him the road to victory."

All Evangelical Christians, regardless of their confessional differences, are requested to join the Union. The following is the programme: "The Evangelical Union confesses its faith in Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, as the sole Mediator of salvation, and in the principles of the Reformation.

"The aim of the Union is twofold. In the warfare against the growing power of Rome it seeks to conserve in all respects the Evangelical interests, to oppose with voice and pen all attempts to weaken the same; but it also wants to encourage true catholicity and Christian freedom in the bosom of the Catholic Church. On the other hand, it aims to strengthen the Evangelical Christian consciousness in opposition to the materialism and indifferentism of the age, to promote peace within the Evangelical Church in opposition to the paralyzing influence of party animosity, and to quicken and increase fellowship between the members of the state churches in opposition to the separation between these churches in the different states of Evangelical Germany."

The work of the Union is to be accomplished by means of meetings, by the press, and in every other legitimate way. The work of the Gustavus Adolphus Association, devoted to the help of Protestants in Catholic countries, is not

to be supplanted but supplemented. The difficulty is appreciated, and long and great labor is regarded necessary for the accomplishment of its aim. While arousing the Protestant consciousness and attempting the conservation of the fundamental principles of the Reformation, the Jesuitism and ultramontaniam of German Catholicism are to be exposed and their machinations opposed. An important mission will be found in meeting the falsifications of history and the countless attacks on the Evangelical doctrines and institutions. The Protestant Church is regarded as passing through a crisis, in which all her friends ought to manifest more zeal in preserving the blessing of the Reformation than was revealed in the enthusiasm a few years ago when the four hundredth anniversary of the birth of the great reformer was celebrated.

#### THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

The fundamental importance of the resurrection of Jesus has made it a centre around which the severest conflicts have raged. The best apologetic method in the controversy is the subject of an elaborate article by Rev. L. E. Steude in "Studien und Kritiken," second number, 1887. He gives a historic review of the methods pursued in the past, and then indicates what he regards as the true one. He says: "The disciples were firmly convinced that Jesus had arisen from the dead. It was this conviction which changed their despairing minds, restored them to the discipleship, and constituted them apostles. Their assurance on this subject became the centre of their faith and hope, and formed the substance of their preaching. They regarded it as the essence of the apostolic calling to be witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus (Acts i. 22); and when the historian describes their method of preaching he merely affirms that 'with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus' (Acts, iv. 33). It was through His resurrection that Jesus Himself fully became to them Lord and Christ; and what they themselves experienced they proclaimed in their discourses and epistles. The resurrection of Jesus is the starting-point of the apostolic Christology. Raised from the dead, Christ dies no more, death having no more dominion over Him (Rom. vi. 9)." Confirmations of these statements are found Rev. i. 18; Acts iii. 15; and in numerous passages. Baur pronounces the faith of the disciples in the resurrection of Jesus "the absolute presupposition from which the theology of the N. T. was developed." The great stress placed on this fact thus becomes evident; the apostles regard it as the beginning of soteriology. All Christian faith depends on this fact; 1 Cor. xv. 17. That this resurrection, the basis of the apostolic doctrine, preaching faith and hope, was that of the body of Jesus is evident from such passages as Acts ii. 31; xxiv. 15; xxvi. 8 and 23; Rom. viii. 10-11, and other passages.

The problem which now presents itself is

this: How is the origin of the faith of the disciples in the resurrection of Jesus to be explained? The theory of Reimarus, in the "Wolfenbuetler Fragmente," that the story of the resurrection was a deception on the part of the disciples to enable them to continue as religious the movement which Jesus began as political but was frustrated on Calvary, cannot be maintained. While it aims to do away with all miracles it does not account for the miracle it implies, namely, the psychological miracle that the disciples were converted from their sorrow into joy by means of a deliberate deception perpetrated by themselves, and that any one should submit to sacrifice, suffering, and death for the sake of a lie invented by himself. The supposition of gross imposture being dismissed, there are only two other theories to be combated: First, that the death of Jesus was only apparent, not real; second, that the disciples had visions on which they based their faith in the resurrection. The first implies that when the body was buried it was not really dead. "The coolness of the grave, which was not air-tight, the ointments, the youthful vigor of Jesus, the help of secret friends who, perhaps, at the descent from the cross discovered traces of remaining life, were instrumental in restoring Him." This would make Jesus Himself a deceiver, for He could not have been ignorant of the real state of the case, and it would base Christianity itself on a lie. The theory of an awakening from apparent death (swoon) has been developed by Schleiermacher, Hase, Herder, and Gfroerer. It is based wholly on speculation, seeks help from accidents to account for the reappearance of Jesus, and cannot escape the conclusion that Jesus practiced deception. Even Strauss argued that one awakening from apparent death, necessarily bearing traces of the act on his person, could not have impressed the disciples with the conviction that He was the conqueror of death and the grave, a conviction which lay at the basis of their preaching. Our author holds the same view, and says that if the body had been only apparently dead the reappearance of Jesus could not have convinced them that His body was a glorified one, such as they concluded it to be according to the accounts of His manifestations to them.

More numerous have been the efforts to account for the faith of the disciples on the theory of visions. Prominent among its advocates are Strauss, Lang, Holsten, Hausrath, Renan, Keim, Schweizer, Schenkel, and Holtzmann. These are by no means agreed respecting the details of the theory. But whatever form it may have assumed, the cardinal question is: Does it account for the faith of the disciples? There are of course other difficulties in the theory; but on this question the attention should be concentrated. Beyschlag has maintained that there is not sufficient proof that the natural conditions for visions of Christ existed among the dis-

ciples, and this argument has been used with effect against the theory. This theory supposes that in the vision something subjectively believed is objectified; so that the vision itself is but a projection or reproduction of a subjective state, and not a phenomenon which teaches anything new. It is consequently implied by the theory that the disciples believed in the resurrection of Jesus before the visions came to them. Now, even admitting that the disciples were in a state for such visions, we must agree with Krauss: "The conviction that one regarded as dead has arisen never could originate from a vision." But, moreover, if the vision theory is correct, how do we account for the disappearance of the body from the grave? Even if this difficulty is somehow overcome, we must admit that all the accounts of Christ's appearance after Calvary are against the vision hypothesis. They are simple and serious, without a trace of the sickly and the sentimental. The conclusion of the critical investigation of our author is that the faith of the disciples cannot have originated, as some suppose, from a combination of visions together with a remembrance of the empty grave, however its emptiness is explained. For that faith is altogether too definite and too fully developed to be the product of a mere conclusion, or of a combination of thoughts. Only definite and unquestionable experience could produce it and make it the basis of the apostolic preaching and hope. No other experience would suffice than the fact that they were convinced by the Risen One Himself, in calm, not ecstatic movements of the reality of His resurrection. In this conclusion we are confirmed, because we know from Acts and the Epistles that the apostles were not ignorant of the nature of visions, and also because the biblical accounts show that at the empty grave of Jesus the disciples did not conclude that He had arisen, but only that His body had been removed.

It is thus the faith of the disciples in the Lord's resurrection which at last decides the question; and in all apologetics on the subject it is this faith which must be made the centre. After this faith has once been established the other difficulties connected with the theory of vision can be considered. In conclusion, proof should be given that the miraculous resurrection and glorification of Jesus solve all the difficulties connected with the whole subject.

#### HOMILETICAL.

Dr. Ahlfeld, of Leipzig, was one of the most popular preachers of Germany. Besides his parochial work he delivered lectures to theological students on pastoral theology, drawn chiefly from his rich experience in the ministry. In *Pastoral Blaetter*, December, 1886, "Aphorisms" from these lectures are given by Rev. Kummer, Ahlfeld defines the sermon as a living testimony before the congregation of the grace and truth of God, drawn by the preacher from Scripture and from his own experience. Ser-

trons taken from others are not the product of our experience; often they lack the seal of truthfulness and personality. He reminded his hearers that many sermons by Grot, Brueckner, and himself were preached by others, and once while on a journey he heard one of his own sermons from a stranger. Even a poor sermon that is original is preferable to the memorized sermon of another. He also opposed the repetition of old sermons, common in the rationalistic period. Frequently then ministers had two courses of sermons on the Gospels and two on the Epistles, which they would repeat, some indeed taking the trouble to prepare new introductions to them. These sermons were then handed down from father to son. When he entered the ministry his father, a carpenter, expressed regret that his son could inherit from him no sermons. The very best rule in homiletics is found in the words of Paul: "I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak." This testimony does not dispense with most careful preparation. Ahlfeld himself wrote every word and memorized it, and he urged students to do the same. He advised them to begin the sermon for the next Sunday immediately after preaching, the mind then taking especial delight in the work. The text should be studied, paper should be placed at hand for noting thoughts as they occur during the week, and particularly is prayer commended as a means of preparation, without which holy things are touched with impure hands. Essential for the preparation and delivery is the right state of the preacher's own soul. The context should be carefully considered, together with the historic, dogmatic, and ethical significance of the passage. Often minor matters are found to be of importance, which he illustrated by referring to Acts vi. 11, where the Jews mention Moses first, then God. All the fine points in the text should be brought out, parallel passages should be weighed, and practical exegetical commentaries consulted. But there may be too much reading, so that originality is interfered with. Every year, at least, a number of sermons should be prepared wholly without foreign aid. Above all, the preacher must guard against an ingenious mosaic made by stringing together beautiful thoughts selected promiscuously. The congregation must always be kept in mind, and this rule should be adopted: Away with all fine thoughts which transcend the comprehension of the audience. The disposition should be simple, taken from the text itself, if possible in the very language of the text, taking care to make the division such as may easily be remembered. But it is more important for the hearer to retain the leading thought of the sermon than the division. He himself formerly put the division in rhyme in order to aid the memory, but afterwards abandoned that. Besides, the division of the introduction merits particular care and should lead directly to the sermon. It should contain facts

and truths unconditionally admitted by the hearer, so that the process of construction may win their approval. Hints may be taken from the context, former sermon, the season of the year, personal or congregational experiences; all must, however, be brief and living. Two considerations should control the entire preparation: the Lord and the congregation. God's glory is supreme; and the preacher should not drag mere personal affairs into his sermons, as his birthday, his children, his home, his illness, and his grievances. "If, perchance, the minister was robbed during the week, no mention should be made of it in his sermon." Neither personal honor nor fear is to be the motive. "All faithful preachers have been subject to persecution." If the souls of the hearers are to be benefitted their lives must be known, and the preaching must be from the life to the life. "Diligent pastoral work is the best aid to the pulpit. The more we are in the congregation, the more can we be in the pulpit." Much benefit may be derived from the biography of godly persons; but great care must be taken to make the impression of truthfulness. Suitable and familiar hymns and the catechism may also be used to great advantage in the sermon. The substance of the sermon is thus to be taken from Scripture, from the life of the Church, from literature, hymnology, and the catechism. At the close the substance of the sermon should, if possible, be compressed into a brief sentence. As to style, the periods should not be long, short ones being more easily comprehended. Scripture is written in brief sentences. Respecting the length of sermons various practices have prevailed. Those of Chrysostom were very long; short ones were common in the Middle Ages, those of Tauler, for instance, though Berthold, of Ratisbon, preached both short and long ones; and the same is true of Luther, though the most of his were long. The law limits sermons in the garrison churches of Prussia to twenty minutes. "Claus Harns was no doubt right when he said of the quantity or quality of a sermon: There are three classes of sermons; the first consists of such as are short and good, which are the best; the second, of such as are long and good, and they are passable; the third class consists of those long and bad, which are the worst of all." Speaking of delivery, Ahlfeld said that the preacher should not ascend the pulpit as a dancing-master, but leaning upon the Lord. God deliver us from a pulpit tone, from frequent emphatic exclamations, and from excessive stress on passages even insignificant. The gestures should neither be learned from an actor nor practiced before a mirror, but should be natural and spontaneous, the outward expression of the inner man. "He who aims at the truth, which consists in a correspondence of the outer with the inner man, will give correct expression to his thoughts in the tone of his voice and in his gesticulation."