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## SERMONIC.

### THE DESPAIRING CRY OF JESUS ON THE CROSS.

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*My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken  
me?*—Matt. xxvii: 26.

THE New Testament contains many momentous questions. The text, Christ's Syro-Chaldaic quotation from the twenty-second Psalm, transcends all others in sadness and sublimity. Divinely appropriated as prophetic to Himself, it introduces the student of His last utterances to a field of theological inquiry both instructive and interesting. With the channel connecting His mighty human soul with His Father's supporting sympathy, temporarily obstructed; with midnight on His great mind, as nature's supernatural gloom gives its recognition of His agony, He asks, as life ebbs away, this desponding inquiry, given by the Evangelist in the Hebrew rather than in the Greek, as explanatory of the mistake of those supposing that, amidst the delirium of His death-pains, He called for Elias. Let us take a glance at

#### I. THE SURROUNDINGS OF THE SUFFERER UTTERING THIS WAIL OF DISTRESS.

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

Among the Romans of Christ's age, crucifixion was the most reproachful mode of inflicting capital punishment. History, profane and sacred, emphasizes the fact that the conquered Jewish nation, clamoring through its representative men for the execution of the Prophet of Nazareth, possessed no longer the legal authority to decree or carry out the death penalty. The civil and ecclesiastical dignitaries of Judaism yearned to associate indelible disgrace with the name and cause of Christ. To gratify their malignant desire, and to popularize his own administration, Pilate signed the warrant that decreed the death penalty of the condemned slave upon the Lord of glory.

The custom of the conquering Romans required the doomed criminal to personally bear the upright timber to which he was to be fastened, to the locality of his execution. Jesus and the two thieves undertook this task. He was physically unequal to the emergency. The military executioners promptly impressed into service one whom tradition has presented as a *colored* man, and on him was laid the eminent honor of carrying the wood on which the God-man was to die

John has been the only disciple of the twelve near to the cross. Apprehensions of danger, blended with withered expectations as to the sufferer's messianic claims, have caused the others to view the phenomena of their Teacher's execution from a safe standpoint. But the female friends of Jesus have stood near to the cross. To His natural mother the bleeding Victim has spoken farewell words, supplementing them with the command to John to bestow on His desolate mother a son's home and affection.

The afternoon hour of three is approaching. Since noon the sun has strangely hidden his face. Over the adjacent city a mysterious night has fallen like a vast ebon canopy. A crown of twisted thorns engirds His brow. An infuriate mob is massed about Golgotha. Blood steadily drops from His palms and feet. Every nerve quivers in agony. A long-honored and divinely protected nation is driving from Palestine the only divine Personage earth ever knew. His native love of life rises in imperial power for the final and fearful struggle. The intellectual faculties are all profoundly sympathetic with a tormented bodily nature. At last, like a wail from a broken harp, His appalling question breaks on the solemnity of the scene: "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" With reverential thought let us investigate the inquiry,

## II. WHAT IS THE IMPORT OF THIS LAMENTATION OF JESUS?

1. It is not the result of any corporeal pain being endured. It is true that Christ is hanging under an Oriental sun. His blood is both interrupted in its flow and congested. Fever and thirst are doing their work. Death swiftly approaches. But the relation of these agonies to this dismay is very remote. They do not induce or account for the alarm flashed on our vision by this question. History is sprinkled with instances where heathen and Christian martyrs, living and dying in isolation from the supporting power of eminent purity of character, have

passed on to eternal relationships unterrified through sufferings of body intenser and more protracted than those confronted with dismay by our Lord on Calvary.

Let the example of the pagan hero, Marcus Atilius Regulus, illustrate this affirmation. After years of Carthaginian captivity his captors sent him on parole, with their official envoys, to sue for peace. He had sworn to return a prisoner should his mission fail. The Roman Senate offered to accept the Carthaginian proposals for peace and an exchange of prisoners, from their affection for this illustrious patriot. He begged them to reject the overtures and continue the war. Conscious of the tortures awaiting his return, he bravely refused to violate his oath, and returned to Carthage to astonish his enemies by the moral magnificence of his fortitude and love of country. They resolved to murder him by an agonizing method. They cut off his eyelids and laid bare his naked eyes for hours under the glare and heat of a torrid sun until blindness overtook his vision. They rolled him in a cask lined with sharp nails until the great pagan died. But he never shrank from pain or death. With a corrupt moral nature he trod the bloody death-vale with victorious footsteps.

The chronicles of primitive Christianity sparkle with such records of individual courage. Jude, Bartholomew, Andrew and Peter, were crucified as inhumanly as was Jesus. Christian martyrs, before the conversion of Constantine, suffered nameless pains without complaint. Some were exultant in the midst of flames; others, when wild cattle were tossing them, and not a few while Numidian lions lapped their blood. Physical pains constitute no key to Christ's mental anguish in His last hour.

There are two primary causes for this cry: (a) In a manner beyond finite comprehension God then withheld from His dying Son, as the latest and most appalling ingredient of His atoning sufferings, a cloudless consciousness of

His supporting presence. Christ's sad interrogatory assumes the fact, that in some mysterious sense God had forsaken Him. For three hours He has been dying in the dark, both in the realms of nature and of mind. For three hours in the silent kingdom of His own thought, He realizes an exile's relation to Him beside whom He had sat, coequal in eternity and glory. In this crisis, as His divine errand to earth is closing, He feels that in an incomprehensible severance from His Father He is battling alone with the difficulties of redemption. The necessity of this eclipse of His Father's face, He cannot understand. For, as men deny Him water, God withholds the light of His countenance. True, a profound consciousness of personal innocency cheers Him. An intellectual apprehension of the plan of salvation sustains Him. His omniscience comprehends the progressive and final triumphs of His cross. But He now becomes aware of paternal desertion as He occupies the relation of the sinner's substitute.

(b) Track His public ministry, and He is never found murmuring as to His Father's absence. Fifty times He has announced His union with His Father. The burden of His utterances has been His union with the eternal Deity. Amid His temptations in the wilderness, God sent to Him angelic ministers. Before the Last Supper, with troubled soul He besought God to save Him from the cross, and added to His earliest cry of alarm the words, "Father, glorify thy name." The storm was beginning to brew over His soul, but a voice from heaven, heard by the people, responded, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again." At once His agitated spirit rallied His normal courage for the greatest tragedy in the annals of time.

So, too, when in Gethsemane He felt the merciless sacrificial lash touch His quivering soul, He exclaimed, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death." With night waving its dark sceptre over His thoughts, He cried out, as He fell to the earth, "O, my Father! if it be possible let this cup pass from me; yet

not as I will but as thou wilt." Nor did He plead unsuccessfully. God sent an angel to nerve Him for His arrest, trial and condemnation. But now, as His enemies hurry Him to the sepulchre; now, as neither men nor angels appear to befriend Him; now, as His intrepidity, from the human standpoint, is in the white heat of the crucible, Christ realizes that the Father has forsaken Him, and above the tumult of the surrounding throng the question of the text goes up to God.

In demonstration of His moral fidelity Daniel went down into the den of lions. But God was with him, and the forest monarchs watched him through the brief night season, like unto heaven-appointed sentinels. In executing the divine will Meshach and his heroic colleagues walked on the blazing tiles of the Dura furnace as though they trod on dewy grass, for with them trod a fourth One, like unto God's only Son. Hence the tall flames kissed their cheeks like evening zephyrs, and toyed with their locks like unto the fingers of a mother's love. Jesus Christ, the purest character and the most eminent martyr our planet ever knew, was the only one, dying for the Father's vindication and glory, who could not by possibility secure a consciousness of the divine presence and favor amidst the pains of martyrdom.

2. This seeming abandonment of His suffering Son was the crowning manifestation of God's wrath against sin. Let us steadily hold in the focus of thought the overshadowing fact that Christ was man's representative at Calvary. His mission was not less to publish the inherent enormity of sin than to provide a plan for human salvation. Humanity existed amidst the darkness of despair. Against transgressors the maledictions of the law of God boomed like ceaseless thunders. On human souls the chains of guilt were riveted. Between God and man there was a changeless antagonism of nature. The veracity and character of the Father demanded that every offender should suffer the penalty of the law, or an atone-

ment be effected that should harmonize with the demands and spirit of the divine law in its illustrative testimony against sin.

It was necessary, that at the crucifixion of the Messiah God should (so to speak) *exhaust* methods by which He might impress mankind with the native turpitude of moral evil. In doing this "he spared not his own Son." There was a sense in which "it pleased the Lord to bruise him." Differing from all other persons born of woman in three things—a miraculous conception, eternity of nature, and inherent sinlessness—He yet assumed human nature in the entirety of its possibilities; and yet He so subordinated His will to the Father's will as to be able to say in Gethsemane, "Thy will be done."

The cross, at this ninth hour of gloom, is the loftiest observatory from which men look at sin. Then and there, on the mind of Jesus, rolled this world's amplified iniquity in thought, word, tendency and deed. No human artist can paint a faithful picture of the results of sin. Its relations to the divine government, to the unhappiness of men, and to the doom of lost souls, Christ apprehended intensely at the moment when He uttered this plaintive appeal. From the cross He looked out and read the vast bill of indictment suspended against moral evil. He gauged its ravages on human character, domestic life, and civil government. He saw it perverting every faculty of universal mind, pearly every teardrop, generating every sigh of sorrow, unshathing every sword, lighting every cannon, digging every grave, and surging as a never-ebbing tide against His Father's throne.

It is only when we take this broad and radical view of sin, and find an omnipotent God at labor to unfold its enormity, *per se*, to men and angels, that this mournful inquiry of our dying Lord becomes suddenly transfigured from a theological enigma into the very central doctrinal truth of the Gospel. This desertion was God's final and culminating illustration of sin's inherent

turpitude. From this experience of mental desolation Jesus could, by no possibility, save Himself, and at the same time make a valid and complete atonement. He had, uncoerced, offered to bridge by His humiliation, suffering and death, the great gulf that hopelessly yawned between heaven and earth. He could, in death, no more escape this bitter sadness of soul than He could have yielded to temptation. Up to this hour He had led a "charmed life," on the theory that "man is immortal till his work is done." But from this orphanage of thought Christ could not save Himself, or be saved by His Father.

During His ministry, as an illustrious free agent, He could calm the storm-swept billows of Galilee, or not, as He elected. He could multiply or annihilate the loaves, as He willed. He could call the dead to life, or suffer them to sleep on until the resurrection. But He could not offer a perfect sacrifice for sin and avoid this desertion. It was the final vial emptied into the brimmed chalice Jesus drank to its dregs when, folding the generations to His heart, He cried, "It is finished," and bowed His sacred head in death!

This lamentation of Jesus suggests TWO INSTRUCTIVE AND INTERESTING LESSONS.

1. *The power and moral enormity of sin.*

It seduced from allegiance to God the angels who kept not their first estate. It has engirt all human souls with the fires of divine condemnation. The nine-headed hydra, whose heads sprang again into existence as fast as the blade of Hercules cut them off, is but an emblem of the native potency of sin. Revolutions may be checked, conflagrations may be extinguished, and great rivers may be diverted from their normal channels; but sin dies reluctantly in a regenerate soul, even when the Holy Ghost co-operates with a consenting human will for its entire sanctification. To enable us to live above its conquests Christ permitted the domain of His own mental life to experience the solitude photographed in the text. Beholding

in *sin* the architect and builder of the vast penitentiary of perdition, He died with midnight within and around Him.

2. The text is also suggestive of the *value at which God rates a human soul*. Twice in His public ministry Christ struggled to impress men with its surpassing worth. On one occasion He held in His hands a pair of scales: in one of the balances He put the world—all the beatitude ever purchased by fortune, all the satisfaction ever acquired by ease, or even by fame—in the other He laid an immortal soul, with its magnificent and wonderful endowments—understanding creating thought and inferring results—memory holding up her chain of undimmed recollections—imagination painting its pictures rivalled by no human creations—conscience striking its alarm-bell at the approach of spiritual danger—will-power transfiguring each responsible intelligence into the architect of his own fortune for time and eternity—affection throwing her Briarian arms around God and humanity—and as the world scale shot up like a fire rocket, and the soul scale fell with millstone weight, the divine Teacher presented to men the problem with which mathematicians have vainly battled: "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Now, expiring in blood and gloom, His thought again grasps the worth of a deathless soul. His vision sweeps over its vast reasoning powers, its marvelous ability to resurrect past impressions, its power to embellish the future with the brush of hope, its free agency elevating it in the scale of creation, its affections rising like the fabled phoenix from the ashes of calamity, its ambition fully met by nothing terrestrial, and its immortality an eternal vestal torch. From the cross He looks out on the craped skies above Him, on the wail of gloom around Him, and on the varied supernatural phenomena about Him. And these all loom up as factors in the obsequies of a lost soul. His own dying cry falls on the ear like the sound

of a mighty bell swung by angelic hands, and tolling in weird solemnity the everlasting knell of a soul perishing without an atonement.

At this final hour Christ says in substance: "If yonder sun, hiding his face in unnatural night, were one vast globe of gold, I could recreate him in mightier magnitude by a word, without this appalling experience, were he suddenly destroyed. If the moon, that will throw her beams to-night on the guard that will patrol my tomb, were a diamond mass, I could again call her into being without this suffering, were she to crumble into atoms by disaster. If the stars, that will shine to-night over doomed Jerusalem, were dropping into ruin, I could kindle anew their glory, and hang them again on the divine will, without one pang of pain. But to complete the only possible plan for human redemption, and indicate the estimate my Father places even on a pauper's soul, He must smite me substitutionally, with omnipotent power and effect. By this supernatural darkness at noonday, by these gory hands and feet, by this awful solitude of spirit, I hold up the soul as the masterpiece of God's workmanship, and the only object in the universe costing for its ransom the death of God's Son."

Profoundly consecrated to God, men like Alliene, Knox, Doddridge, Henry, and Moody, have been thrilled with the realization of the worth and peril of souls. But no mind ever grasped the inherent grandeur and value of a deathless spirit as did the expiring Jesus, when the Father saw the necessity of withdrawing divine comfort.

To God's dear children the thought that we have not been redeemed with corruptible things is full of interest. The pall of darkness that fell on the soul of Jesus has hung a canopy of hope over our future. The gloom that gathered around His cross has spangled our sky with brilliant and precious promises. The darkness that fell on His sad heart has kindled watch-fires of rejoicing along the mountain peaks of our being. Because He looked

mournfully out after an apparently departed God, we have become heirs of the pledge, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." Christ endured this keenness of atoning agony that our sins might be canceled, our hearts sanctified, and heaven become attainable.

This cry from Calvary appeals to the unsaved to measure their responsibility to God from the standpoint of Christ's crucifixion. At Golgotha He paid the debt of penalty to the violated law, but not the debt of human duty. The voluntary rejection of our personal interest in the atonement of our divine Lord is the one and only unpardonable sin of this age—the overshadowing iniquity that has no forgiveness, here or beyond the tomb. He who commits it is a moral suicide. Wading through the current of Christ's death, on to perdition, God will forsake the self-doomed transgressor when he stands before His bar. And, lost forever, where no star of promise twinkles on the perpetual darkness, that man's wail will be, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" And to that dread question an omnipotent conscience—that trump of God whose peal will never die—shall respond, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha."

Forsaken of God beyond the grave! That means deserted by all the present agencies employed for human salvation. It means spending eternity in the fruitless study of the relations between the actual and possible, the deathless present and the ruined past. May God save us from asking, in the next life, the last interrogatory of the dying Redeemer: "MY GOD! MY GOD! WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME?"

ANSWER TO PRAYER need not come by miraculous means to be just as much an answer. If you are in sore need of funds, and write to a friend for money, and receive it from him the next day, is it any less a response to your petition that he sent the money by the regular mails provided by government? So Elijah's prayer for rain was answered by God, though the cloud rose and grew in the ordinary way.—*W. M. Taylor.*

## THE TWO-FOLD ASPECT OF THE DIVINE WORKING.

BY ALEXANDER MACLAREN, D.D., IN UNION CHAPEL, BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND.

*If a man hath an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety-and-nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?—(Matt. xviii. 12.)*

*The way of the Lord is strength to the upright; but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity.—(Prov. x. 29.)*

You observe that the words "shall be" in the last clause, are a supplement. They are quite unnecessary, and in fact they rather hinder the sense. They destroy the completeness of the antithesis between the two halves of the verse. If you leave them out, and suppose that the "way of the Lord" is what is spoken of in both clauses, you get a far deeper and fuller meaning. "The way of the Lord is strength to the upright; but destruction to the workers of iniquity." It is the same way which is strength to one man and ruin to another, and the moral nature of the man determines which it shall be to him. That is a penetrating word which goes deep down. The unknown thinkers, to whose keen insight into the facts of human life we are indebted for this book of Proverbs, had pondered for many an hour over the perplexed and complicated fates of men, and they crystallized their reflections at last in this thought. They have in it struck upon a principle which explains a great many things, and teaches us a great many solemn lessons. Let us try to get a hold of what is meant, and then to look at some applications and illustrations of the principle.

I. First, then, let me just try to put clearly the meaning and bearing of these words. "The way of the Lord" means, sometimes in the Old Testament and sometimes in the New, religion, considered as the way in which God desires a man to walk. So we read in the New Testament of "the way," as the designation of the profession and practice of Christianity; and "the way of the Lord"

often is used in the Psalms for the path which He traces for man by His sovereign will.

But that, of course, is not the meaning here. Here it means, not the road in which God prescribes that we should walk, but that road in which He Himself walks; or in other words, the scene of the Divine action, the solemn footsteps of God through Creation, Providence, and History. His goings forth are from everlasting. His way is in the sea. His way is in the sanctuary. Modern language has a whole set of phrases which mean the same thing as the Jew meant by "the way of the Lord," only that God is left out. They talk about the "current of events," "the general tendency of things," "the laws of human affairs," and so on. I for my part prefer the old-fashioned "Hebraism."

To many modern thinkers the whole drift and tendency of human affairs affords no sign of a person directing these. They hear the clashing and grinding of opposing forces, the thunder as of falling avalanches and the moaning as of a homeless wind, but they hear the sound of no footfalls echoing down the ages. This ancient teacher had keener ears. Well for us if we share his faith and see in all the case distracting mysteries of life and history, "the way of the Lord." But not, only does the expression point to the operation of a personal Divine Will in human affairs, but it conceives of that operation as one, a uniform and consistent whole. However complicated and sometimes apparently contradictory the individual events were, there was a unity in them, and they all converged on one result. The writer does not speak of "ways," but of "the way," as in a grand unity. It is all one continuous, connected, consistent mode of operation from beginning to end.

The author of this proverb believed something more about the way of the Lord. He believed that although it is higher than our ways, still, a man can know something about it, and that whatever may be enigmatical and sometimes almost heart-breaking in it, one

thing is sure—that, as we have been taught of late years in another dialect, it "makes for righteousness." Clouds and darkness are round about Him, but the Old Testament writers never falter in the conviction, which was the soul of all their heroism and the life blood of their religion, that in the heart of the clouds and darkness, "justice and judgment are the foundations of His throne."

The way of the Lord, says this old thinker, is hard to understand, very complicated, full of all manner of perplexities and difficulties, and yet on the whole the clear drift and tendency of the whole thing is discernable, and it is this: it is all on the side of good. Everything that is good, and everything that does good, is an ally of God's, and may be sure of the Divine favor, and of the Divine blessing resting upon it. And just because that is so clear the other side is as true; the same way, the same set of facts, the same continuous stream of tendency, which is all with and for every form of good, is all against every form of evil. Or, as the Psalmist puts the same idea, "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil." The same eye which beams in lambent love on "the righteous" burns terribly to the evil doer. "The face of the Lord" means the side of the Divine nature which is turned to us, and is manifest by His self-revealing activity, so that the expression comes near in meaning to "the way of the Lord," and the thought in both cases is the same, that by the eternal law of His Being, God's actions must all be for the good and against the evil.

They do not change, but a man's character determines which aspect of them he sees and has to experience. God's way has a bright side and a dark. You may take which you like. You can lay hold of the thing by which ever handle you choose. On the one side it is convex, on the other, concave. You can approach it from either side, as you please. "The way of the Lord" must touch

your "way." You cannot alter that necessity. Your path must either run parallel in the same direction with this, and then all His power will be an impulse to bear you onward; or it must run in the opposite direction, and then all His power will be for your ruin, and the collision with it will crush you as a ship is crushed, like an egg-shell, when it strikes an iceberg. You *can* choose which of these shall befall you.

And there is a still more striking beauty about the words, if we give the full literal meaning to the word "strength." It is used by our translators, I suppose, in a somewhat archaic and peculiar signification, namely, that of a stronghold. At all events, the Hebrew means a fortress, a place where men may live safe and secure, and if we take that meaning, the passage gains greatly in force and beauty. This "way of the Lord" is like a castle for the shelter of the shelterless good man, and behind those strong bulwarks he dwells impregnable and safe. Just as a fortress is a security to the garrison, and a frowning menace to the besiegers or enemies, so the "name of the Lord is a strong tower," and the "way of the Lord" is a fortress. If you choose to take shelter within it, its massive walls are your security and your joy. If you do not, they frown down grimly upon you, a menace and a terror.

How differently, 800 years ago, Normans and Saxons, looked at the square towers that were built all over England to bridle the inhabitants. To the one they were the sign of the security of their dominion; to the other they were the sign of their slavery and submission. Torture and prison houses they might become; frowning portents they necessarily were. "The way of the Lord" is a castle fortress to the man that does good, and to the man that does evil it is a threatening prison which may become a hell of torture. It is "ruin to the workers of iniquity." I pray you, settle for yourself which of these it is to be to you.

II. And now let me say a word or two by way of application, or illustration of

these principles that are here. First, let me remind you how the order of the universe is such that righteousness is life and sin is death. This universe and the fortunes of men are complicated and strange. It is hard to trace any laws, except purely physical ones, at work. Still, on the whole, things do work so that goodness is blessedness, and badness is ruin. That is, of course, not always true in regard of outward things, but even about them it is more often and obviously true than we sometimes recognize. Hence all nations have their proverbs embodying the generalized experience of centuries, and asserting that, on the whole, "honesty is the best policy," and that it is always a blunder to do wrong.

What modern phraseology calls "laws of nature," the Bible calls "the way of the Lord"; and the manner in which these help a man who conforms to them, and hurt or kill him if he does not, is an illustration on a lower level of the principle of our text. This tremendous congeries of powers in the midst of which we live does not care whether we go with it or against it, only if we do the one we shall prosper, and if we do the other we shall very likely be made an end of. Try to stop a train and it will run over you and murder you. Get into it, and it will carry you smoothly along. Our lives are surrounded with powers, which will carry our messages and be our slaves if we know how to command nature by obeying it, or will impassively strike us dead if we do not.

Again, in our physical life, as a rule, virtue makes strength, sin brings punishment. "Riotous living" makes diseased bodies. Sins in the flesh are avenged in the flesh, and there is no need for a miracle to bring it about, that he who sows to the flesh shall "of the flesh reap corruption." God entrusts the branding and punishment of the breach of the laws of temperance and morality in the body, to the "natural" operation of such breach. The inevitable connection between sins against the body and disease in the body, is an instance of the way of the Lord — the

same set of principles and facts—being strength to one man and destruction to another. Hundreds of young men in Manchester—some of whom are listening to me now, no doubt—are killing themselves, or at least are ruining their health, by flying in the face of the plain laws of purity and self-control. They think that they must “have their fling,” and “obey their instincts,” and so on. Well, if they must, then another “must” will insist upon coming into play—and they must reap as they have sown, and drink as they have brewed, and the grim saying of this book about profligate young men will be fulfilled in many of them. “His bones are full of the iniquity of his youth, which shall lie down with him in the grave.” Be not deceived, God is not mocked, and His way avenges bodily transgressions by bodily sufferings.

And then, in higher regions, on the whole, goodness makes blessedness, and evil brings ruin. All the powers of God’s universe, and all the tenderness of God’s heart, are on the side of the man that does right. The stars in their courses fight against the man that fights against Him; and, on the other hand, yielding one’s self to the will of God and following the dictates of His commandments, “Thou shalt make a league with the beasts of the field, and the stones of the field shall be at peace with thee.” All things serve the soul that serves God, and all war against him who wars against his Maker. The way of the Lord cannot but further and help all who love or serve Him. For them all things must work together for good. By the very laws of God’s own being, which necessarily shape all His actions, the whole “stream of tendency without us makes for righteousness.” In the one course of life we go with the stream of divine activity which pours from the throne of God. In the other we are like men trying to row a boat *up* Niagara. All the rush of the mighty torrent will batter us back. Our work will be doomed to destruction, and ourselves to shame. For ever and ever to be good, is to be well. An eternal truth lies in

the facts that the same word “good” means pleasant and right, and that sin and sorrow are both called “evil.” All sin is self-inflicted sorrow, and every “rogue is a roundabout fool.” So ask yourselves the question: “Is my life in harmony with or opposed to these Omnipotent laws which rule the whole field of life?”

Still further, this same fact of the two-fold aspect and operation of the one way of the Lord will be made still more evident in the future. It becomes us to speak very reverently and reticently about that matter, but I can conceive it possible that the one manifestation of God in a future life may be in substance the same, and yet that it may produce opposite effects upon oppositely disposed souls. According to the old mystical illustration, the same heat that melts wax hardens clay, and the same apocalypse of the Divine nature in another world may to one man be life and joy, and to another man may be terror and despair. I do not dwell upon that; it is far too awful a thing for us to speak about to one another, but it is worth your taking to heart when you are indulging in easy anticipations that of course God is merciful and will bless and save anybody after he dies. Perhaps—I do not go any further than a perhaps—perhaps God cannot, and perhaps if a man has got himself into such a condition as it is possible for a man to get into, perhaps, like light upon a diseased eye, the purest beam may be the most exquisite pain, and the natural instinct may be to “call upon the rocks and the hills to fall upon them” and cover them up in a more genial darkness from that Face to see which should be life and blessedness.

People speak of future rewards and punishments as if they were given and inflicted by simple Divine volition, and did not stand in any necessary connection with holiness on the one hand, or with sin on the other. I do not deny that some portion of both bliss and sorrow may be of such a character. But there is a very important and wide region in which our actions here must

automatically bring consequences hereafter of joy or sorrow, without any special retributive action of God's.

We have only to keep in view one or two things about the future which we know to be true, and we shall see this. Suppose a man with his memory of all his past life perfect, and his conscience stimulated to greater sensitiveness and clearer judgment, and all opportunities ended of gratifying tastes and appetites whose food is in this world, while yet the soul has become dependent on them for ease and comfort. What more is needed to make a hell? And the supposition is but the statement of a fact. We seem to forget much, but when the waters are drained off all the lost things will be found at the bottom. Conscience dulled and sophisticated here. But the icy cold of death will wake it up, and the new position will give new insight into the true character of our actions. You see how often a man at the end of life has his eyes cleared to see his faults. But how much more will that be the case hereafter! When the rush of passion is passed, and you are far enough from your life to look at it as a whole, holding it at arm's length, you will see better what it looks like. There is nothing improbable in supposing that inclinations and tastes which have been nourished for a lifetime, may survive the possibility of indulging them in another life, as they often do in this; and what can be worse than such a thirst for one drop of water, which never can be tasted more. These things are certain, and no more is needed to make sin produce, by necessary consequences, misery and ruin; while similarly, goodness brings joy, peace, and blessing.

But again, the self-revelation of God has this same double aspect. "The way of the Lord" may mean the process by which He reveals His character. Every truth concerning Him may be either a joy or a terror to men. All His "attributes" are builded into "a strong tower, into which the righteous runneth, and is safe," or else they are builded into a prison and torture-house.

So the thought of God may either be a happy and strengthening one, or an unwelcome one. "I remembered God, and was troubled," says the Psalmist. What an awful confession—that the thought of God disturbed him! The thought of God to some of us is a very unwelcome one, as unwelcome as the thought of a detective to a company of thieves. Is not that dreadful? Music is a torture to some ears, and there are people who have so alienated their hearts and wills from God that the Name that should be "their dearest faith" is not only their "ghastliest doubt," but their greatest pain.

O, brethren! the thought of God and all that wonderful complex of mighty attributes and beauties which make His Name should be our delight, the key to all treasures, the end of all sorrows, our light in darkness, our life in death, our all in all. It is either that to me, or it is something that I would fain forget; which is it to you? Especially the Gospel has this double aspect. Our text speaks of the distinction between the righteous and evil doers, but how to pass from the one class to the other, it does not tell us. The Gospel is the answer to that question. It tells us that though we are all "workers of iniquity," and must, therefore, if such a text as this were the last word to be spoken on the matter, share in the ruin which smites the opponent of the Divine will, we may pass from that class, and by simple faith in Him who died on the Cross for all workers of iniquity, may become of those righteous on whose side God works in all His way, who have all His attributes drawn up like an embattled army in their defence, and have His mighty name for their refuge.

As the very crown of the ways of God, the work of Christ, and the record of it in the Gospel, have most eminently this double aspect. God meant nothing but the salvation of the whole world when He sent us this Gospel. His "way" therein was pure, unmingled, universal love. We can make that great message untroubled blessing by simply accepting it. Nothing more is needed but to

take God at His word, and to close with His sincere and earnest invitation. Then Christ's work becomes the fortress in which we are guarded from sin and guilt, from the arrows of conscience and fiery darts of temptation. But if not accepted, then it is not passive, it is not nothing. If rejected, it does more harm to a man than anything else can, just because, if accepted, it would have done him more good. The brighter the light the darker its shadow. The pillar which symbolized the presence of God sent down influences on either side, to the trembling crowd of the Israelites on the one hand, to the pursuing ranks of the Egyptians on the other, and though the pillar was one, opposite effects streamed from it, and it was "a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these." Everything depends on which side of the pillar you choose to see. The ark of God which brought dismay and death among false gods and their worshippers brought blessing into the humble house of Obed Edom, the man of Gath, with whom it rested for three months before it was set in its place in the city of David. That which is meant to be the savor of life unto life, must either be that or the savor of death unto death.

Jesus Christ is *something* to each of us. For you who have heard His name ever since you were children, your relation to Him settles your condition and your prospects, and moulds your character. Either He is for you the tried Cornerstone, the sure Foundation, on which whosoever builds will not be confounded, or He is a stone of stumbling, against which whosoever stumbles will be broken, and which will crush to powder whosoever it falls upon. "This Child is set for the rise" or for the fall of all who hear His name; He leaves no man at the level at which He found him, but either lifts him up nearer to God and purity and joy, or sinks him into an ever-descending pit of darkening separation from all these. Which is He to you? Something He must be; your strength or your ruin. If you commit your souls to Him in humble faith He will be your

Peace, your Life, Your Heaven. If you turn from His offered grace He will be your Pain, your Death, your Torture. "What maketh Heaven, that maketh hell." Which do you choose Him to be?

### EARNESTNESS IN RELIGION.

BY REV. SYLVESTER F. SCOVEL, PRESIDENT WOOSTER UNIVERSITY, OHIO.

*And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent taketh it by force.*—Matt. xi: 12.

1. Earnestness is a distinguishing mark of race-elevation. (1) Beginning lowest in the East (Mongolian); (2) Latin race next; (3) Teutonic; (4) Anglo-Saxon.

2. Earnestness is characteristic of great epochs. Great eras are earthquakes of earnestness. Trifling is put away. Deep thoughts stir men. Common men become heroes, etc. (1) Crusades; (2) Reformation; (3) Netherlands; (4) Scotland; (5) America (Rev'n, 1861); (6) France in 1789-1871.

3. Earnestness is a criterion of individual character. Men weigh according to earnestness. It is more than ability. The able man may be dilletantish; the earnest man, never. He will blunder into more than, etc. Ear's synonym for Jesus, for Paul, for Howard, etc.

4. Of all places for earnestness religion is the most important and natural. Perennial source universally diffused.

5. This is the immediate teaching of the text. Our Savior means that if a man will be saved he must be in earnest. Nearly a year later He said: "The law of the prophets were until John; but since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." (Biazetai.) Jesus introduced and Christ preached a religion in which earnestness was an essential. Let us examine the subject.

#### REASONS FOR EARNESTNESS IN RELIGION.

I. Earnestness about religion is demanded by the nature of religion itself.

It is an earnest thing. 1. As a scheme of worship. (a) Brings the soul into

contact with God. (b) Demands exercise of best powers. (c) Utterly rejects anything not in earnest. How angry God is with false worship!

2. As a series of truths. (a) Far-reaching in extent. (b) Directly appealing to our deepest nature. (c) Taking in heaven and earth and man.

3. As a system of duty. (a) Claims control of life at every point. (b) Even of heart and soul and feelings and purposes. (c) Embraces words and speech. (d) Demands conformity to a written standard. (e) Presents a high ideal.

4. As a revelation of future rewards and punishments. (a) Puts upon men an untold pressure at this point. (b) Keeps the conscience sensitive. (c) Shows immense interests conditioned on a short time.

"Religion" cannot be spoken as a word without awakening earnest thought. It embraces almost everything which can awaken and stir men profoundly.

II. Earnestness in religion is demanded by *earnestness in the God* whom religion reveals.

No epicurean deity, careless of men, etc. God has manifested no desire to get away from the race.

1. God's earnestness visible in nature. (a) It is a whirl of terrible forces. (b) It has a mysterious and deep history. (c) But an intelligent purpose was through it all. (Evident in man.) (d) It cannot be a giant's sport; it must be a design of God.

2. Visible in the things permitted and accomplished in Providence. (a) All-embracing designs. Purpose widening with the suns. (b) Contradictions only apparent.

3. Earnestness in God's self-revelation visible. (a) God comes nearer to man at every step. (b) Earnestness of a written revelation. (c) Disclosed also in history of ancient people. (d) Blossoming in the Incarnation. Then in the example of Christ; then in the atonement; then in Pentecost.

4. The language of Scripture as revealing earnestness in God. (a) Definite command. (b) Tender pleading. (c)

Strong remonstrance. (d) Brilliant promises.

Nothing left undone to prove God's earnestness. Can man trifle in religion? The only thing that can answer God is earnestness in us.

III. Earnestness is demanded by the *difficulties in being religious*.

"Kingdom suffereth violence," etc.

1. These are real. Joshua said, "Ye cannot serve the Lord your God," etc. (Service.) Christ said: "Strive to enter in, for, etc., shall seek," etc. (Exertion.) The promises are "to him that overcometh." (Perseverance.) "All run in the race, but one obtaineth." (Obedience.) "Many are called, but few are chosen." (Shallowness banished.) "He went away sorrowing," etc. (Riches discounted.) "Many went back and walked," etc. (Intellectual pride rejected.)

2. They are not difficulties in religion itself. The door is wide open. The invitations universal. The conditions are blessings. Abundant grace is supplied.

3. They are in us. (a) Unbelief; (b) Love of sin; (c) Love of the world; (d) Self-will and pride; (e) Spiritual indolence and indifference.

4. These are complicated by our surroundings. (a) Our bodily necessities, our dependants, etc. (b) Unfriendly course of this world. (c) Special circumstances.

5. And there is no accommodation of conditions. Religion no respecter of persons. No royal road to Zion! Money and position, etc. Nay, "how hardly shall they," etc. We must take it by force.

IV. Earnestness in religion is demanded by *our actual dangers and needs*.

1. Religion is a scheme of pardon as well as a code of practice, and a system of truth. (a) It is addressed to sinners; appeals to conscience; awakens conscience by law. (b) It is thus addressed to endangered sinners. Our exposure is imminent: "condemned already." That condemnation is final, if we repent not, because it is for just and sufficient reasons. "This is the condem-

nation," etc. That exposure under condemnation is universal; different in degree, but true of all. The penalty of the condemnation is inconceivably awful. Exclusion from heaven: "When once," etc. Torments of conscience: "Their worm," etc.

2. Here is the supreme reason for earnestness in seeking the kingdom of heaven. It is your life. You are energetic in ordinary business, but how much more energetic to save your goods from fire! Clothing for ship-wrecked men is important; but first let them be brought to shore. Here we stand in view of the life-and-death choice to be made by every soul, and in view of the judgment-seat.

3. The whole situation, then, is: (a) Earnestness for an earnest religion; (b) Earnestness to meet an earnest God; (c) Earnestness to do a difficult work; (d) Earnestness to escape imminent danger. The last two meet and blind. Difficult work in front, and danger pressing behind.

V. Now contrast the earnestness so evidently demanded by our situation, and the *lightness* with which some treat the whole matter.

1. Contentment, with slight grounds for unbelief, is a clear indication of want of religious earnestness. To this our Savior directs attention in this chapter. He complains of the captiousness of that generation: "We have piped unto you," etc., for "John came," etc. John did not dress well enough; Christ dressed too well. John drank too little; Christ too much. John kept too separate from the people; Christ too near them, etc.

So modern cavils run in the same shallow channels; Christians too stingy to live well, or too extravagant. Reserved and careful, they are "unco guid" and stuck-up; but if more free, then they are just like us and no better, etc. Devoted to religion, they are bigots; easy-going Christians, they are hypocrites. Thus about the Church and the ministry. "Too cold, nobody speaks to me," says one; "Too warm, they bother me," says another. Ah!

wisdom is justified of her children, but alas! alas! men are losing their souls by such trifling. (a) They shift responsibility from self to others. (b) They give the enemy power just where they are weakest.

2. Then see the lightness with which some turn away to business. "They go their way, one to his farm," etc. A crooked finger of the beckoning world is more than the outstretched hand of God!

3. There is lack of earnestness shown in deferred offers and broken promises. No present pressure is felt. Fast and loose, with good purposes.

4. There is lack of earnestness in feeble beginnings and speedy abandonments. How many hopeful once and indifferent now? Stony-ground hearers and thorny-ground, etc.

APPLICATION.—1. Remember that the religious earnestness to which Christ exhorts you is no fanatical excitement. (1) No! "Dancing dervishes" are the type of all merely physical and merely emotional religion. Evil in all its effects. (2) Christ desires intelligent energy; (a) in thought, about sin, truth, etc.; (b) in study, to know God's will; (c) in conflict, with stubborn will, etc. (d) in obedience to all God's law. (3) Christ counsels immediate surrender, implicit faith, service begun on the instant, growing into His likeness; dedication to great purpose of saving men.

These things call for all the energy and earnestness possible to you.

2. Remember how soon difficulties melt away before earnestness. (a) As with Bartimeus, Zaccheus, Syrophenician woman. (b) "The publicans and harlots go into the kingdom before you," said Christ to the chief priests, "because they were in earnest." 3. Examine the reasons by which indifference replaces earnestness. How shallow they are! (a) Unbelief. All things wrapt in mist. But God is with him. (Matterhorn concealed, etc.) (b) The struggle of natural inclination. But religion is a new nature. (c) The power of this world's course, which is away from God and the supernatural. But

there is an inner life, and there is a future life. (d) Lack of the feeling of urgency. "Well enough;" "Time enough." Yet we know that "Work while the day lasts." (e) Indisposition to change. But all progress is change; and indifference is but change for the worse, etc. 4. Earnestness is demanded by your conduct in everything else which you really believe will be to your advantage. Consistency demands it. (a) Pursuing a joy. How the eye glistens, etc. ! (b) Following up a gain. What anxiety manifested ! Morality even a felt restraint. (c) Discovering a truth or a fact. How the heart beats ! etc. Scientific enthusiasm. But religion is joy, is gain, is truth. "I am the way," etc.

5. Appeal for considerate decision. (a) These are the only proper or wise or right things for our first earnestness. (b) These will please God. (c) These demand and deserve your whole soul. (d) Come to them, as they come to you. Take the kingdom by force, etc. "Seek first the kingdom," etc.

### THE WONDERFUL PRAYER.

By RICHARD S. STORRS, D.D. [CONGREGATIONAL], BROOKLYN.

*Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done.*—  
Luke xi: 2.

THERE are some words often on our lips, the contents of which we do not compass. The wonderfulness of meaning may be hidden by their familiarity. They lie in common speech as the nugget of gold in the earth, or the diamond enveloped in the quartz. They are to us as an article of beauty or value may be to any person who, holding it in his possession, is yet ignorant of its worth. The very vastness of thought may, on the other hand, so impress us as to impart a vagueness to it, so that it may loom up before our eyes like fire-mist, rather than as a rounded, concentrated orb. We utter these words as often as we pray, "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done." During the Week of Prayer, in fellowship with Christians all over the globe, we have used them,

in the family, in social and in public prayer. What a reach of thought! "Thy will; Thy kingdom." Words like these embrace every heart and every household on this planet; they recognize and eulogize a common nature in mankind, the capacity and privilege of fellowship with God.

No such conception was common among men when they were first uttered. It was not to be found in language, literature, commerce, or in the maxims of political science. The idea was unique. No one is too weak, none too lofty or strong; no one is too base, and none too refined; all are embraced in one foreseen and desired result. Beneath every varying distinction under which men are classified, there runs one broad, distinct, universal principle, a possible, a certain harmony, supposed, anticipated of the human will and the divine. This is to be not of mere constraint, but a joyful unity of affection; not an intermittent harmony, but permanent; not in one place, but everywhere on earth, as everywhere in heaven! Vast indeed is this idea in its reach and in the radicalness of its requirements; beautiful and beneficent also in its results. The might and majesty of law is seen in the physical creation. Every sand on the beach, every cresting billow of the sea, every mountain on the shore, every star on the front of night, every comet in its fiery path through the heavens, is held by the law which the Creator made; and so all nature moves on in its undisturbed career. When this harmony is paralleled in the moral world, there will reign a serene, crystalline purity and peace in the individual, in the social circle, and in national life. All this beneficent work is contemplated by this great petition, "THY WILL BE DONE." The Master knew this heavenly life Himself by eternal experience; out of this, his personal knowledge, He taught His disciples and us, as well, evermore to pray, "Thy kingdom come."

Consider the boldness of Christ in speaking these words. Men have belittled the Redeemer and His teachings.

They have failed to conceive of the august grandeur of His character and work. Here is a single thought of His, which is the sublimest ideal ever presented in human speech: something which, heretofore, was utterly unknown on earth in its true scope and fullness. Christ here announces the fellowship of the human with the divine nature, the sanctification of man's will and temper, and its union with God's purpose and plan. He was the one, alone, in all the world who knew what it meant, "Thy will be done," and what was possible to man. The world in His day was, as now, full of fierce ambitions and belligerent forces. Only military power seemed to be supreme and triumphant. In the midst of all the rivalries of the race, Christ stands as the index of a spiritual kingdom, for the prevalence of which His disciples are to pray. He perfectly, they—timid and passionate—very imperfectly, represented the kingdom of God to be set up in the world. "Impossible!" you would have said, had you then lived. Men say so now, even though Pentecost has past, martyrs and missionaries have lived and died; though the printing press has multiplied the leaves of life, and commerce has carried them with its merchandise to the ends of the earth. They say that ancient civilizations are too refractory to be moulded into the spirit of the Gospel, and that the heathen are too firmly wedded to their superstitions to be converted to God. O, in our meanness of spirit and powerlessness of faith, think of Him! He stood alone in His serene majesty and boldly taught the story and the glory of that kingdom for which they were to pray; He speaking, as it were, into the air, with no press to record and no sail to carry His words; with no convincing illustrations of saintly martyr spirit to point to; no Rome, or Antioch, or America, with their converted thousands to authenticate His message—He, towering up in solitary grandeur of might and sight above all men, said unto them, "When ye pray, say . . . Thy kingdom come!"

Again: think what light is cast upon the Gospel by this utterance of the Son of God. We look at the Scriptures, and sometimes think them a small, weak instrument to regenerate the race; we compare them with the libraries of philosophy, with the mighty rhythmic poems of other ages; with the arts and the sciences to which men turn as to potent factors in society; but Christ had not one of these in mind, unless subsidiary. He spoke His words into the air, as I have said, but trusted to the illumination of the Holy Ghost, by which enlightenment His disciples would be guided into all truth. The word of life was to regenerate the world. It is small: we may carry it in the pocket. So the telescope is small that brings to view the starry depths of distant sky. The powder is small, yet forms a mighty projectile force. The potion may be very small that the chemist mingles by which the irritated nerves are soothed to sleep. This "little" Gospel, this "foolishness of God," is a mighty power. It is the truth of God. Law is planted in it. Penalty flashes from it. Promises shine with celestial effulgence. All the truths of the Gospel, all the work and teachings of Christ, from the beginning even to His death and resurrection; all the operations of the Holy Ghost, whom He sent into the world—all these converge to the one single point, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done." This was the one supreme, central thought of Christ. Let men quarrel about miracles: to me, this divine presence of Christ has a significance grander than them all.

In view of what has been said, we recognize the true standard by which we are to measure society. Its value and its beauty are not found in its literary culture, its commercial enterprise, its democratic institutions, in any or all of the secularities of life. The test is this: How far is the divine idea realized? Is the kingdom of God set up? Is His will measurably done? Here is an absolute and final test. It grows clearer and more imperative as the race is coming to its future. We measure

the society of Christ's day, and condemn it. We measure mediæval life by this standard, and condemn it. Men will measure us in future years, and condemn us if the moral spirit and tendency of this age fail to realize this conception of Christ. Let us not be proud, then, of our wealth, power and intelligence. These are but auxiliary and tributary. If we are advancing God's kingdom, then these take on a celestial lustre, a brightness caught from the Sun of Righteousness, as the golden edges of a cloud shine, not from a glory evolved from its darkness, but from a splendor borrowed from the sun.

Here, again, we find the criterion of judgment as to what constitutes individual renown in history. It is not scholarship, social distinction, leadership in the senate or in the field; but the test is this: "How far has one wrought and prayed for the furtherance of God's will, for the upbuilding of His kingdom in the earth?" So we justly honor martyr and missionary. We say that the blood of the slain is the seed of the Church; that every prayer and effort and benefaction will not be fruitless in the name and service of the Master; while, on the other hand, the crown will be torn from the brow of genius, and the jeweled robe from the majesty of power, when genius and power have been but servants of ambition seeking to secure personal glory and eminence, instead of the honor of God, in the world.

Finally, we are reminded in these words of Jesus, of the great opportunity of life. We may co-operate with God in bringing, first, our own souls into harmony with His will, and then leading other spirits under the sweet dominion of His royal law. Every time we repeat the Lord's Prayer, let us pause to ask ourselves: "Am I fulfilling this idea? Am I furthering this purpose?" It will surely be accomplished. Earth never has been the same since it was wet with the blood of the Son of God—since it beheld the splendor that hung over Christ! The will of God is to be done. Does my

consecration, does my fellowship with Christ, contribute to the result? There is a contagion of virtue, a distributive influence, that goes out of a rich and regnant life, which brings tranquility to the sorrowing and courage to the imperiled. It is our privilege to enjoy this opulent experience of union with God. We speak of rare and inviting opportunities for success in business, where a young man may rise from step to step till he is admitted a partner of the house; of avenues open to distinction in law, or in other learned professions; but how insignificant, compared with this opportunity, which stands related not only to the future of the world, but to the glory of heaven. Here we may serve God's purpose and fulfill Christ's prayer. His request implies a command. We should heed it without delay. We should exhibit, not a languid, intermittent zeal, but a steady enthusiasm to the end; never a step backward. Christ was surrounded with prejudice, incredulity, indifference, disgust and opposition, but showed tenacity and persistence of aim. Sharing His work on earth, we shall share His glory in heaven.

Here is our motto. You hang a calendar in your office or your home, which, oftentimes is embellished with a philosopher's maxim or a poet's verse. No nobler, no more inspiring text can be found than this, which shines so lucidly and with such quickening power: "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done." A heavenly society on earth; the New Jerusalem built up below! It is worth living for, praying for, working for, dying for. It is the one thing certain in this world. Christ died not in vain; the Holy Ghost came not in vain. If we see not the accomplishment of this prayer while on earth, we shall surely see it from heaven: a renewed and purified Church; Christ honored below as He is honored above! Sharers in His earthly toil and travail, we shall then stand diademed with the beauty, and robed in the whiteness which already are Christ's and His saints' above!

## A KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

BY REV. THOMAS KELLY [METHODIST],  
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*Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and sup with him, and he with me.*—Rev. iii: 20.

In Scripture man is frequently represented by the figure of a house or dwelling. The simile is apt, simple, and suggestive. Every sense, sentiment, and affection may be regarded then as a separate room. This gives every man the same number of rooms, but I need hardly say there is a great difference between men in the size, cleanliness and furnishing of apartments.

## I. THE PERSON.

1. His antecedents. "I." "Son of God." (a) His previous riches and glory. (b) His present poverty and humiliation.

2. His attitude. "I stand." The Greek *ἕστηκα*, "I have taken up my stand" implies, not hastily abandoned, but patient, repeated effort; yet the figure may well alarm the careless and presuming. The fact underlying the figure is, that any "knock" may be the last, if no response be given. Brevity is both understood and implied.

3. His approach. "At the door." Christianity differs from all other religions, in that it represents *God as seeking man*; all others represent *man as seeking God*. God and man could never have found each other if God had not first gone out to seek man. A Greek writer has said: "Man cannot find God; God must find man." Having arrived "at the door," His gracious overture is: (a) Friendship with God; (b) Friendship with God, as His own proposition; (c) Friendship with God on an absolutely human level. "At the door." At your door and mine. Just as we are; in just the kind of place we live. Christian life is only every-day life spiritualized and ennobled by the indwelling of Christ. (d) Friendship with God as a present blessing. "I stand." The very grammar of the text puts everything in the present tense; and

Jesus uttered it sixty years after He had taken His place as our Advocate at the right hand of God. It is therefore specially to our dispensation. (e) Friendship with God for all. "Any man." Then no man will ever voice the dungeons of the damned with the groanings of despair simply because he sinned, but because he would not accept salvation.

4. His act. "Knock." How? (a) By providence; (b) Conscience; (c) Spirit; (d) Word.

5. His appeal. "Behold." He speaks, not to be obtrusive or to gain admittance, but to call attention to what He is doing, and the fact that He is there. He does not promise so much what He will do as what He will be; nor does He speak until knocking has failed to bring a response.

## II. THE PURPOSE.

To save man from the *guilt, darkness and pollution* of sin. To open up the windows, unbolt the hatchways and doors, and let men up into all parts of themselves. Though endowed with lofty ranges of faculty, most men live in the basement story. Down near the ground there is occupancy and commotion; but the most lofty and ennobling apartments—those which look out upon the majestic and the spiritual—upon God and the glories of eternity—these are mostly unused, locked up in filth, or in stumbling darkness. The purpose of Jesus in seeking admission is to renovate and light up the whole residence, and to teach the owner, by His own blessed inspiration and presence, to properly occupy and enjoy every part of His wonderful structure.

1. His reasonable conditions. They imply two things. (a) Contingency. "If any man hear." Here the tremendous power of free agency is recognized. The power to waive incarnate Deity from one's door and spurn the salvation which He brings. If the conditions begun and ended with *hearing*, there could be no room for doubt as to the result of the Savior's mission. It is not optional with the sinner whether he shall "hear" or know his duty; *he*

must know it. Jesus never leaves any man's "door" without making Himself heard. (b) Submission. "Open the door." "Hear" and "open." These words do not always follow each other as cause and effect. To know and to do are not synonymous terms. A man may "hear" and *bolt* his "door." To "open" is a voluntary act; to "hear" is not. "Open the door." This represents faith and obedience. Mark, there is no fixed feeling or mental state specified here as invariably preceding or accompanying the act. No matter how you get to the "door"—whether you run or crawl, whether you sing or sigh. "Great things in the Gospel are always simple, and the simple thing, the great thing is, to *let him in*." "Open the door."

### III. THE PROMISE.

(a). His personal presence. "I will come." Not an archangel, or a committee of seraphs shall come to befriend and help, but, "I will come." (b) His personal indwelling. "I will come into him." (c) His personal friendship. "I will sup with him." In the East, to have eaten at a man's table is to be the friend and ally of that man ever afterwards. In reading the Bible you

may have been impressed with the singular hospitality of men in those times—their promptness in kneading bread, and preparing a meal for strangers, especially if of any apparent note or standing. The spirit underlying it was the spirit of the text—to make *friends*. Many men, whose wealth consisted of flocks and herds, moved from place to place for pasturage, and many bandit tribes and caravans were passing to and fro. Possession of property was more a matter of muscle than of ethics in those days. The defenceless condition of the people fostered the spirit of hospitality, and this called forth a friendly spirit, which protected them in the absence of law. (d) His personal desire for reciprocated friendship. "And he with me." An Oriental guest is sacred in the estimation of his host, and the full force of the Eastern custom was understood, and evoked by our Savior. To show that the friendship was to be reciprocal, binding on both parties, He *repeats* and *reverses* the words, "I will sup with him and he with me." That is, "I will be his friend, and he will be mine. I will stand up for his interests, and he will stand up for mine."

## THE INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY-SCHOOL SERVICE.

### The Temple Dedicated.

(Lesson for November 2, 1884.)

By BISHOP SAMUEL FALLOWS, D.D. [REFORMED EPISCOPAL], CHICAGO

1 Kings viii: 22-24.

*Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee.*—Verse 27.

SILENTLY toward the heavens rose the magnificent temple of Solomon: not one of the seven wonders of the world, but its one solitary wonder; the one national house of worship erected on the earth for the honor and glory of the only living and true God.

The ceremonies of its dedication were of a nature befitting the august grandeur and sacred solemnity of the unwonted occasion. From all parts of the widely-extended empire over which the son of David held peaceful sway, came

the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, and the princes of the people, to assist in the joyous services. Amid the assembled thousands of the nation, the glad and stately procession of king and princes in robes of state, and priests and Levites in flowing garments of pure white linen, preceded by the ark—the type of the presence and power of God—sweeps up, with songs and blending harmonies of silver trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, toward the completed building. Reverently the ark, with its two tables of stone, the most precious treasure of the temple, is put by the priests beneath the outstretched wings of the overshadowing cherubim in the holy place. As they retire from this hallowed precinct, the vast multitude join in with the Levites and the one hun-

dred and twenty priests standing at the east end of the altar, and with the swelling notes of the trumpets, cymbals, psalteries and harps in the grand *Te Deum* of the ancient Church: "For he is good; for his mercy endureth forever." Then the glory of the Lord descends and fills the holy place with its awful splendor, so that the priests could not stand to minister, by reason of the cloud.

Descending from his ivory throne, Solomon now bows down before the altar and makes the prayer of consecration; the prayer which is breathed in substance, if not in actual form, when every place of Christian worship is formally consecrated to the high and holy uses of the spiritual nature of man.

As we analyze this outpouring of Solomon's heart, we find that it embraces all the elements of true prayer.

1. Adoration. God is recognized as the supreme God of the universe, who keeps covenant and shows mercy.

2. Confession. The acknowledgment of unworthiness. But will God in very deed dwell with men upon the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built? Will He, the high and holy One, the dome of whose temple is the blue over-arching sky, its pillars the everlasting mountains, its pavement the tessellated beauty of the earth, its lights, the sun and moon and all the stars of heaven, with spreading space and streaming lights for curtains and cords, with groves and clouds for drapery and adornings—will He deign to dwell in this house, which I, a feeble, sinful man, have built? Will He come down to meet here His wayward, needy children, and assure them of His pardoning mercy and of His constant help?

3. Supplication and intercession. For himself, for those around him, for his people, for the stranger, Solomon pleads. He implores the blessings of preservation, of justice, of forgiveness, of the fruitful rain, of fertile fields, of health, of personal good, of victory in war, and restoration from captivity.

4. Then he rises to the glorious heights of thanksgiving. God is merciful. He is good. His tender mercies are over all His works. He does hear prayer. He does bless. He does forgive. He does help. "Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he hath promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he hath promised by the hand of Moses his servant."

The answering fire, the descending cloud, the glory-filled temple, attest His presence and His love.

For twenty centuries that temple stood, the silent, eloquent witness of the name and attributes of God. It was the standing protest against all idolatry. It was the constant memorial of the righteousness and goodness of God, ever saying in its mute majesty and flashing glory: There is a Father above, bending down in tenderness and compassion and sympathy toward the children of men.

The temple of Solomon prefigured three other temples:

1. The temple of Christ's human body. "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it again." The body of Christ was indeed a greater manifestation of the pleasures of indwelling Deity than either the temple of Solomon or the temple of Herod, rising in its gorgeous magnificence before the Savior when the words were uttered. The tabernacle of God was with men. Everlastingly in the glory of heaven, that temple body of the risen Redeemer, consecrated on earth to the revelation of God's glory and the welfare of men, will be seen, the fullness of the unfolding of the wisdom and love of the Father, and the centre of union of all the glorified throng.

2. The temple of the body of man. Through the temple of Christ's body, the divine glory has passed into the temple of the human body, and thus into the innermost shrine, or holy of holies of the human heart. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?" "It is not I that live, but Christ that liveth in me." Here is the home of

God, here the seat of His glory. With every power consecrated to the service of God, the human body becomes the perpetual shekinah splendor of the divine presence on earth.

3. The Christian Church. This is the vast temple ever building; the temple composed of living stones. The saints build up the fabric, and the cornerstone is Christ.

#### Solomon's Sin.\*

(Lesson for Nov. 16, 1884.)

BY REV. WILBUR S. CRAFTS [PRESEBYTERIAN], NEW YORK.

1 Kings xi:4-13.

THE historical books of the Old Testament are a series of positive and negative illustrations of their key-text, "As long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper." Jeroboam and those who did not obey the Lord came to adversity. Jehosphat and those who had piety had also prosperity. Solomon illustrated both obedience and disobedience.

Though the youngest of David's sons he achieved the place of the eldest, by the law that "he lives most who thinks most." In early life he triumphed over the temptations of princely prosperity. He accepted a crown with the same humility that Moses rejected one. When crowned at nineteen, God appeared to him and gave him spiritual discernment. Again when the temple was completed God appeared to him and gave him promises and warnings. This Edenic period of Solomon's young life is mirrored in "The Song of Solomon," written doubtless when his affections had but one earthly object, and were so undefiled that they were to him a mystic parable of the soul's love for the heavenly Bridegroom. Those early days of Solomon's reign were prosperous as well as pure. By diplomacy and commerce Solomon conquered the whole "Land of Promise," which had never before been the land possessed, reminding us that only through the Greater than Solomon can we come up to the

level of our best. He achieved a world-wide fame also as "the preacher." Alas that he could not walk as well as he talked! Kings, queens and travelers "came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon." The whole Orient to-day is full of legends about his wise replies to hard questions. To this period of Solomon's middle life probably belongs the book of Proverbs, whose key-thought is *wisdom* as related to happiness, prosperity, reputation, and righteousness; and *folly* as related to shame, sorrow, adversity and defilement. These proverbs were probably uttered primarily for Solomon's son, Rehoboam, who followed his father's practice instead. Not even the magnificent temple which Solomon built could counteract the effect of his vices on his son. The thousand wives of Solomon's wholesale adultery were more influential than his thousand proverbs. How changed is the inner temple of his heart since that wise choice at Gibeon! He is no longer "glorious *within*." Strange women have led him to strange gods. His chief end has come to be to glorify self and enjoy sin. As in the so-called golden age of Augustus, Christ was crucified, so in this Jewish golden age of Solomon's reign, God was mocked by temples to heathen idols. At this time Solomon almost fills the poet's description, "The greatest, wisest, meanest of mankind."

At length old age came to the royal sensualist, and such an old age! He describes it in Ecclesiastes 12th chap., an old age of nature's retributions, not the sunset glory of a saintly life.

Did Solomon repent? The discussions of this question, which is one of conjecture, as collected by a German author, fill volumes. In a series of frescoes on the walls of the Campo Santo at Pisa, Solomon is represented at the judgment as looking anxiously to both right and left as one who knows not on which side his lot will be cast. The artist represents the world's perplexity as to Solomon's fate.

The book of Ecclesiastes, which was apparently written by Solomon in his

\* Dr. Thomas' sermon came to hand too late for this number: will give it in our next issue.—Ed.

old age, is the only ground for hope for his eternal destiny. It is evidently the book of one who sought to fill God's place in the human heart with the world, and found it all too small for the ocean-bed of the soul's desires, which only God's love could fill. We read between the lines his lament for the lost kingdom of inward peace:

"What peaceful hours I once enjoyed  
How sweet their memory still;  
But they have left an aching void,  
The world can never fill!"

The key-word of Ecclesiastes is "Vanity." Twenty-five times the disappointed writer exclaims: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!" His soul, which was once a Bethel, a house of God, is now a Bethaven, a house of vanity. The biography of godless great men is full of such laments of the unsatisfying nature of wealth, wisdom, power and pleasure. For instance, the accomplished Lord Chesterfield, who had received ribbons, offices, applause, everything except God's approval, confessed at the end that his life had been unhappy as well as hollow. He said: "I have recently read Solomon with a kind of sympathetic feeling. I have been as wicked and as vain, though not as wise, as he; but now I am old enough to feel the truth of his reflection, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

The reason why men utter such sentiments is not usually because they have exhausted life's resources, but because they have tried to live for things seen, and, like Solomon, have found them insufficient. It is like trying to fill an ocean-bed with bottles of rose-water. "O God, thou hast made us for thyself, and our souls are restless till they come to thee!" All things "under the sun" Solomon declares to be "vanity," though God called them "very good." They are "vanity" only when we attempt to put "things under the sun" in the place that belongs to things above the sun. Power, pleasure, property, popularity, are all "good," if they are not put in God's place.

Let us hope that the conclusion of Solomon's thought and experience were

utterances of his final penitence: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter—fear God and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment." Thus the book which began with a testimony of the "vanity" of worldly pursuits and pleasures closes with a reminder of "judgment." None need the reminder more than the powerful and prosperous. We should pray for the rich as well as the poor; the well not less than the sick. Solomon is in greater peril of soul than one of his poor or sick servants.

Let us, most of all, learn from Solomon's history not to leave those who knew us in doubt as to our future. How many coffins are covered with question-marks thicker than flowers, that cannot be covered from the thought of those who gather at the funeral even by exaggerated eulogies?

Only those hearts to which heaven has come in this life, can in death rejoice in the certainty of coming to heaven. Only such hearts leave behind them assurance rather than doubts of their eternal destiny.

The Queen of the South shall rise up in judgment against all others, because she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold a *Greater than Solomon is here* to forgive and save even the chief of sinners!

#### Proverbs of Solomon.

(Lesson for Nov. 23, 1884.)

By T. W. CHAMBERS, D.D. [REFORMED],  
NEW YORK.

*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.*—Prov. i: 7.

This text is the key-note of the whole book. Its contents, as the name indicates, are mainly prudential, giving hints for the conduct of life, but all are based upon religious principle. The Scripture is a friend of sound learning, the symbol of the Hebrew church as well as the Christian being a lamp. (Zech. iv: 2; Rev. i: 20.) But this learning is to be cultivated in its proper place and due proportion. Hence this prov-

erb, which in substance is repeated in Job (xxviii: 28) and in the Psalms (cxi: 10). The word rendered "beginning" is given in the margin in *principal part*, but both senses may be combined as in our familiar idiom of the head and front of anything. The fear of the Lord is first in time and first in importance.

#### I. What is the fear of the Lord?

Not terror, nor the instinctive dread with which one shrinks from the pestilence or a tornado; but reverence, which is by no means inconsistent with joy or hope. It is a compound of submission and affection. In the Lord's Prayer our freedom of access to a Father is tempered by the added assurance of His majesty as the One who is in heaven. So in the preface to the Decalogue we are taught to feel awe toward the Creator as the Lord our God, and also grateful love to Him as the One who brought us out of the house of bondage. These two feelings have justly been styled the centripetal and centrifugal forces of the moral universe. Neither can be spared. The concurrence of the two bring about that state of mind and heart which is most acceptable to God and most conducive to our present and future welfare. The text says that it is the head and front of knowledge. How is this the case?

II. All other knowledge without this is vain.

It may be in itself both real and good, yet to us it is useless while it stands alone.

1. It is imperfect. The investigation of nature, often boasted of as the only sure acquisition, is a study which constantly undergoes a change. The discoveries of to-day afford only a starting-point for those of to-morrow. Science is in a continual flux. No man can say when or where the last stage will be reached and progress stopped. Hence any conclusions reached now must be adopted subject to whatever alteration future disclosures may furnish. Hence present imperfection. Besides, what is usually meant by science now includes only external nature and the irrational

tribes. But if we allow liberally not only for what has been, but also for what may yet be achieved in these directions, still the largest part of the field of knowledge has not been touched—that which concerns man made in the image of God. One soul outweighs in dignity the whole material universe. It is quite conceivable that a man after having mastered every branch of physics may still have no proper view of the nature and functions of the very instrument by which he gained his learning; and if so, then his knowledge is fearfully one-sided and inadequate. Moreover,

2. It is unsatisfying. Mere intellect is not the whole of man. He has an emotional nature which may be starved, while the thirst for information is ever more and more gratified among the phenomena of nature and human life. The widening of the horizon before the inquisitive minds brings no real satisfaction. This truth is as old as Solomon. "In much wisdom is much grief, and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow" (Eccles. i: 18)—a sad declaration, which has often been repeated in other and far different ages, and must continue to be repeated as long as men suppose that the sharpening of the cognitive faculties and their employment upon external things is the road to happiness: Such studies, again, are

3. No aid to the conscience. The claim of the scientist is that he establishes everywhere the reign of law. Constantly the number of anomalies is reduced and the reach of leading principles is extended. Effect follows cause with unvarying uniformity in air and earth and sea, and as it has been in all the past so it is certain to be in all the future. But if so, what hope is there for the sinner? If whatever a man sows that shall he also reap, is an absolute and universal rule, to which there neither is nor can be any exception, how is a burdened conscience ever to obtain any relief? Hope is lost.

5. Morality also is undermined. This needs for its enduring support the

fear of God and reverence for His law. Elegant culture will not supply their place, either in the individual or the community. Science, art and letters may co-exist with utter depravity, but in such a case they work their own downfall. The French Encyclopedists in the last century had full swing, and proposed to regenerate society; but when the revolution came, what a scene of barbarism was displayed!

6. Once more, as the apostle says, mere knowledge puffeth up. "If a man thinketh that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing as he ought." The conceited man is ignorant. He may know a great many things, but not their true nature. The arrogance of mere intellectual attainments keeps a man from seeing the real relations and significance and grandeur of what he does know. A world without God is as great a blank as a solar system without a sun.

III. The fear of God crowns all other knowledge.

It accepts ascertained truth in any realm of research, co-ordinates it, puts it in its right place, and makes it subservient to the highest ends. Every manifestation of power, wisdom or goodness in created things, is made the incitement to higher reverence for its divine source. And the soul thus comes into ever clearer and more joyful apprehension of its Creator, and is led to utter with sincerity the wondrous words of the old Psalter, "Whom have I in heaven but thee?"

1. Our educational system is unduly exalted. It does much, very much, but more is needed. The fear of God is the best of all knowledge. Were it not for the religious teaching of the home and the Sunday-school the defects of the Public school would be painfully obvious.

2. This knowledge is open to all. The arts and sciences need special gifts or considerable means on the part of their students. But the school of religion stands with open doors, and whosoever will may come and appropriate its rich and enduring prizes.

3. It needs to be carefully sought. The great apostle deliberately counted all things but loss for the excellent knowledge of Christ. How sad is it that they who need not make a hundredth part of the sacrifice which he made, refuse even this for that which is the head and front of all knowledge!

### True Wisdom.

A SERMON FOR BOYS AND GIRLS.

(Lesson for November 30, 1884.)

BY W. G. E. CUNNINGHAM, D.D. [METHODIST], NASHVILLE, TENN.

*I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.*—Prov. viii: 17.

THESE are the words of God, uttered in the name of wisdom, and addressed to every living soul of man, especially to the young. Arnot says: "It is Christ offering Christ to sinners." In this sense we shall use them, without reference to any critical meaning of the word wisdom. It is God speaking to us by his Holy Spirit. Let us, therefore, listen reverently to His words of loving counsel. He says: "Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things." (v. 6.)

I. I LOVE THEM THAT LOVE ME. God is love. Not merely loving and kind, as good men and angels may be; but He is Love itself; the very substance and fountain of love. He is not merely wise, as good men and angels may be; but He is Wisdom itself; the very soul and substance of wisdom. When He speaks, therefore, it is the voice of love and wisdom that speaks. He is disposed by His very nature to love all His creatures; not only those who love Him, but "all sorts and conditions of men." His love forbids that He should be unkind, and His wisdom forbids that He should ever make a mistake; so that what He does is always the best that could be done.

Does God love everybody alike? Does He love the wicked as much as He does His own people? No; He does not say that He loves all alike: He loves them that love Him with the love of com-

placency, while He loves the sinner with the love of compassion. He loves His own people with a peculiar and tender affection; He delights in them as a father delights in an affectionate and dutiful child. This is called the love of complacency—that divine and holy delight which God feels when He looks upon those who love and serve Him. He loves the sinner, not with this love of complacency, for He cannot be pleased with sin in any form; but He loves him with the love of compassion, or, with feelings of pity and displeasure. He does not desire his misery in this life or in the life to come, but seeks his eternal happiness. Now we think these words, *complacency* and *compassion*, explain the love of God in such manner that we can understand how He is said to love the sinner, and yet is "angry with him every day." A father may love a wayward and disobedient son, and yet be greatly displeased with his conduct. God is a Father, and as a father, loves and cares for his children.

1. *He provides for and protects them.* It is the duty of a father to take care of his children; to feed and clothe them, and to protect them as far as he can from all that could injure them in body or mind. So God takes care of His children. (a) *He cares for their bodies.* God says to His children, "The very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not, therefore." (Matt. ix: 30.) Again He says; "Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, what shall we drink? or, wherewithal shall we be clothed? for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." (Matt. vi: 31, 32.) He has been saying these kind things to His people for thousands of years. He says in the ninety-first Psalm: "Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation, there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." (b) *He cares for their souls.* God has given us His holy Word to enlighten us and to teach us the way of salvation. He has given us His only begotten Son to die for us, that through Him we may

have eternal life. He has given us His Holy Spirit, to convince of sin, to regenerate, sanctify and comfort us. He has also promised to be with His people, to guide, sustain and save them. He will never leave them to the will of their enemies. This is the way God loves those who love Him.

II. **THOSE THAT SEEK ME EARLY SHALL FIND ME.** These words are true of wisdom and of all knowledge; and they are true in a beautiful sense of all who seek God early in life. He will be found of all who seek Him earnestly and properly; but especially will He be found of those who come to Him in the days of their youth. He loves the bright young creatures He has made, and when they seek Him, His great fatherly heart turns toward them with infinite tenderness. The advantages of seeking God early in life are very great every way.

1. *It is the time in which all ought to seek Him.* It is God's time, for the first fruits always belong to Him. The whole of our lives belong to God, and we ought to dedicate them to His blessed service. "Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price."

2. *It is the time of promise.* God has not said, "They that seek me in middle life, or in old age, shall find me;" but He has said, "Those that seek me early shall find me." "The promise is unto you, and to your children."

3. *It is the time for learning.* We learn more easily and more rapidly in childhood and youth than at any other period of life, and what we learn at this early season remains with us through life. It is in youth that men acquire useful and solid knowledge, the rudiments and foundation of all human knowledge; and so they should acquire at this time that knowledge which is above all other—the knowledge of God and His salvation. "Come, ye children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord."

4. *It is the time for forming good habits.* Much depends on a good start in life. The man whose youthful days are given to vanity and sin is a weaker man for

it to the end of life. But good habits, formed in early life, brace up and strengthen the moral character, and give a great advantage in the days of toil and temptation which follow.

5. *It is the time when the heart is tender*, and when it yields most readily to religious impressions, and when it responds most promptly to the influences of the Holy Spirit. It is then free from the cares, anxieties, and passions that afterward distract and harden it.

*Shall find me:* 1. In pardon and peace. 2. In joy and hope. 3. In the hour of trial. 4. In the hour of sorrow. 5. In the hour of death. 6. In eternity.

Hear, then, dear young friends, the voice of wisdom and love, the voice of God, calling you to Him. You are not too young to go to Him, if you are old enough to hear His voice. Give Him the first days of your young life, and the first hours of every day, and all the hours of all your days. Give Him your heart, your head, your hands, your feet—all your powers of soul and body, for time and eternity.

REMEMBER NOW THY CREATOR IN THE DAYS OF THY YOUTH, WHILE THE EVIL DAYS COME NOT, NOR THE YEARS DRAW NIGH, WHEN THOU SHALT SAY, I HAVE NO PLEASURE IN THEM.

### THE PRAYER-MEETING SERVICE.

By J. M. SHERWOOD, D.D.

Nov. 5.—*Missionary Service.*—THE FINAL TRIUMPH OF CHRISTIANITY.—John xii: 32; Ps. ii: 8; Zech. ix: 10.

I. This triumph is assured by the *promises* of the Bible, which are many, explicit, positive, and world-embracing. They leave no room for doubt.

II. The *divine origin and character* of Christianity render it certain. Christianity itself is on trial. If it fails to subjugate the world; if it encounters systems of error, false philosophies, hostile forces, effete civilizations, which it is inadequate to transform and vitalize with its divine life—then it will be demonstrated that it is not of God, and its high claims are false. A partial and temporary success will not suffice. The promises, the prophecies, the claims of Christianity, demand nothing short of universal and perpetual dominion. It must conquer every race and clime and generation and form of evil and opposition in all the world, or be itself defeated and driven from the field.

III. The *measure of success which it has already achieved* is a guarantee of its complete ultimate triumph. Christianity is not without its witnesses and signal triumphs in human history. There is nothing comparable with it. It has shown itself, on actual trial of 1800 years, to be "the wisdom of God and

the power of God unto salvation." It has subdued kingdoms and changed the face of the world. Idolatry, superstition, false philosophy, cannot stand before it. It saves "the chief of sinners." It elevates the most degraded people. It transforms savages, demons, into saints. Nothing in the heart of man, or in society, can withstand its power. It is moving steadily and rapidly on to final conquests. (See the statistics we gave in the September number of the H. M., p. 695).

"Christianity thus stands committed to the achievement of universal dominion. Its Founder puts it forth into history as the universal religion, foreordained to universal prevalence."

Nov. 12.—*CONFESSING CHRIST BEFORE MEN.*—Mark viii: 38.

Strange that argument, appeal, and warning should be necessary to prevail with men to confess Christ! But so it is. So was it when the divine Son of God appeared among men and set up His kingdom. So has it been in every age of the Church, and so it will continue to be to the last. Some think a public confession of Christ unnecessary; they can be Christians without joining the Church; can serve Him and go to heaven in a private, secret way. Others

are unwilling to commit themselves openly and irrevocably to a Christian life. Some stand aloof, lest, if they do confess Christ, they may fall away and bring reproach on themselves and on religion. And some even refuse public allegiance to Christ because there are so many unworthy persons in the church! But all these excuses are "refuges of lies"; devices of the devil, to ensnare souls to ruin.

I. Nothing, certainly, is more *reasonable and proper* in itself than to confess Christ before men. There is nothing hard, degrading, unnatural in it, but the contrary.

II. It is *enjoined on every disciple, in the most positive terms by Christ himself*. It is not an optional thing; it is commanded. To refuse to do so is to be guilty of willful disobedience to the Redeemer.

III. It is *essential to the perpetuity of the Church and its highest usefulness*. The Church is a spiritual kingdom, with Christ as its Head and King; with laws, duties, interests, responsibilities; and every disciple is required, openly, to identify himself with it, swear allegiance to it, and give it the whole weight of his example and influence.

IV. It is the *only safe course* to a man seeking salvation. He needs the Church even more than it needs him. There is but little hope for any man who, from choice, stands aloof from the Church, and declines to confess Christ openly, and consecrate his life to Him who hath redeemed it.

V. It is sure to *forfeit the favor of God and the life everlasting*. Read, ponder, take in the awful meaning of Christ's own words: "Whosoever, therefore, shall be ashamed of me and of my words . . . of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels."

Nov. 19.—JACOB AT BETHEL.—Gen. xxviii: 10-22.

We have space to note only a few of the points presented in this highly interesting narrative.

I. The *time and place*. "Exiled from home, fleeing from the mercurious resentment of a brother, o'ercanopied by the star-lit firmament, remote from human habitation, and encompassed by a heathen population on the bleak summit of the Bethel plateau, upwards of sixty miles from Beersheba, the wandering son of Isaac makes his evening couch with a stone slab for his pillow—an emblem of many another footsore and dejected traveler on life's journey." It is remarkable how many of God's gracious manifestations have been made in circumstances equally strange and forbidding.

II. Note the *vision*. A ladder reaching from earth to heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon it. It rested on the earth, and "the Lord stood above it." Christ in His own person is the "ladder" by which God comes down to the creature, and the creature ascends to God. The God-Man is the only foundation upon which the finite and the Infinite can come together, can hold intercourse. "No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." In the person and office of the "one Mediator," we have direct access into the presence of the ever-living God; the way to heaven is opened up; and wheresoever prayer is offered in faith and penitence, the heavens are pierced and God comes down to men in forgiving love.

III. Note the *effect of this revelation upon Jacob*: "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." God's presence consecrates the very stones of the desert, the rudest house of worship, the commonest service of prayer. Where genuine worship is offered up, the Most High God condescends to draw nigh, and speaks gracious words to the soul, and makes the closet, the family altar, the sanctuary, the solitary place, the very "gate of heaven."

Nov. 26.—SOWING AND REAPING. — Ps. cxxvi: 6.

They go together in God's purpose, and in His providence. There is never a harvest where there has been no season of preparation.

I. There is a *seed-time* for every work, a favorable season to cast in the truth, to plant ideas, principles, serious thoughts, good habits, where they may take root and bear fruit in due season. This is true of the individual, the family, the church, the community, etc. God ordains this seed-time in the moral and spiritual kingdom as really and truly as in the natural world.

II. There is a *seed-work* that must be done. Not only must we note the appointed time, but when it is at hand rise up and make the most of it; go forth, and by diligent effort prepare the ground for the seed, and watch and wait and pray for the increase. It is not enough to observe the times and seasons, and cast in the seed of the Kingdom; there is much hard *work* to be done on men's hearts and in the public mind to secure attention to the truth, to overcome their prejudices, silence their objections, convict them of sin, and persuade them to come to Christ. To secure a revival in a church, it is often necessary to labor patiently and prayerfully for months, and it may be for years.

III. A time of *reaping* is sure to follow seed-work, performed at the proper time. "He that winneth souls is wise." Our labor is not in vain in the Lord. Not more sure is the husbandman to reap the reward of his outlay, than is the faithful spiritual toiler to gather the sheaves of an abundant harvest. "Shall doubtless come again." There is no uncertainty. The laws of nature are not more stable and sure than the law which governs in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. Seed time and harvest may fail, sometimes do fail in the natural world; but in the spiritual, *never*. Faith, penitence, prayer, seeking God, were never disappointed. Earnest, faithful, seed-sowing and seed-labor, attended with prayer and weeping, were never known

to miscarry. If His people will do their part, in faith and labor and watching, God is sure to do His. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse . . . and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." So long as that and other promises of similar import remain in force, if we fail to gather in frequent and abundant harvests, to the praise of God's abounding grace, it will not be for lack of encouragement. Nothing but an "evil heart of unbelief" can turn aside the blessing.

#### THE CANON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

By PHILIP SCHAFF, D.D., LL.D.

THE canon of the sacred Scriptures of the Old Testament differs in various churches, the canon of the New Testament is the same in all the churches.

The Roman Catholic and the Greek churches *include* in their editions of the Old Testament the *Apocrypha*, which are derived not from the Hebrew, but from the Greek Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate. The Roman church puts them on a par with the canonical books according to a decision of the Council of Trent. The Greek church gives them a subordinate position.

The Evangelical churches *exclude* the *Apocrypha* from the canon, because they were no part of the Jewish canon, are not quoted in the New Testament, and contain some objectionable doctrines. The British and Foreign Bible Society, and the American Bible Society, do not print them at all any longer, and those who wish to possess them have to get an older edition, or one published by private firms. The best is the edition in the Cambridge Paragraph Bible. The revision now going on will also embrace the Apocrypha. They are interesting and important in an historical point of view, for they fill up the gap of four or five centuries between the Old and New Testaments. Some of them are very edifying, as the Books of the Maccabees, and the Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirash.

For Protestant Christians the acceptance of the Old Testament canon depends on the authority of Christ and the Apostles, which is the highest authority in matters of faith and morals. But this does not exclude criticism or the investigation of the authorship and literary character of the books, which is quite indispensable for all healthy progress in theology and can only promote the cause of truth in the end.

As to the canon of the *New Testament*, there is no difference among the standard confessions, whether Greek, Roman or Evangelical. All are agreed as to its extent. Its authority rests on external and internal evidence combined. The external evidence embraces the numerous testimonies of ancient fathers, heretics and heathen writers concerning the apostolic origin of the gospels and epistles. The internal evidence is the witness of the Holy Spirit which inspired the books and speaks through them to the hearts and consciences of men as no other book.

The *New Testament* itself nowhere gives a catalogue of books which are included in the canon. Such a catalogue could only be expected in the last book, say the *Apocalypse* or some other book of St. John, who wrote last of all the apostles and lived to the close of the first century. But he does not mention any other book of his fellow-disciples. The warning in Rev. xxii: 18, 19, does not refer to the whole *New Testament*, but simply to the book of *Revelation* (hence *book*, not *books*). This is agreed among all commentators. Nor do we find such a catalogue in any writing of the so-called Apostolic Fathers down to the middle of the second century; but they knew and freely quote from the principal books of the *New Testament*.

We need then the testimony of the Church as to the number of writings which were from the beginning regarded as apostolic, inspired, and hence canonical, *i. e.* authoritative as a rule of the Christian faith and practice. Such testimony, fortunately, is abundant, and far outweighs the testimony in favor of any book of antiquity, yea,

we may well say, it outweighs the combined testimonies in favor of all the ancient Greek and Roman classics put together. The ancient church acted not blindly in this most vital matter, but was led by a sound instinct which enabled it to distinguish between the different classes of sacred books which were in circulation during the first three centuries of the Christian era, and many of which falsely bore the name of apostles and other primitive disciples. It evidently exercised a certain kind of higher criticism, and its judgment has stood the test of centuries.

The principal books of the *New Testament*, the four Gospels, the Acts, the thirteen Epistles of Paul, the first Epistle of Peter, and the first of John, which are designated by Eusebius as "*Homologoumena*," were in general use in the church as early as the middle of the second century, and acknowledged to be apostolic, inspired by the Spirit of Christ, and therefore authoritative and canonical. This is established by the testimonies of Justin Martyr, Tatian, Theophilus of Antioch, Irenæus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen, of the Syriac Peshito (which omits only Jude, 2 Peter, and 2d and 3d John, and the Revelation), the old Latin Versions (which include all books but 2 Peter, Hebrews, and perhaps James) and the "*Fragment of Muratori*;" also by the heretics, and the heathen opponent Celsus—persons and documents which represent in this matter the churches in Asia Minor, Italy, Gaul, North Africa, Egypt, Palestine, and Syria. We, therefore, call these books the original canon.

Concerning the other seven books, the "*Antilegomena*" of Eusebius, *viz.*, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the *Apocalypse*, the second Epistle of Peter, the second and third Epistles of John, the Epistle of James, and the Epistle of Jude—the tradition of the church in the time of Eusebius, *i. e.* the beginning of the fourth century, still wavered between acceptance and rejection. But of the two oldest manuscripts of the Greek Testament, which date from the age of Euse-

bis and Constantine, and were probably written in 330, one—the Sinaitic—contains all the twenty-seven books, and the other—the Vatican—was probably likewise complete, although the last chapters of Hebrews (from xi-14), the Pastoral Epistles, Philemon and Revelation, are lost. There was a second class of Antilegomena, called by Eusebius "spurious" (ρόδια), consisting of several post-apostolic writings, viz., the Catholic Epistle of Barnabas, the first Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians, the Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians, the Shepherd of Hermas, the Teachings or Teaching of the Apostles, the lost Apocalypse of Peter, and the Gospel of the Hebrews, which were read at least in some churches, but were afterward generally separated from the canon. Some of them are even incorporated in the oldest manuscripts of the Bible, as the Epistle of Barnabas and a part of the Shepherd of Hermas (both in the original Greek) in the Codex Sinaiticus, and the first Epistle of Clement of Rome in the Codex Alexandrinus. One of them, the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, has recently been rediscovered by Bryennios and published in 1883. It has very few quotations from the Scriptures, mostly from the Gospel of Matthew.

The first express definition of the New Testament canon, in the form in which it has since been universally retained, comes from two African synods, held in 393 at Hippo, and 397 at Carthage, in the presence of St. Augustin, bishop of Hippo (died in 430), who exerted a commanding influence on all the theological questions of his age. By that time, at least, the whole church must have already become nearly unanimous as to the number of the canonical books, so that there seemed to be no need even of the sanction of a general council. The Eastern church, at all events, was entirely independent of the North African in the matter. The Council of Laodicea (363) gives a list of the books of our New Testament with the exception of the Apocalypse. The last canon which contains this list, is probably a later

addition, yet the long-established ecclesiastical use of all the books, with some doubts as to the Apocalypse, is confirmed by the scattered testimonies of all the great Nicene and post-Nicene Fathers, as Athanasius (d. 373), Cyril of Jerusalem (d. 386), Gregory of Nazianzum (d. 389), Epiphanius of Salamis (d. 403), Chrysostom (d. 407), etc. The name *Novum Testamentum*, also *Novum Instrumentum* (a juridical term conveying the idea of legal validity), occurs first in Tertullian, and came into general use instead of the more correct term *New Covenant*. The books were currently divided into two parts, "the Gospel" and "the Apostle," and the Epistles, in the second part, into "Catholic" or General and "Pauline."

The Catholic canon thus settled, remained untouched till the time of the Reformation, when the question of the Apocrypha and of the Antilegomena was reopened and the science of biblical criticism was born. But the most thorough investigations of modern times have not been able to unsettle the faith of the church in the New Testament, nor ever will.

Luther had objections to the Epistle of James on account of its apparent contradiction to Paul's doctrine of justification by faith alone; to the Epistle of the Hebrews, because it seems to deny the possibility of a second repentance (ch. vi); and to the Apocalypse, because it deals with unintelligible mysteries; but he gave his objections only as his private opinions, and the Lutheran church, notwithstanding his commanding authority, did not accept them. Calvin doubted the genuineness of the second Epistle of Peter, but the Calvinistic confessions without exception include it in their lists of the canonical books. The Reformers in this respect simply claimed and exercised the freedom of the ante-Nicene fathers concerning the few Antilegomena; while as to the genuineness of the Homologomena they had not a shadow of doubt, and the genuineness of these books has since stood the severest test of modern criticism.

## A SYMPOSIUM ON ROMANS.

## No. I.

BY REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER.

[Dr. Godet, the eminent Swiss commentator, has sent us a reply to Mr. Beecher's article which he has seen in proof. This reply will appear in our next issue. Dr. Godet will be followed by Prof. Timothy Dwight, Dr. T. W. Chambers, Dr. George R. Crooks, Dr. M. B. Riddle and other scholars of note. Our readers will have a rare treat in this symposium.—Ed.]

1. It has been much discussed whether Paul wrote to Gentiles or Jews. To Jews, I have no doubt. The Jewish community was the nucleus of Christian labor. The Sabbath, the synagogue, the assembly, the Old Testament read and expounded, furnished the best conditions for Christian labor. But, above all, the Jewish nature was the strongest; the moral stamina, the dialectic habit, the intelligence in religious experience, would inevitably make them the ascendant party in any city, even when the Gentiles predominated in numbers. In a church of twenty Jews and one hundred Gentiles the Jews would lead, fashion, control; and to them, therefore, a letter from Paul would inevitably be directed, in spirit if not in form; for the Jew was the moral rudder, and which way he went the Church would go.

2. It was especially necessary that a Christian church in Rome, the capital of the world, should not propagate an impure Christianity; that it should send forth a clear and unpolluted stream; that the churches throughout the Empire should be set free from the encumbrances of Jewish rabbinic thought and ritualistic worship.

3. This letter of Paul's has shaped the theology of the orthodox world more than all the rest of the Bible. The gospels and Paul's ethical letters have influenced the piety of Christian ages; the writings of John have nourished the mysticism and romance of ages; but the systematic theology has been Pauline, and Paul misunderstood, at that. Here has been the battle-ground. The commentaries, treatises, and sermons on Paul's letter to the Romans

might well be called a fulfillment of the Prophet's vision: "*The hand of the Lord was upon me and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley, which was full of bones. \* \* \* behold, there were many of them, and lo, they were very dry.*"

4. The reason of this confusion is found in the misapprehension or the want of consideration of—

(1.) *Paul's Genius.*

(2.) *Paul's Standpoint or Purpose.*

## I. PAUL'S GENIUS.

He was intensely Hebraistic by nature, culture, patriotism, and love.

Of Hebrews, he most resembles, without being like, Isaiah. By nature, he had the fierce fidelity of Elijah; but not John himself could show a heart more susceptible of tenderness and self-sacrificing love.

This moral nature was developed in that temperament and genius out of which seers, poets, and dramatists are made. He dreamed dreams, heard voices, saw visions, had revelations with lightning flashes, had translations from earth to heaven, had angels standing by him, heard God speak: "My grace shall be sufficient."

This Oriental nature was nurtured in the rabbinic school of Gamaliel—a name to be honored—which admitted into his mind and instruction Greek philosophy and literature, the effects of which are distinctly seen in Paul, not alone by his references to Greek thought, but by the combination in him of rabbinic and philosophical reasoning. Rabbinic reasoning was narrow, textual; Greek reasoning was based on general principles. The one was an ingenious reasoning on words and things; the other was upon the nature and philosophy of things. Thus the impetuous stream of his reasoning was in part the petty rabbinic and in part the philosophic Greek. Nor is the line always distinguishable. Like the Missouri and Mississippi, they flow side by side, distinct for a time, yet invading each other, and finally mingling. An impetuous soul, uttering itself with intense emotion, in prophetic dramat-

icism, in reasonings in which sometimes the letter and sometimes the spirit dominates—cannot be understood or interpreted by the grammar or the dictionary alone. Something of Paul is needed to understand Paul. It was such a soul that was writing to his countrymen, to bring them out from a school where men sought complete manhood by mechanical observances, into a school where men sought manhood from the impulses of emotion and reason inspired by God.

This style is a marvelous union of emotion and intellect, rabbinic and Grecian, literal and poetic, prose and drama. Sometimes his thoughts were white as light, and at others the light passed through a prism, and fell upon the page in all the opalescent colors of the rainbow.

Now put a matter-of-fact man—learned, cold, unsympathetic—to interpret Paul! What is an owl's opinion of the aurora borealis? What is a mole's opinion of a magnolia tree in full blossom? What would a political constitution be, based on Shakespeare? or a treatise on domestic economy, based on interpretation of Solomon's Songs? Such is much of the theology based on Paul in the epistle to the Romans!

#### II PAUL'S STANDPOINT.

He was not a judge opening a well-balanced system of law; but a fiery advocate who took only so much of law and fact as should secure a verdict.

He was not a mental philosopher, laying open the whole science of the human mind; but a lover pleading before his mistress whatever should enlist her sympathy, and warm and win her heart.

What was that jury before whom Paul was a special pleader?

His Jewish Countrymen.

What was the case which he argued—argued as the tide argues in the Bay of Fundy—impetuous, overwhelming?

That they should accept Christ in the place of Moses, not as antagonistic to Moses, but as seeking the same things by grander methods. Moses sought righteousness; the Jews sought the same. (Rom. x : 1-4.)

The first impressions made on a Jew would be, that to abandon Moses would be infidelity. It was to be shown that it was to fulfill Moses' purpose. Moses sought to produce character by external influences; by works, deeds, observances. Christ sought the same end by internal regeneration, by giving the soul a controlling inspiration.

Put ourselves in the devout Jews' place, to whom Paul preached. It would seem to us, as it did to them, as if Paul made overtures of infidelity. Were they to dishonor their fathers; to forget the chastisements which the nation had received for former apostacies; to defile the most sacred associations of the temple, the ritual, and their own life-long moral experiences, which had grown up and twined themselves round the altar, the Sacrifice, the Priest, the *Hope of Israel*, whose coming they had waited for and watched—and for what? For an ignorant Galilean peasant, who had contemned the Temple, set at naught the orthodox teachers, rushed upon the law, and had been destroyed in the conflict!

Shall we forsake our whole history to take up with a crucified criminal? The ground was planted with dangers. Stephen had attempted the same office—and when he intimated that Jew and Gentile were alike before God, they answered him with stones. The true Jew felt himself lifted immeasurably above every other creature on earth. The Hebrews were an aristocracy on earth. No aristocracy is like a spiritual aristocracy. Had not God conferred these prerogatives upon them? Had He not bound Himself by everlasting covenants, if they would keep His Law, to exalt them above all that ever lived? Read Deuteronomy xxviii; and then, xxix: 19, etc.

The condition of God's favor was, Keeping the Law of Moses

The conceit of Pharisees as to this was boundless. Paul, a Pharisee, declares of himself—"*touching the righteousness which is in the Law—BLAMELESS,*" absolutely blameless!

Here was Paul's task! He was to

make a plea for a nobler conception of true righteousness—(except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, etc.). He was to sympathize with them in patriotism and excite them to abase their spiritual conceit by placing them on the same ground with all the world—spiritual aristocracy to yield to infidel democracy. He was to develop the fact that God was just as much the God and Father of all mankind, of every nation, as he was of the Jews; to convince them that they were under condemnation; that they needed pardon; that their whole conceit of righteousness was false and dangerous; that another and higher flight must be made; that such flight could not be made by the ladder of the law, but only by wings; that such wings came by FAITH, the inspired communion with Christ.

## ANALYSIS.

I. Though not stated on the face, yet the whole epistle is a discussion of RIGHTEOUSNESS, or the best method of *building up men to Perfection*. It comes to the surface continually, as the end toward which the argument drifts. But this end must not be confounded with the argument.

II. The argument was, that Christ was a better means of educating manhood than Moses and his institutions.

III. But this argument for righteousness must be cast in such form as—

(1.) To meet the universal belief that the Jews were regarded by God, under moral conditions, as different from the rest of mankind; and it was necessary to show the universality and absolute sameness of God's government over all mankind.

(2.) To convince them that the relinquishment of Moses was not abandonment of the END, but only change of MEANS—not infidelity, but religion under better conditions.

Chapter I. is a vivid picture of the sinfulness of mankind. Not a refined kind of sin—that of culture, of subtle and graceful selfishness, but UNDISPUTED sin, of the passions and appetites. V. 18.

No one could deny that such sins

violated UNIVERSAL MORAL law—not venial sin, such as violation of Moses' ritual.

Chapter II. The argument now is, not that such sin is punishable, but that it is punishable in a Jew as really as in a Gentile.

He now turns upon them—they are in the net. Do you suppose that God declines to punish sin or reward holiness on the mere ground that one is a Jew, and another a Gentile? Nay, Jews and Gentiles stand on the same ground. God's moral government knows no provincial lines.

Read Chap. ii: 6-11.

Having drawn the sword, he now throws away the scabbard, and pursues them through the whole chapter. Every blow aims at the Jewish conceit, that they are safe, though wicked, simply because they are Jews.

Chapter III. He pauses. He seems to hear a response: "*If all this is true, what use of being a Jew?*"

And now Paul's rabbinic reasoning develops. He employs the style of reasoning which is suited to the habits of reasoning of his countrymen. And yet, here and there, twisted curiously in and out, the Hellenic style of reasoning alternates with the rabbinic.

The scope and result of Chap. 3 is summed up in the last four verses.

God is not provincial, but universal.

The Jews stand on the same moral grounds as the Gentiles, as to guilt and penalty.

The Gentiles stand on the same universal condition of pardon and salvation that Jews do.

Righteousness does not depend upon conformity to an external law, but to the law within—to the spiritual law. He has assumed the text, RIGHTEOUSNESS, and developed its scope and meaning.

Chapter IV. Now he turns to his countrymen, and re-enters upon the argument that Faith is the instrument of Righteousness. This is purely a scriptural argument, in its type rabbinic, but modified by the Hellenic spirit. He selects scriptures and applies them after

the manner of a rabbi. But the large view, the wide results, are Hellenic.

Chapter V. As a stream choked in a ravine, held back by rocks, whirled in pools, at last fights its way out and descends in a gentler mood toward the meadows, so, now, the stream of argument, no longer twirling and foaming, goes singing from the first to the eleventh (1-11). It is as sweet as spring, as beautiful as flowers, as melodious as the singing of birds.

But while we read, the stream leaps into a pool and whirls around furiously. Adam? Adam? Was there an historic Adam? or only a legendary Adam? A mythical, or parabolic Adam? Did his sin blight the race? Can either guilt or righteousness be imputed?

At every such step we have parted company with Paul's argument. What was he arguing? These are modern questions. They are anachronisms. The Jews to whom Paul was writing believed in an historic Adam, and in the curse of the race by reason of his sin. The apostle used that belief as an illustration of the beneficence of Christ's life and death. His purpose was not to prove anything about Adam, but to use the reigning belief as an illustration of Christ and in the line of his foregoing argument. The argument points to Christ, and not to Adam.

Chapter VI. The whole of Chapter VI, and to the eighth verse of Chapter VII, is an argument of the most pronounced type of Hebrew reasoning, to show that the acceptance of Christ and the breaking away from ritualism did not mean lawlessness; that faith in Christ was more powerful for holiness than ritualism. Grace does not lead to laxity. Faith, as distinguished from works of the law, inspires holiness. The reasonings and the illustrations are Hebraic, but the atmosphere is Hellenic, freer, larger, than the narrow rabbinic methods. But when he reaches the eighth verse of the seventh chapter, he is carried away into the experimental and the universal. The form and feeling are dramatic; the conception is pre-eminently philosophic. It is an

Iliad. It might be called the *Battle of the Animal with the Spiritual*. The moral and fleshly nature of man refuses to submit to Reason, Conscience, Love. The battle is joined. The conflict rages. It is the Darwinian man in conflict with the man after God had breathed into him the rational soul. The terrible conflict goes on; and sin, plumed with darkness, is pushing the man back and down, till spent and overcome, he gasps: Oh, who shall deliver me from this death of the body? The cry brings relief! A new warrior appears. It is the Captain of Salvation, the Lord Jesus Christ!

Chap. VIII. And now that deliverance has come. In the eighth chapter Paul shows that when the reason, the moral sense, the heart, are inspired with love to Christ, they constitute the real man, the essential manhood. The argument is no longer Jewish. It is as broad as the human race. It is a glowing psychology that has no place except in this immortal chapter! The impetuous rush of his mind cannot be stayed. His wings are spread, and the whole heaven is before him. For the moment he forgets Jew or Gentile, the argument and the illustrations. The future of the spiritual realm opens before him. He is on the point of being caught up again into heaven. He sees the unfolding kingdom of Christ, the victorious working out of God's purposes; and then, in the fiery rapture of that view, he breaks out into a defiance of sin and all infirmities, and chants that immortal hymn to the victory of Christ's love. (31-39.)

The amanuensis is overborne! The dash, the swift terms, the mingling comments, the impetuous argument, the overflowing emotion, would weary a giant. I think a day elapsed before the ninth of Romans was resumed. The argument begins again, tenderly, weepingly, in a minor key. The heavens are closed, the dull clouds of unbelief rest on the minds before him. The distance in spirit, in insight, in triumph, between the eighth and ninth of Romans, is the whole distance between the

New Jerusalem in heaven and the Old Jerusalem on earth.

In one sense, Paul finished his letter with the eighth. But he was not writing a letter for the sake of an argument. His sympathy was not of a logical or philosophical kind, but human. What effect would this reasoning have on his countrymen? As a true hunter forgets his gun the moment it is fired off, in looking to see if the game was hit, so Paul turned from his argument to see how it struck his people. He sees their minds stirred, objections arise, doubts and obscurities, and now he sets himself to combat objections and solve doubts.

The honest Jew, with sincere reverence for his national religion, yet unsettled by the new doctrine, may be imagined as saying: "If at this day it appears that Moses and the law are vain, that God is no more to Jews than to Gentiles, that all covenants are broken, that we are not God's chosen people, that we are not elected out of all nations as His peculiar people, what then?"

Chap. IX, X. The ninth and tenth are an exposition of truth in answer to these questions; and the argument is more than curious, for it is rabbinical reasoning outwardly, while at the root it is philosophical.

The real argument is, in brief:

1. God has never bound Himself to peculiar favoritism to the Jews. In your own history you can see it. It is to the *righteous* that the promises go. One is not necessarily righteous because he was born a Jew. In every nation, those who fear God are accepted of Him.

2. God is free. The play of the Divine Will is not obstructed. "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." God is not governing the world under a constitution which limits His choice and power, but under His own absolutely free mind and heart; and the result reached by reasoning on historic instances is in Chapter ix: 30, etc.

3. Next, in the tenth chapter, Paul

makes an argument in behalf of *faith* as a motive force in obtaining righteousness. It is an *argumentum ad hominem*. And in Chapter eleventh the controversy is closed by a rabbinical argument of consolation addressed to wounded national pride, to aggrieved patriotism: This overthrow of all your hopes is not to be mourned. God will bring greater good out of it than you could have conceived. (xi: 25, 26.)

Then follows a practical application of the true results of Faith. It is as if he would console the timid and doubting by laying before them the practical workings of Christ's spirit; and surely no harvest-field, garden, and orchard was ever more beautiful or fruitful.

#### RESULT.

1. Romans is meant to be a bridge over which sincere and devout Jews could pass to Christianity without doing violence to their religious feeling, to their patriotism, and without incurring the charge of infidelity.

2. Its main principles are:

(1.) All men are sinful—Jews and Gentiles alike.

(2.) God will punish sin without respect to persons or nationalities. He has one moral government for all mankind.

(3.) The same is true of His favor. It is not national favoritism: it is moral sympathy with the human race.

(4.) That Christ, as a living force, built up men in righteousness, as no dead formalism or extended system of rules and rituals could. All that the Law meant, Christ meant; but what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, a living, loving Christ could do. (Read viii: 3, 4.)

The difficulties of the epistle to the Romans lie primarily in the genius of the writer, and secondarily in the standpoint taken by orthodox commentators and interpreters. Paul's style is full of rushes and jumps; it plunges forward as if it would never stop, and yet in the twinkling of the eye it halts, turns out of a straight line, snatches at some side thought, runs along this side-channel for a way, and re-enters the main stream

without consciousness that there has been a break. Interpreters run ashore where he leaves the channel, and wonder afterward how they got back. Now it is a battle of texts with Jewish ways of using them; then out shoots a philosophical line of thought. See that wonderful eighth of Romans standing between two rabbinic chapters, the sixth and ninth!

All attempts to smooth and harmonize these leaps, side-glances, lapses and recoveries are hopeless. Neither grammar nor dictionary can help here. Only in the mind of the reader or interpreter who has a sympathetic nature can the clue be carried unbroken. He who rides Paul is as one who rides an Arabian steed over fields, through stony passes, through forest and swamp. He knows, when he gets through, where he is, but how he got there no tongue can tell! Paul's writings are like oil-paintings. At a right distance the picture is clear, plain, harmonious; but, held close to the eye, the picture vanishes in a wilderness of paint!

The difficulties of the Book are intrinsic and extrinsic.

(1.) **INTRINSIC.**—It has been studied from a wrong point of view as a treatise, and not as a special plea.

(2.) Accordingly, from Augustine to our day, orthodox interpretations have made that which was relative, universal. The term law has been interpreted, not as Moses', but as God's universal moral law.

(3.) The argument for God's freedom to go outside of His alleged covenants to the Jews—an argument of mercy, of liberty—has been turned into a rigid doctrine of decrees—a fate—an irresistible law!

(4.) The right of God to go beyond the Jews, and choose or elect of the whole world those who fear and worship God, has become the doctrine of election.

(5.) The plea of the Jews that no one could be righteous or just who did not fulfill the law—Moses' law—and which was met by the apostle, that Christ was the end of the law, and that by faith in

Him men are justified before God—becomes a theory of justification, not as between two ways, but on universal principles under imperial government.

(6.) The struggle between a man's bodily passions and his moral sense has been tormented into the doctrine that no unconverted man can understand the law, obey it, or please God.

The Pauline argument is that the animal passions are not moral, rational, or in any way in sympathy with the moral and rational soul in man. Every man is two men—the flesh man, the spirit man—and they quarrel.

1. In short, the letter is special and provincial; it has been made generic and imperial.

2. It is true that great facts and principles underlie the argument; but the provincial adaptation has been given to the universal and philosophic form.

## MISSIONARY WORK AND PROSPECTS IN INDIA.

No. II.

BY RAM CHANDRA BOSE, LUCKNOW, INDIA.

### ENCOURAGEMENTS TO MISSIONARY WORK.

MISSIONARY work, though sure to be ultimately crowned with complete and glorious success, is attended everywhere by peculiar difficulties; but nowhere are these more formidable and apparently insurmountable than in our country. But the missionary in India has, along with obstacles of an appalling nature heaped up in his way, peculiar advantages and encouragements. To a few of these allow me to call attention in this brief paper.

1. The first and foremost among these is the protection extended to the missionary by a strong and vigorous Christian government. The history of India before British occupation and ascendancy, was the history of internecine warfare, amid broils, feudal fights and street affrays, and the insecurity of life and property, as well as the unsettled and migratory habits of life, generated a period of misrule and anarchy. The country, as a whole, was hermetically

sealed against missionary labor; and, even if had not been, the impossibility of carrying on such labor amid the din and turmoil of its oft-recurring internecine feuds would have been a deterrent cause of the most potent type. But now, under British rule, the country basks under a peace unknown to its down-trodden peoples for ages untold, before its subjugation by the British lion; and not only access to its various provinces, but peculiar advantages secured by facilities of locomotion, improved modes of living—as well as traveling, administration of justice, on the whole impartial, and perfect security of life and property, are offered the missionary of the cross; while persecution, or the slightest approach to persecution, is an impossibility. The missionary in India has advantages decidedly superior to those enjoyed by the first preachers of the Gospel under the shade of the Roman empire, and in consequence of the many desirable facilities secured by Roman civilization.

2. Another source of encouragement to the missionary is the spread of Western culture, secured by a liberal system of national education. Under this head ought to be noticed the rage for English education, witnessed not only in our larger cities and towns, but even in places of subordinate importance. It ought to be borne in mind that nothing tends to relax, nay extinguish, the hold of Hinduism so thoroughly and in so short a time as English education; and its rapid and wonderful spread means the accomplishment of preparatory work, such as that done by John the Baptist. And the benefits of the culture imparted in English schools are slowly but surely reaching the masses through the medium of an improved vernacular literature, raised and molded under its potent and plastic influence.

3. A third source of encouragement is the process of social disintegration at work, in consequence, not merely of the spread of novel truths and novel ideas, but of the blessings of material

civilization secured by British civilization, such as railways and telegraphs, but specially because of the non-recognition of caste in the public offices and courts. The ancient caste system of India, matured though it has been by centuries of fostering care, is now receiving, in schools and colleges, in resorts of business and centres of manufacturing interests, in mines of industry and marts of commerce, in railway cars and street conveyances—a series of blows which will, before long, convert it into a dead corpse; and the spread of Christianity in India is sure to be accelerated, other conditions remaining the same, in proportion as its firm hold is relaxed.

4. The growth of trained intelligence and a higher tone of moral perception and feeling noticeable in our country, should be specially pointed out as a source of encouragement. The greatest obstacle in the way of the missionary is the absence, especially among the masses, of intelligence fitted to follow an argument through its successive stages, and of a moral sense fitted to lead to an appreciation of the moral charms of truth; while the prevalence among the learned of fallacious methods of reasoning and principles subversive of morality, theoretical, if not practical, is an all but insuperable bar to the progress of Christianity. English education is emancipating the national intellect from the sophistic modes of thought and reasoning by which it is hampered, and thereby preparing it for a clear recognition of the basis and perception of the moral worth of Christian truth.

5. Nor can the missionary contemplate the rise of theistic associations, such as the Benhmo-Somaj of Bengal, the Pearthana-Somaj of Bombay, and the Argo-Somaj, especially of the Punjab, without encouragement. These may be regarded as intervening stages or intermediate links between the growing superstition of the country and our holy religion; and they indicate a spirit of inquiry, and an advance of thought most favorable to our work.

Many other sources of encouragement might be pointed out, but the space at our disposal makes it impossible to do more than refer briefly to one more. The growing readiness on the part of the people to give Christian preachers a hearing, and even study the literature they are engaged in circulating, is fraught with great promise. The missionary can get an audience both in the bazaars and in halls, private or public, and, if he chose, might push on his work by means of domiciliary visitation. And he has succeeded in popularizing those features of Christian truth which the natural man appreciates, through the medium of a body of literature which includes translations and original works, and which may be represented as an enduring monument of his industry and zeal.

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**THE VALUE OF A KNOWLEDGE OF  
GREEK IN THE INTERPRETATION  
OF SCRIPTURE.**

BY PROF. S. STANHOPE ORRIS, PRINCETON  
COLLEGE.

Roger Ascham says that, "as a hawke fleeth not hie with one wing, even so a man reacheth not to excellency with one tongue." And the emperor Charles V. declared that, "in proportion to the number of languages which a man knew, in that proportion was he more of a man." But the Greek is the most perfect language in the most perfect of the three families of speech. It is the original language of the New Testament. And we should have said, *a priori*, that God on purposing to give the last and most perfect revelation of His will and character to men, would select the most perfect language for the embodiment of that revelation. And what we should have said with confidence in advance that He would do, we find on an actual comparison of the languages with one another, that He has done. And a knowledge of a language like the Greek, as an acquired tongue, makes one "more of a man" and enables him to "reach to" greater excellence than any other.

A knowledge of such a language, a

language so rich in the number of forms which it possesses for distinctions in thought, rich in its grammar, rich in its lexicon, incomparably rich in its literature, implies a knowledge of the principles of language in general, a mental discipline, a breadth of culture, not to be derived from the study of any other language, nor attained in any other way yet discovered.

This has been demonstrated on an extensive scale in Germany, and reiterated with emphasis in England and America. By the side of the *Gymnasium* there has sprung up in Germany a species of schools called *Realschulen*. The instruction of the *Gymnasium* centres in the classical languages. The *Realschule* dispenses with Greek, but retains Latin. It, however, reduces the time devoted to Latin, and gives particular attention to Mathematics, the natural sciences, and modern languages. The education of the *Gymnasium* is general and liberal; that of the *Realschule* is special, and limited by practical aims. But what it is particularly important to observe is, that the gymnasial instrument of culture with which the *Realschule* dispenses, and for which it makes substitutions, is *Greek*.

Accordingly, on a comparison of the relative efficiency of these two systems of instruction, we shall be able to determine the value of Greek as an instrument of intellectual discipline and as an integral part of liberal education. But as young men of talent acquire culture and attain excellence under inferior instruction and in any school, and prominent men are found in all the departments of life, who have not enjoyed the advantages of any school whatever, this comparison must be made "upon observation of a large number of young men of *average* gifts, part of whom have had their preparatory training at the *Gymnasium* and part at the *Realschule*."

Such a comparison has been made by the Philosophical Faculty of the University of Berlin, "the Faculty of science free and untrammelled," the domain of whose investigation is mind and nature, and whose immediate aim in

teaching is science for its own sake. And after an experience of a decade of years; this Faculty testifies that the graduates of the *Realschule* are inferior to those of the *Gymnasium*, in mental training, in scientific impulse and apprehension, and in degree of ability to solve scientific problems; that, however much they may excel the graduates of the *Gymnasium* in the same studies in the first semester, they are overtaken by them in the later semesters; that their further development is slower, more superficial, and less independent; and that the graduates of the *Gymnasium* outstrip them in the higher mathematics, in astronomy, in chemistry, in descriptive natural science, in the English language, in the German language, in philosophy, and in political economy and statistics.

Add to this, that the directors of the *Realschulen*, with an appreciation of their responsibility as directors, and in accordance with a resolution which they have adopted, and a requirement which they have fixed, select their teachers exclusively from the number of those who have had a gymnasial education. Thus the representatives of the *Realschulen*, in denying the fitness of these schools to serve as nurseries for their own future teachers, unite with the Philosophical Faculty of Berlin in declaring the superiority of the training of the graduates of the *Gymnasium*. What a testimony is this to the value of Greek as an element of liberal culture, as an instrument of mental training!

I need not say, therefore, that a knowledge of the Greek language, the calculus of grammar, the language of languages—that a knowledge of Greek, the acquisition of which promises such discipline of the powers of the mind and skill in the use of the instruments of thought, is of value, to say no more, in analyzing and determining the contents even of our English versions of Scripture, of value in the use of commentaries, and above commentaries, in the interpretation of the Word.

Goethe says, "Wer fremde Sprache nicht kennt, weiss nichts von seiner

eigenen." And it is doubtless true that a knowledge of at least one foreign tongue is essential to an appreciation of the wealth and power of our own. For this reason, then, if for no other, why should we not acquire a knowledge of the Greek, the richest, most exquisite, most perfect of all languages? And there is reason to fear that, if the study of Greek were banished from our schools, and the knowledge of Greek were to perish from the minds of our literary men, the life and power of our own language would wane and its brightness and beauty grow dim.

In France, "a government circular of September, 1872, and a law of February, 1880, reduced the time allowed to the classics, and prescribed courses of instruction in which the French language held a secure preponderance. Four years have elapsed since this change was consummated, and the first of French reviews is already sounding an alarm. The standards of examinations have fallen, not only in the provincial schools, but even in the Sorbonne, and a French scholar asks for the revision of the school programmes, not in the interests of the classics, but for the sake of general French culture, and of the French language itself." And Professor Scherer of Berlin, in his request, March, 1880, to the Royal Minister of State, complains of the difficulties which he encountered in giving instruction in the department of German to those students who were "ignorant of the Greek forms of speech, and of the Greek models of German literature." And therefore he lifts up his voice for the study of Greek, not in the interests of Greek, but for the sake of German culture, and of the German language. And Professor Zupitza, also of Berlin, in his request at the same time to the Royal Minister of State, declares that in teaching the English language he found it difficult to communicate a knowledge of the English grammar to those students under his instruction who had no knowledge of the Greek; whereas he experienced no such difficulty in the case of those who were graduates of the *Gymnasium*. And there-

fore he asks for the study of Greek, not in the interests of Greek, but for the sake of his department, the department of English. In view of facts like these, he, at least, who wishes to understand and appreciate the contents of his own language, and to enrich and perpetuate its literature, especially its sacred literature, should aspire to a knowledge of Greek.

But the real question involved in the theme which heads this article, and on which I have been asked to write with prescribed brevity, doubtless is: In the interpretation of the New Testament, over and above the English versions and commentaries upon these versions, what is the value of a fair knowledge of Greek? This question has already been partially answered. But further: No English version is perfect. The English language is less perfect than the Greek as an instrument for the expression of thought. It has fewer distinct forms for distinctions in thought. And no version can express all that a mind, familiar with Greek, can see in the words themselves of the original, in their radical and formative elements; in their order, and sometimes in their accent; in the moods and tenses; in the particles with their lights and shades of meaning; in the participles with their variety of functions; in the cases of nouns, speaking by their inflections to the eye and to the ear; in the prepositions used; in the form and position of some of the personal pronouns in the oblique cases, and in their expression or omission in the subject-nominative. In these, and in other things, one possessing only an ordinary knowledge of the Greek, will see in the original what he will not see in the English version.

In regard to commentaries — few, if any, express or suggest all the truth. Few are minutely analytic. On many points they differ. On some they are conveniently silent. And where they differ, and where they are silent, what is the reader to do if he has no knowledge of the original, of the grammar, the lexicon, and the laws which pertain to the formation, derivation

and definition of the words of the original?

But assuming that, by a careful study and comparison of the commentaries on the New Testament, and by a perusal of the lesson papers and other helps on particular passages, one may attain, through the medium of the English, a knowledge of the truth which is embodied in the Greek, what a *saving of time* it is to be able to read the Greek itself and to see the truth, in an instant, in its inspired form!

And in this inspired form, and because it is inspired, there is a beauty, a charm, a suggestiveness, a power, which no versions can express, no commentaries convey. For, our language, as we have seen, is inferior to the Greek, and our versions, our commentaries, our exegetical helps, are not inspired. And, therefore, to be able to read the truth in the original language, is a blessing, for the want of which there is no compensation. And when we receive an accurate exegesis of a portion or text of Scripture from an author or teacher who professes to know the original, it is a great advantage to be able to turn to the Greek and, on seeing that, to say, as the Samaritans to the woman: "Now we believe, not because of thy saying": for we have seen the original ourselves, and know that this is the true interpretation.

Moreover, he who relies exclusively on secondary sources, and accepts the opinions of commentators, without a knowledge or appreciation of the reasons on which their opinions rest, is in danger, though the opinions be true, of so holding them as to fall into error. "A man," says Milton, "may be a heretic in the truth; and if he believes things only because this or that author says so, or the assembly so determines, without knowing other reason, though his belief be true, yet the very truth he holds becomes his heresy."

And further: From frequent use and long familiarity, words lose their beauty, their suggestiveness, their power; and it requires a special effort of attention to perceive and appreciate the real significance and force of language with which

we are most familiar. Of course it is desirable to be familiar with the words of Scripture in our own tongue. But, since these words, because of our very familiarity with them, may degenerate into lifeless forms, and fail to impress us with the power of truth, it is an advantage to be able to read the Scriptures in the original. And to read the New Testament in Greek "is like looking on the Urim and Thummim when, for him who rightly consulted it, the fire of the divine messages flashed upon its oracular and graven gems."

### PASTORAL AND SERMONIC HABITS.

#### Personal Experiences of Distinguished Clergymen.\*

No. V.

A. J. F. BEHRENS, D.D. [CONGREGATIONAL], BROOKLYN, N. Y.

IN the choice of a subject for a sermon I have no fixed plan. I take great care in making preparation, studying the text in the original languages to discover its original meaning. I do not keep a list of subjects for sermons; do not make any memoranda of that kind, but simply carry the subjects in my memory. Many of my sermons are suggested by what I conceive to be the needs of my people, as learned by intercourse with them: and I select from time to time such topics as I think may be helpful to my hearers. I do not allow myself to preach on what are called the topics of the day, simply as topics, but such matters are often woven into a discourse by way of illustration or application. Sometimes, what I regarded as an excellent theme has come to me suddenly, and the subject itself opened as by a flash.

A great many ministers have used the scrap-book for the preservation of suggestions, and to very great advantage. I tried the plan at one time, but I found that I did not work easily with such machinery. My opinion of it is that it tends to make a man "scrappy." It hampers his originality: his think-

ing becomes a sort of mosaic, into which he weaves his material. In all such matters every man must be a law unto himself. Some friends of mine are methodical, but I am not. I have been a hard student; have studied things I wanted to know about and preach on; subjects that came to me, topics that I wanted to preach upon—not such as have come to me in my study, but that have suggested themselves as I have mingled among my people.

I may say that I have always made it a point to mingle with my people in a free and frank way, striving to know their thoughts, to learn what they are busy about, and to keep myself acquainted with them as a man among men.

I always use the mornings for study, and have been in the habit of using four days of the week for general study, without any special reference to Sunday. I ordinarily do not prepare for my Sunday work before Friday morning, taking Friday and Saturday for the preparation of the two services.

As to pastoral visitation, I devote to it all the time that I can in the afternoons; never in the mornings. I do not allow myself to be bound in any mechanical rule as to how often I shall call at the homes of my people, but I aim to get there as often as possible.

I attend every funeral I am asked to, though I have not been obliged to officiate at but few funerals outside those of my own parishioners, either in my present charge or in Providence, from which city I came to Brooklyn. I never go to the grave, except in the case of a member of my own parish; in fact, it is not the custom to go, either in New York or Brooklyn.

In the case of a funeral, I should feel like putting myself to some inconvenience in order to serve people; though, of course, in some cases it might be impracticable.

I have never had much trouble in keeping up an interest in the prayer-meeting. The prayer-meeting generally runs itself. Our Friday evening meeting is very large, and the middle-

\* In interviews for THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY.

aged and elderly men who attend are quite capable of taking part in the services, and take up most of the time. The younger members of the church take more interest in their own meetings.

I avoid seeing people who have no claim upon my time and attention, by having my study at the church. At the house, it is said I will return at a certain hour. If people call who have no claim upon my time—that is, upon objects that do not demand my pastoral or personal interest—why, I listen for a while quietly to what they have to say, and then—bow them out. I try to be gentlemanly, but at the same time make very short work of the unwelcome visitor.

#### LAY CRITICISM ON THE MINISTRY AND THE METHOD OF CHURCH WORK.

No. VIII.

BY WILLIAM A. HAMMOND, M.D.

Scientific men, as a rule, think that the sermons of to-day are too theoretical and speculative in character; that the preachers pay too much attention to subjects about which they know nothing, and do not pay sufficient attention to the practical topics. I think clergymen should preach about what they know, not what they think.\* They preach, for instance, about the attributes of the Deity. The way to teach us in regard to that matter is through studying the works of the Deity. But when you go to church it is astonishing to see how many mistakes the preachers make in regard to the simplest matters of science. Lately I heard a clergyman—eloquent, a college graduate and a student at Oxford, England—I heard him speak of a beetle as a reptile, and a tadpole as a fish! The fact is that the beetle is an insect and not a reptile, and the tadpole is a reptile and not a fish.

The scientific man marks the change that has been wrought in the teachings of the Church. For instance, if the

Scripture be true, as it is assumed to be, why should not the doctrines that prevailed fifty years ago be the same doctrines now? But you can hardly find a clergyman (outside of the Roman Catholic Church) who believes in the doctrine of endless future punishment, as it was once taught. When I was a boy, I was taught to believe in a literal hell-fire of burning brimstone. Very few at present believe in that orthodox doctrine.

Then, again, we were taught that the world was created in six days, and every geologist was set down as an atheist who questioned that statement; I have heard clergymen make such declarations from the pulpit. Then we were taught that the sun stood still while Joshua fought his battle. If anybody urged such a belief now I suppose he would be laughed at, and everybody believes that the world was not made in six days.

Now if such changes in belief among preachers have occurred within the last forty years, why it is an indication that in the next hundred years there will be no Christians such as we have now. The whole of theology will be so changed that a century from the present time you would not be able to recognize a Christian, any more than a Christian of to-day could recognize his orthodox brother of fifty years ago.

I would have preachers teach the highest kind of morality; of the duty of man to his neighbor. Let them preach simply that religion which tells a man to be good, without the stimulus of self-gratification or personal advantage.

I am not opposed to Christianity. I am in favor of sustaining the Church. My wife and family are members of the Church, and regular attendants. I have a brother who is a clergyman, and a cousin who is a Bishop in the Episcopal Church, and I used to be a teacher in the Sunday-school. As an ethical system, there is nothing better than Christianity now; it is the best system of religion we have ever had, and I am in favor of sustaining it, and believe that the theological errors connected with it will work their own cure. I am

\* We ask the reader's attention to what we have to say on this and some other points in this criticism on another page. See *Around the Editor's Table.*—Ed.

not, like the infidels of the day, in favor of overturning it. I think that would do an immense amount of harm. Thousands of people are only restrained from doing great harm to society because they believe in some of the principles of Christianity.

Sermons and clerical efforts are not sufficiently devoted to the practical improvement of the human race, and to the lessening of the degradation into which many members of the human family have fallen. Too much attention is paid to questions of doctrine, and matters of faith, and too little to matters of fact. I have the greatest respect for the clergy. I talk to them as I talk to you. I would not, if I had the power, turn them from their places. But I think the Christianity of the future is going to be more practical and serviceable to the world than the Christianity of the present.

If young men do not attend Church now as much as formerly, it is because their time is otherwise occupied; and the fact is, I suppose, that they do not believe they are going to be damned if

they fail to go to Church. And those that go do not feel very greatly the necessity for devotional exercises, or, it seems to me, in view of the fact that eternity is staring them in the face, they would spend nearly every moment of their lives in preparing against the possibility of being eternally damned.

I think ministers are good men, and ought to be paid generous salaries. In New York, for instance, where a clergyman has a wealthy congregation, where he is expected to visit and receive visitors, \$10,000 a year is little enough. What can he do with that amount in the way of display? He can live comfortably; that is all.

Fine churches do not, I think, keep the poor away from the house of worship. It is good to have fine churches, stained glass, excellent music, and an elegant service generally. A man can feel more devotional, more interested, in such a place than in an ordinary "meeting house." The Roman Catholics know this, and act accordingly. Protestantism has always been a little too bare.

#### THANKSGIVING SERVICE.

*Thanksgiving makes our prayers bold and strong and sweet; feeds and enkindles them as with coals of fire.*—LUTHER.

#### Reflections Upon Our National Wisdom.

By REV. DAVID LEITH [METHODIST],  
JACKSON, TENN.

*Surely it is great nation is a wise and understanding people.*—Deut. iv. 6.

Would it be truthful to affirm this of our own people? Not without much qualification. Our country is great geographically, great in wealth, great in undeveloped resources, and has a great future before it. And for a (comparatively speaking) new country, it is great in those elements which go toward making up the greatness of the nations of the Old World—such as history, poetry, philosophy and oratory. Such men as Bancroft, Emerson, Longfellow, Webster, Clay, and Summerfield will, in these departments, bear favorable comparison with any similar number of men anywhere in this century. And

there are thousands of earnest Christian workers who are, at least, "great in the sight of the Lord." These points are on the bright side of the picture: now look on the dark side.

Among the things which are sharp reflections on our "understanding" and lack of wisdom, I have space to name only the following:

1. The trade in *demoralizing literature*, which has been allowed to attain to such fearful proportions. I have great respect for the doctrine of the liberty of the individual; but that doctrine has its limitations. When the liberty of the few tends to the injury of the many, it has passed beyond its limitations. It will not do, therefore, for publishers of *Police Gazette* and "dime novel" type of literature to cry out about "the liberty of the citizen." Let literature of this class, with its lewd and corrupting

illustrations, its tales of illicit love, of murder, of seduction, of suicide, be generally read by the people, and society will become rotten to the core; the innocence and purity of youth will be blasted, and the sanctity of home life destroyed. We do not expect that the people are to be kept chaste and pure by legislative enactments and penal punishment. But why should our lawmakers assist in the corruption of the people by giving the traders in vile literature such facilities for distributing their wares? Gladstone says: "It is the function of government to make it easy for the people to do right, and difficult for them to do wrong." This fundamental principle in the science of government is reversed among us. We make it easy for the people to do wrong and difficult for them to do right. I trust we shall soon have a law prohibiting this traffic; and when we do, then may the God of heaven strengthen the heart and nerve the arm of judges and magistrates, rigidly to enforce it!

2. The practice of *gambling*, in every conceivable form. So extensively does this vice prevail that it is fast becoming a national sin. From state treasurers and bank presidents down to common laborers, society is permeated with the gambling spirit. The immorality of gambling is seen in its creating in a man the expectation and hope of getting something for which he has given no equivalent. There are many ways of gambling beside buying shares in Louisiana or Kentucky lotteries, or speculating in cotton and grain "futures," or mining stocks. There is no difference, in principle, between buying shares in a lottery and taking chances in a church fair or bazaar. There is the same element of risk in the one as in the other. Some may say, in justification of the latter: "It is done for the benefit of the church." What church? The synagogue of Satan may be benefited; but the Church of God—never. The doctrine that the end justifies the means may be good enough for a Jesuit, but cannot be good enough for a Christian. The devil was never more a devil than

when persuading professedly religious people that they can help God's cause by gambling operations. It is a sad reflection on our "wisdom and understanding" as a people, that this great evil of gambling has not been effectively dealt with.

3. The tolerance of the *liquor traffic* among us. If the social, moral, intellectual and commercial life of the nation, and the effects of the liquor trade on these interests be considered, that trade is simply infamous. The welfare of the people, as a whole, would be greatly promoted if the trade in strong drinks were restricted to medical and mechanical purposes. My faith in its medical use is exceedingly weak, and many of the highest medical and surgical authorities in the world are against it. But it should be sold only from the shelves of the druggist, like any other poison. I believe it to be the greatest evil that curses the human race. Why is it that certain States are agitating for the "prohibition" of the liquor trade? Why do they not seek to prohibit the trade in hats and boots, coats and calico, books and meat? Because they know from observation and experience that the sale of these articles conduces to the welfare of the Commonwealth; while the trade in intoxicating liquor is antagonistic to it. Broken hearts, blasted characters, ruined fortunes, pauperism and crime, are the fruits of this trade. The toleration and fostering of such a horrible business among us proves that in this we are not "a wise and understanding people."

4. *Sabbath desecration* is fast becoming a national sin in our land. We have lived to little purpose if we have not learned that, apart from the religious aspect of this question, even on such low grounds as for physical and intellectual benefit, it will pay to work six days and rest the seventh. This is being recognized and acted on in some influential quarters. It is a shame and disgrace that thousands of our railroad men and postal officials have no more facilities for attending the public worship of God than if they were living in Central

Africa. On the low ground of expediency, and on the high ground of religious principle, we contend for the observance of the Sabbath. It looks as if there were a determination to have the European Continental Sunday in America. France has her horse-racing, Spain her bull-baiting, Italy her operas, and Ireland her political meetings, all on the Sabbath. For free and enlightened America to take an example from these countries, sunk as they are in popish superstition and darkness, would be a tremendous step backward. Every class among us is entitled to the Sabbath. It was made for man. Let all enjoy the privileges of it.

Mingled with our thanksgiving for bountiful harvests, for health and peace and prosperity in all our borders, let our confessions be heard, and our national sins be sought out and put away from before the Lord. We shall be a wiser and greater people when vile literature, gambling, the rum traffic, and Sabbath desecration find no longer a place in all our borders.

#### Mercies Mingled with Judgments.

*Where is God my maker, who giveth songs in the night?—Job xxxv: 10.*

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

I. Life, under God's gracious government in this world, is neither unmixed evil, nor unmixed good. Light and darkness, good and evil, truth and error, safety and danger, blessing and cursing, prosperity and adversity, mingle together in every cup, and attend us at every step.

II. There is no condition in human experience in this life so unqualifiedly painful and hopeless that it affords no occasion for gratitude and hope. In "the night" of fiercest conflicts and sorest afflictions, God "giveth songs" to his beloved.

III. "Judgment," in God's hand, may be a greater reason for thankfulness than "mercy." "I will sing of mercy and judgment."

IV. As a nation, during the year under review in this service, the Ruler

of the universe has dealt with us both in the way of evil and of good—in the way of chastisement as well as of favor—in terrible rebukes, in righteousness, as well as by great and manifold mercies. "Hard times," great business depression, the loss of fortunes, the overthrow of hopes, the toppling over of institutions and reputations, and the failing of men's hearts through fear—all this, as well as bountiful harvests, and health and plenty in all our borders, and the continuance of peace, and the continued prosperity of the Church and the nation. Has there been great darkness in many families in the land? So has there been light and gladness. And well may we as a people to-day "sing of mercy and judgment."

#### The Proclamation of the Gospel an Occasion for Thanksgiving.

*The ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify of the gospel of the grace of God.—Acts xx: 24.*

The crowning gift of God's love to man is the Gospel of His Son. His providential gifts are numberless and great and constant, and call for unceasing and heartfelt gratitude on the part of all. But superior to them all, more precious and indispensable to us than all, is the "glorious gospel of the blessed God." This is indeed "glad tidings of great joy to all people." Its message of love and mercy; its offer of Christ, and pardon, and life; its divine provision for justification and sanctification; its ministry, its Sabbath, its sanctuary worship, its Holy Spirit, its heaven and glory unending—oh! divine, infinite gift. Was ever angel or archangel so loved! Was ever angel or archangel so placed under obligation? How this Gospel of God's wondrous love and grace should thrill our souls! What songs of thanksgiving should it call forth from every heart! It is this Gospel which makes God's children to differ from the children of vanity and sin. It is this Gospel which makes us as a nation to differ from pagan and heathen nations. It is this Gospel which gives to human nature all its

dignity and worth, to life all its sanctity and value, and to the future all that is bright and desirable. To no nation has the proclamation of this Gospel been more universally and more persistently made than to the American Nation. Let the nation give thanks for this unspeakable gift.

### Thanksgiving Themes.

*Thanksgiving in perilous times.* ("When David knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house, and his windows being open in his chamber towards Jerusalem, he kneeled three times a day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime."—Dan. vi: 10.)

*An appeal to gratitude.* ("And Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father and said . . . For he did put his life in his hand and slew the Philistine, and the Lord wrought a great salvation for all Israel: thou sawest it and didst rejoice; wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood to slay David without a cause?"—1 Sam. xix: 4, 5.)

*Forgotten mercies remembered.* ("Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying, I do remember my faults this day . . . there was there with us a young man, a Hebrew . . . and he interpreted to us our dreams."—Gen. xli: 9-12.)

*Gratitude proclaimed.* (And he departed [the man out of whom Christ had cast an unclean spirit], and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him; and all men did marvel."—Mark v: 20.)

*The most unpromising sometimes the most thankful.* ("And one of them [the ten lepers whom Christ had healed] when he saw that he was healed, turned back and with a loud voice, glorified God, and fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks; and he was a Samaritan."—Luke xvii: 15, 16.)

*Vicarious blessings.* ("David said, Mephibosheth . . . Fear not; for I will show thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father, and thou shalt eat bread at my table continuously."—2 Sam. ix: 6, 7.)

### Select Thoughts on Thanksgiving.

\*\*\* I thank God that I was born a man, and not a beast; that I was born a Grecian and not a barbarian.—*Plato.*

\*\*\* There is this difference between a thankful and an unthankful man; the one is always pleased in the good he has done, and the other only in what he has received; but there are some men who are never thankful.—*A. Monod.*

\*\*\* Inasmuch as we are sinners, and have forfeited the blessings which we daily receive, what can be more suitable than that we should humbly thank that Almighty Power from whom comes such an inexhaustible supply of goodness to us so utterly undeserving?—*Francis Wayland.*

\*\*\* As flowers carry dewdrops, trembling on the edges of the petals, and ready to fall at the first waft of wind or brush of bird, so the heart should carry its beaded words of thanksgiving, and at the first breath of heavenly flavor, let down the shower perfumed with the heart's gratitude.—*H. W. Beecher.*

\*\*\* Christians thank God that He hath created them after His own image; that He hath called them out of the common crowd of this world and made them Christians; that among those that bear the name of Christ He hath made them faithful ones, like a few quick-sighted men among a company of blind ones; like the light in Goshen, when all Egypt was dark besides, or like Gideon's fleece, only watered with the dew of heaven, while the rest of the earth was dry and destitute of His favor; great cause of thankfulness indeed!—*H. Spencer.*

## PREACHERS EXCHANGING VIEWS.

*It is much easier to be critical than to be correct.*—*DISRAELI.*

### "Historical Illustrations."

I HAVE read with interest Dr. Ludlow's articles in THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY, and am led to expect the others which are to come. I was struck by the suggestion, as from one's own experience, of the value of historical study. Bible history itself is, perhaps, the most fruitful of all for illustration. Together with the motives which operate on men and the consequences of their wise and unwise choices and courses of action, there is a revelation of the hand of providence in the prosperity and adversity, the success and failure, follow-

ing upon righteousness and unrighteousness.

Then ancient history is important, not as a developed specialty, but in so far as it throws light on the history of the Hebrew people, and especially upon the prophecies. And I have found it very suggestive in the line of my own special study of the evidences of revealed religion, as showing what is the best and the worst men have been and done without supernatural help, in contrast with lives under revelation. I have spent the best hours of the days of my ministry in Biblical study, and such

matters as throw light on the text, and can testify to the fruitfulness of the careful examination in the most minute manner, of Biblical characters, lives, and great events.

I have been in the habit of preaching Biblical discourses, three times out of four, combining a central idea with the exposition of the capital passages, in a rapid manner giving results of critical study and not the details. I find the people always interested. The Bible becomes a superior *Index Rerum*, inasmuch as the knowledge imparted hangs by association with the text; and when it is read again, the information casting light upon it is recalled.

I find, especially here in New England, where Bible theology is just beginning to be taught regularly, that the people who have been used to disquisitions are eager to follow an historical discourse or biographical sermon which sets truth in the forms of life and reality, and so brings it home to men's consciences and hearts.

Dr. L. is correct about the studies of the minister. They must be so conducted as to converge upon the business of preaching. And if a man has his heart in his work, he cannot abuse any department of knowledge to his hurt, or the loss of his people, when he sees his pulpit before him and Sunday coming.

[A leading clergyman of New England.]  
*Boston, Sept. 20, 1884.*

#### Old Preachers.

The advantages which young ministers have as preachers are the following: Vivacity and vigor of feeling, the novelty and freshness of the truth, greater bodily strength and grace, greater sweetness of voice and tone. The young, as a rule, feel more strongly and vividly than the old. It is easier to preach a fresh and new truth than an old and stale doctrine. Hence, if the old preacher is to keep his place in the competition, he must have other advantages to make up for his infirmities. What are they?

The old minister should have a better

comprehension and stronger grasp of the truth. He has been pondering it in his study, his pulpit and his parish. To the young the doctrines are largely abstractions and names, to be reasoned about; while to the old they are living realities to be felt—personal friends and companions of the daily life. If the Gospel facts have thus grown into the old minister's life and experience, his preaching will have a sweetness, a mellowness, a maturity and energy that will more than supply any lack of youthful vigor and interest of novelty.

So, also, all ministers should grow in pulpit art and expression. They should not suffer themselves to fall into mannerisms or peculiarities; but by continued study, reflection and practice, they should become better and better delineators of the Gospel truth. They should read some new book on homiletics, or re-read some old one every year. If they can find a competent critic, it will be a great blessing. The skill of experience will more than compensate for youthful grace. In a word, if we are to hold our places we must see to it that we continue to deserve them, after

FORRY.

*Blountville, Tenn.*

#### Jesting on Sacred Themes.

I often hear ministers and others speak in a light, flippant and jocose way of things sacred and divine; not in the spirit of criticism, but to excite laughter. I have heard it even from the pulpit and in Christian circles. But is it a proper thing to do? A.—We have frequently noted the same habit, and been pained by its exhibition. We think it more than questionable, both on the ground of taste and of principle. True taste is based on the proprieties of things; and surely all forms and degrees of jesting, lightness of speech, and a facetious spirit, are out of place when applied to God and things sacred, or to the serious and awful subjects of sin, death, judgment, etc. As to the tendency of such a habit, it is evil beyond all question. "Familiarity breeds

contempt." It begets an irreverent spirit, a frivolous feeling, and a jesting, flippant manner of speech, that is injurious to character. The impression it makes on the young, and on the irreligious, is decidedly bad. This evil habit is atrocious when it leads persons to quote Scripture—the very words of divine inspiration—to point a joke or excite frivolity. And yet how extensively is this done; thoughtlessly, of course, and with no evil intent: but the mischief is done, nevertheless. The soul's instinctive reverence for God's Word is impaired, and the infinite sacredness of religion is desecrated. The evil habit should be frowned down. Let ministers set the example.

#### SERIOUSNESS.

##### Look to your Ushers.

IN some city churches usually (and, perchance, in some village churches also) the gentlemanly ushers get careless. I recently saw a half dozen people neglected at a church where there are always, I am told, vacant seats. The usher was busy talking with some friends; the party I refer to waited several minutes and went away. It may be that these people were Christians, who, not finding a welcome here went to another church. But it may be that they were "sinners," moved by some providence to make "inquiry of religion"—a feeble impulse that might have been strengthened that morning into resolution, had they not been repelled by the indifference of the usher. An usher may greatly hinder or greatly help the preacher. He should be watched, trained—he should be a warm-hearted Christian gentleman.

A LAYMAN.

##### Thoughts on Preaching.

PREACHING is not a mere reading or recitation of the Word, nor yet an interpretation of it. It is that Word intertwined into the preacher's experience and reproduced out of that experience, so that it comes as fresh truth vitalized by passing through the heart.

"DR. GUTHRIE," said an artist to him, "you are a preacher, not a painter." "I am a painter," was the reply, "only I

paint in words, while you use brush and colors." In every discourse the preacher should aim at proving, painting, and persuading, *i. e.*, aim at the reason, the fancy and the heart.

A YOUNG PREACHER, apologizing for the sermon he had preached at a pastoral conference, said that he had no time to prepare anything special, and thought it best, under the circumstances, to preach a plain Gospel sermon. An old minister present said to the brother, "Don't you think that under any circumstances the best thing you can do is to preach a plain Gospel sermon?" "Well, yes; I suppose it is," was the answer.

ILLUSTRATIONS should *clear up*, not *cover up*, the truth. If they are too elaborate or exuberant, they may resemble those chromo-mottoes in which the words are scarcely legible on account of the superabundant ornamentation. Truth is sacrificed to beauty.

Glastenbury, Vt.

C. A. V.

##### "Make Haste Slowly."

"He must be in a great hurry to get away," remarked an attendant upon a funeral service, when she saw the minister hasten away *before* the remains were carried to the hearse. In a few minutes this would have been attended to, and he could have departed with perfect decorum. The custom is, in many places, for the minister to precede the coffin out of the house of mourning, even if he cannot go to the cemetery. This is one of those "minor manners," semi-morals, which go far to establish the minister's reputation for Christian courtesy, and which promote or diminish his social and religious influence.

B.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

##### Short-Sightedness.

THERE is a growing prevalence of short-sightedness (physical) among clergymen. In a meeting which I attended lately, one out of five of the clergy present was near-sighted. What is the cause and what is the remedy?

A SHORT-SIGHTED PASTOR.

## SERMONIC CRITICISM.

"Critics dispute, and the question is still undecided."—HORACE.

"He who would shun criticism must not be a scribbler, and he who would court it must have great abilities or great folly."—J. MURRO.

## Criticism of a Sermon Plan.

'H. M. H.' sends us a sketch of a sermon based on 2 Cor. viii: 9: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." The *main divisions* do not clearly appear, and here is one of the chief defects of the plan. We are left to guess them out. To omit this essential part in any sermon detracts from its effectiveness. Various *sub-divisions* are given under each part of the text: For instance, Christ was 1. "Rich" in His Godhead. 2. In His creation. 3. In His possessions. 4. In His dominion. 5. In His worship. He became "poor." 1. In His birth. 2. In his reputation. 3. In His possessions. 4. In His life. 5. In His associations. Our criticism on this part of the plan is, First: That the particulars are not well chosen. His "God-head," without violence, would include "creation," "possession," "dominion. Second: The most important item of all is left out, viz., rich in the Father's love and presence. See this thought in the light of Gethsemane and Calvary! "My God, my God," etc. And the same criticism will apply to the second class of sub-divisions. The third and fourth contain the same idea. Nor can it be said that Jesus had no "reputation." For he *did* attract attention, as a teacher sent from God, excite inquiry, profoundly impress men, stir up the wrath of the Scribes and Pharisees by reason of His exposure of their hypocrisies, and make His mark on His times. "Never man spake like this man," was no mean testimony. The God-man could not pass through the world and not, in some degree, radiate it with His presence, and startle it with His words of exceeding wisdom and power.

Were we to preach from this text we should handle it as follows: I. The condition and possession of the God-man

anterior to His Incarnation. II. The condition and life to which His Incarnation subjected Him. III. The end for which He made this stupendous sacrifice. In the sub-divisions we would not particularize more than *three* each under divisions I and II, and make the contrast as sharp and impressive as language and thought could make it. Under the last head we should specify: 1. The "rich" provision of Redemptive Grace. 2. The "rich" inheritance of promises, experiences, hopes and blessings, now and here, in life and in death, under the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. 3. The final possession of eternal life and glory in the heavenly Kingdom, as "joint-heirs" with Christ.

## Pulpit Crusading.

The pulpit has to fight evils which are fruits of sin. It is wise to strike them frequently, and to strike as hard as possible. But nagging at an evil—giving it a little pat in nearly every sermon—is not likely to curtail or destroy it. When a preacher strives to strike constant and heavy blows at an evil, he engages in what is in these days called a "crusade," and, just as rescuing Jerusalem from the infidels became a substitute for all real religion, so a pulpit crusade in our day is apt to make the particular sprout from the tree of sin of more importance than the root itself. So it is not wise to get into a habit of crusading. The pulpit exists to allure men to diviner living, and the Christian theory is in Christ's words, "first make the tree good." The preacher wants to blast out the foundation rock on which the sinful life is built; he must spend his best force in that way or he will fail. There is no evil that would not come back again immediately, in the same or some other form, if we should drive it out, leaving men's hearts unchanged. Get a man into a sound religious condition of heart and life, and you have killed the

special evils so far as he is concerned. Many evils can be killed only in that way. The preacher is a crusader, but he is preaching the kingdom of heaven, and so fighting the kingdom of darkness. Let him keep mainly to his main business.

#### Interpolated Appeal.

Homiletic writers tell us that it is a rhetorical blemish to do this. Granted. So there are other ways of violating the nice rules of the rhetorician. But there are considerations of graver moment. The Holy Spirit teaches us that it is wise, sometimes, to depart from established usages, and set at naught precedent and authorities, and surprise as it were the sinner, and outwit the devil! I read to-day of a pastor, who in the midst of an impressive sermon, suddenly stopped and asked those who desired to yield their hearts to Christ, to "stand up for Jesus" then and there. To his joy, no less than thirty at once arose, and the pastor prayed for them and then resumed and finished his sermon. Can any one doubt that he acted under the suggestion of the Spirit? The excellence of any instrument is proved by the amount and character of the work it does. That sermon or method approaches the nearest to perfection which does the most effective execution in convincing and converting sinners, and in edifying the Church of Christ.

T.

#### Advertising Error.

Without any intention of assisting error, but really for the purpose of destroying it, certain of our ministerial brethren have, nevertheless, done not a little to advertise the errors of so-called scientists, and philosophic mountebanks, by attempting to tell their hearers what those men believe, or profess to believe. But for such rehearsing of error, very many of the common people who attend church, would not know anything about it. It may be fairly assumed that more harm is done by this course, than whatever good may be accomplished. Some of the hearers, who

are skeptically inclined, are thereby, incited to secure the works of false teachers, and thus, through the plausibility and sophistry of their statements and arguments, be led into an acceptance of error, which all future efforts of the preachers who advertised them, shall fail to dislodge. It is always safer to preach the vital, pungent truths of the gospel, as God's remedy for moral and spiritual maladies, than it is to hold up the speculations of men, whose errors are unknown to the masses.

C. H. WETHERBE.

#### Is Religion a Matter of Private Opinion?

Christianity is passing through a singular period in its history. The Reformation has at last wrought its whole work in its special direction. Among intelligent people, out of Roman Catholic countries, the idea of a priesthood of the ministry, and the superstition concerning the functions of the Church, have been pretty well eradicated. But the impression has been made that religion is a matter of private opinion, and private concern between the individual and God. So many do not seek the services of the ministry, and do not "go to Church." Worship has been put aside; the first commandment given away to the second. And the "world's people" going in reformatory and beneficent work, as generously and promptly as Christians, so long as it is humanitarian, and even when there is involved an evangelical element.

How shall we so conduct the expression of Christianity as to attract men to the worship of God in social relations, that they may not "forsake the assembling of themselves together?"

Boston.

OBSERVER.

#### Bad Exegesis.

It is getting to be more and more unsafe to select texts for the words in them without regard to the sense. A chronic case of bad exegesis is on Gal. iv: 18, which reads in the C. V.: "It giv' ood to be zealously *affected* always in a good thing," and is commonly used as a text for Christian zeal. The R. V.

changes *affected* to *sought*, and in the previous verse *affect* to *seek*. The old sense of *affect* (to desire, like, seek) has become very pale, if it be not obliterated from the word. The zeal which is described in verse 17 is decidedly not Christian; and in the 18th verse the Christian is the object of the zeal, not the subject who has zeal. The thought of the text is much finer than the general one forced upon it in many sermons. The precise sense has been sought, with different results, by many commentators; but taking into account the whole paragraph (12th to 20th verses), the stress is on *always* (R. V., *at all times*), and, so construed, the lesson would be on Christian Constancy.

#### THINGS A PREACHER SHOULD REMEMBER.

\*\*\* That, in order to edification and the greatest profiting, it is essential that sound judgment be exercised in proportioning the several parts of worship; not giving undue prominence to the sermon, to singing, or to the prayers.

This rule is constantly violated, to the detriment of worship.

\*\*\* That, not the outward, the mechanical—however grand, imposing or superior—but the inward spirit—the spiritual power, the divine Presence incarnated in the services of the sanctuary—will determine the measure of their life and power for good.

\*\*\* Hence, that the most effective ministrations of the pulpit are those which are saturated with the spirit of prayer, and draw their inspiration from the Cross, and are supplemented with the unction of the Holy Ghost.

\*\*\* That his pronunciation of words will be specially noted by his fastidious and cultivated hearers, and all errors will be criticised, to the lessening of the effect of the sermon upon them.

\*\*\* That the proper selection and reading of the Scriptures, with brief explanatory or suggestive remarks, is a very important part of public worship, and requires a thoughtful and skillful preparation and performance.

\*\*\* That the first condition of pulpit effectiveness is to make himself distinctly heard in every part of the house, and by all who are not far on the way to deafness.

\*\*\* That his manners in the pulpit, in every minutia, are carefully observed and have no little influence in conciliating the good-will of his audience, or offending them.

#### HINTS AT THE MEANING OF TEXTS.

*It is not well for a preacher to seek to make up in length what he lacks in depth.*

##### Revival Service.

##### THE UNREVIVED CHURCH.

*Woe is me! for I am as when they have gathered the summer fruits, as the grape-gleanings of the vintage: there is no cluster to eat: my soul desired the first ripe fruit.*—Micah vii: 1.

The imagery of this text is exceedingly vivid and suggestive. The picture before the eye of the prophet is that of famine in the midst of plenty; want in time of harvest, sterility amid summer fruits; soul-fasting and wretchedness in a season of external prosperity and fulness. The time of ingathering is at hand. "The summer fruits" have ripened under the golden sunshine; the "vintage" groans under the weight of the clusters. And yet Israel knew not the day of divine visitation; she had no appreciation of the golden fruit, no heart or no capacity to pluck and eat the ripe clusters. Without were

sunshine, plenty, gladness, an abundant fruitage; but within were darkness, want, sadness, and spiritual desolation! Practically it was as if there had been no summer fruits, and no vintage; nay, it was worse; it was only a mockery—just as the sight of food is mockery to a hungry man who has lost the capacity to swallow or his relish for food.

And this is a truthful representation of the experience of very many Christians and churches. There is no heart-felt appreciation of God's outward mercies, or of His gracious spiritual manifestations. He comes to them in "the summer fruits" and in the autumn "vintage;" but so dull are their spiritual perceptions, so vitiated are their tastes, so surfeited are they with the "apples of Sodom" and the wild grapes of sinful indulgence, that they know it not, and feel no hungering after righteousness; "there is no cluster" in all

God's vintage which they can "eat." So have we seen souls in times of glorious revival, when sinners were pressing into the kingdom, and many souls were refreshed and full of rejoicing, unrevived, unblest, crying "woe is me!" "there is no cluster to eat!" So have we seen whole churches and communities left to darkness and desolation and death, while the mighty God had bared His arm for salvation and was deluging the land with a wave of regenerating and sanctifying power.

GOD LOVES US FOR CHRIST'S SAKE.

*For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.*—John xvi: 27.

GOD LOVES THE INDIVIDUAL. "The Father himself loveth you." He loves all, but He does not overlook the individual or the million. His love embraces each, as if each were the whole.

GOD LOVES THE INDIVIDUALS ESPECIALLY WHO LOVE HIS SON. "Because ye have loved me." He loves all, whether they love Christ or not; but it would seem from the text that He has a special love for those who love His Son. In truth, no man can love the Father who does not love His Son, who is His revealer and image.

THE LEADINGS OF THE HOLY GHOST.

*. . . were forbidden [Paul and Timothy] of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia. . . they assayed to go into Bithynia; but the Spirit suffered them not.*—Acts xvi: 6, 7.

We are not told how the mind of the Spirit was here made known to these early preachers of the Gospel. But the fact is clearly and positively stated. The language implies that both divine authority and restraint were made use of. The agency of the Spirit may have been exerted only as a presence directly influencing the mind, controlling the will, and impressing a sense of duty. But the interposition was real and effective, and manifest to the consciousness. The apostolic conception of the Holy Ghost has not been sufficiently studied

apart from doctrinal theories. Besides the doctrine of the personality and office work of the Spirit, there is a practical realization of His presence in the soul and gracious working in us and by us, which is a source of strength and guidance. He "helpeth our infirmities." He "taketh of the things of Christ and sheweth them unto us." He "leadeth into all truth." Without any miraculous interposition—in the way of ordinary means and agencies—we may be, and often are, "led by the Spirit," as truly as Christ was "led up into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil," and as Paul and Timothy, probably, were restrained and forbidden in the cases cited in the text.

HOLY GIVING, SELF-DELIGHTING.

*The husbandman that laboureth must be the first to partake of the fruits.*—2 Tim. ii: 6.

This truth in parable is among the sweetest rewards of good living: to him that so lives, as to him that tills the earth, the first partaking of the fruits belongs. His are the freshest and choicest fruits. If there be no such fruits for him, there can be none for others. We must feed upon our own life; it is so much closer to us than anything else, that we cannot, if we would, escape from it. You say of a departed saint: "He forgot himself; he lived for others. We could wish that he had taken some joy for himself instead of making all he could for others." Well, he did take the joy; the first sip from every flowing bowl of his charity moistened his own lips. It is the law of the soul that its moral and spiritual blessedness is self-delighting. And when the whole life comes to harvest, God gives the spiritual husbandman the very choicest grain. One got from his life a loaf of bread, another a shelter for a night, another a start in business, another an impulse to right living. But he himself gets endless life and joy. All that all others get from his life-work is a trifle compared with his harvest.

*Strong reasons make strong actions.*—SHAKESPEARE.

### Christian Culture.

#### PAUL'S PLEASANTRY AND SARCASM.

*Forgive me this wrong.*—2 Cor. xii: 13.

Verses 12-18 seem to have a spirit of playfulness in them, which occasionally breaks out into sarcasm with a little acid in it. There are two of these outbreaks, at least. "Forgive me this wrong." What wrong? Why that he had not required a salary at their hands! This non-paying character, he says, is the only point in which they are inferior to the rest of the churches. And he is to be blamed for it. Again (v. 14), he touches the same string and adds: "For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children." Here he puts in a tender claim to being their spiritual father, but there is still a bit of acid. The 16th verse has a kink in its thread; the sense is: But—some one will say—it is true I did not myself burden you, but, in a crafty way, I got your confidence and imposed other men upon you who made gain of you for my profit. "Did Titus take any advantage of you?" Was he not self-supporting like myself? The play of satirical feeling is perhaps strongest in verse 16. Bloomfield called verse 13 "a finer mixture of sarcasm and irony than any in Demosthenes." Verse 16 is often misunderstood and made to teach an infamous doctrine of deceit. (Any preacher may make a very interesting and instructive sermon on this passage.)

#### FALSEHOOD A SELF-INJURY.

*Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor; for we are members one of another.*—Eph. iv: 25.

The reason which Paul gives for truth of the tongue is a neglected one: we are damaging ourselves when we lie. Men are so bound together that when one suffers all suffer. Falsehood always damages some one man and therefore all. One damaged reputation discredits a family—a community—a class. We feel this in family relations, and resent a lie told of a mother or sister. We feel it in a class, as when a minister is convicted of lying. The whole hu-

man race feels it when one member demeans himself. Lying hides the truth and teaches error—and all suffer. Lying strikes at the roots of all confidence, and hence endangers social life. Liars are in conspiracy with the devil to cheat the world out of truth. Truth is the light of the world; whatever diminishes it is a harm to all.

### Funeral Service.

#### THE PLACE—HEAVEN.

*I go to prepare a place for you. . . I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*  
—John xiv: 3.

To some people, heaven is merely a state. We may carry it about with us in our own hearts, in the perfect rest of a conscience washed and made clean in the blood of the Lamb. This is true. In the text Christ speaks of heaven as being also a *place*. Judging from the works of His hands in creation where sin abounds, from the grandeur of Nature, we may well conclude that heaven will be a place of transcendent beauty. In God's Word we read of its pearly gates, its golden streets, and its streaming glories; but what is far dearer to us is the thought that it will be the home of loved ones. How much nearer and dearer it seems to us, as, one by one, our kindred and friends pass into it! They leave us here, and as they do so, we feel that we are strangers and pilgrims, and that heaven is more our home than earth by reason of their departure. But the crowning glory of heaven will be the presence of Christ in the midst. To Him every eye will turn, and every knee will bow. It will be glorious to meet the great and good of all ages, of whom we have read; but how much more glorious to be with Jesus forever! Our friends are not gone from us forever: they are with Christ, and we shall soon join them.

In pulpit eloquence the grand difficulty lies here—to give the subject all the dignity it so fully deserves, without attaching any importance to ourselves.  
—COLTON.

## LIVING ISSUES FOR PULPIT TREATMENT.

*Dante, in the Inferno, was easily detected by the wise old Centaur as a living man, because he moved when he touched.*

**The Temperance Question in a Nutshell.**

*Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgressions, and the house of David their sins.—Is. lviii: 1.*

There are three facts which must not be lost sight of in our fight against the liquor interest, and in our attempt to suppress the liquor curse. They are momentous, and should be emphasized and made to ring through the land.

1. *The rapid increase in liquor-drinking.* In spite of all the temperance agitation; in spite of a high license here and local option there; in spite of flaming evangelists, such as John B. Gough and Francis Murphy, with their long pledge-rolls; in spite of temperance organizations and literary bureaus; in spite of the women's crusade and their untiring zeal ever since, intemperance has been increasing far more rapidly than the population. We do not merely assert it; we prove it; or rather the figures furnished by the Government Bureau of Statistics prove it. We reprint them. The annual consumption of beer has increased from 23,000,000 gallons in 1840, to 551,000,000 in 1883; that of distilled liquors from 43,000,000 gallons in 1840, to 78,000,000 in 1883; that of wines from 5,000,000 gallons to 25,000,000. The number of gallons *per man* has increased from a little over four in 1840, to a little over twelve in 1883.

2. *Beer does not drive out whiskey or lessen the consumption,* as the following statement proves:

During the last five years the tax on distilled spirits has varied but two-tenths of a cent on the gallon. The tax on fermented liquors has not varied at all. The relative increase of the two is shown in the table below, which seems to settle conclusively the claims of brewers, and of some advocates of temperance, that beer drives out whiskey. This table is taken from the report of the Chief of the Bureau of Sta-

tistics, Treasury Department, for the quarter ending March 31st, 1884:

Year	Consumption of Distilled Spirits	Consumption of Malt Liquors	Consumption of Wines
	Proof Gallons	Gallons	Gallons
1879	54,278,475	344,605,485	24,377,130
1880	63,526,694	414,220,165	28,319,541
1881	70,607,081	444,112,169	24,162,925
1882	73,556,976	526,379,980	25,562,927
1883	78,452,687	551,497,340	25,778,180

This is the interpretation thereof—if the table needs one. During the last five years the consumption of distilled spirits has increased *forty-four and one-half per cent.* (44½), nearly, if not quite, three times the rate of increase in population. During the same period the increase in the consumption of malt liquors has been *sixty and two-tenths per cent.* (60½), and the consumption of wine, undoubtedly the least harmful of the three, has not quite kept pace with the increase of inhabitants. We commend these figures to any one who is indulging the fancy that the drinking of beer is the promotion of temperance.

3. *The only successful means of checking the liquor traffic has been prohibition.* Other means have been tried for fifty years; but in spite of them, notwithstanding the great good they have wrought in the education of public sentiment and in the rescue of individuals, the liquor traffic has immensely increased. But prohibition does prohibit, as appears from a table showing the sales of malt liquors in the several States during the last ten years, published in *The Voice* for Sept. 25, 1884. While the total increase in sales since 1875 has been 123 per cent., yet in Kansas, notwithstanding the rapid increase in population, there has been a decrease of the traffic, under prohibition, of 8 per cent.; in Iowa, the decrease has been twelve and one-half per cent.; and in Maine the traffic has been so practically wiped out that the revenue return of sales is a blank.

To our mind, these three facts are

conclusive. Being derived directly from the Government's statistics, they cannot be explained away or evaded.

### The Sin of Profanity.

*Because of swearing the land mourneth.*—  
Jer. xxiii: 10.

AGAINST no evil of our day is positive effort more needed than against the vice of profanity. Of its fearful prevalence and terrible influence there can be no doubt. We are a nation of swearers; the most profane people on earth, if we may believe credible testimony. The prophet's wail is literally applicable to this great land: and it is quite time to invoke the earnest aid of every Christian and good citizen, of the clergy, the press, and every other repressive agency, to cry it down. It is not simply a vulgar vice, an ungentlemanly habit, a wanton and inexcusable insult to Jehovah, but it is a SIN—an atrocious transgression of God's law. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." Says Dr. T. L. Cuyler, in his terse, plain way:

"The man who swears turns speech into a curse, and, before his time, rehearses the dialect of hell. He waits for no bait, but bites at the devil's bare hook."

Equally forcible and true are the words of the distinguished Jonathan Edwards:

"Some sins are productive of temporary profit or pleasure; but profaneness is productive of nothing, unless it be shame on earth and damnation in hell. It is the most gratuitous of all kinds of wickedness; a sort of peppercorn acknowledgment of the sovereignty of the devil over those who indulge it."

Says President Dwight, in his famous sermon on the Guilt of Profaneness:

"In profaneness there seems to be no good, either enjoyed or expected, besides that which is found in the mere love and indulgence of sin. No person ever acquired property, health, reputation, place, power, nor (it would seem) pleasure, from profaneness. . . . The pleasure found in profaneness, such as it is, is therefore found chiefly, if not wholly, in the wickedness which it invokes and expresses. The *sin* is the good; and not anything peculiar to the manner in which it is committed, nor anything which the

performance is expected to be the means of acquiring."

Dr. Parker, of London, has a frequent saying:

"Have no faith in any man who is irreverent, for reverence is the basis of all that is noble and tender in conscience."

One of our dignified and leading literary periodicals, the *North American Review*, gives expression to the following:

"If we observe such persons (swearers) closely, we shall generally find that the fierceness of their profanity is in inverse ratio to the affluence of their ideas. We venture to affirm that the profanest men within the circle of your knowledge are all afflicted with a chronic weakness of intellect. The utterance of an oath, though it may prevent a vacuum in sound, is no indication of sense. It requires no genius to swear. The reckless taking of sacred names in vain is as little characteristic of true independence of thought as it is of high moral culture. In this breathing and beautiful world, filled, as it were, with the presence of Deity, and fragrant with incense from its thousand altars of praise, it would be no servility should we catch the spirit of reverent worshipers, and illustrate in ourselves the sentiment, that

"The Christian is the highest type of man."

The late Charles Sumner, who never swore himself, said to a friend:

"The greatest mortification I ever received in my life, in this way, was when I was abroad, at a breakfast with Lord Brougham. We sat down at the breakfast table, when somebody brought a newspaper to him. It contained a personal attack upon him. The article was marked, and he read it through. When he had completed it he let off a volley of the most scathing oaths that I ever heard fall from the lips of any man. There was no limit to the curses he rained upon the head of the writer. I was shocked and stricken dumb. The only other person at the table, except Lord Brougham and myself, was Brougham's mother. She sat at the head; a venerable and courtly lady, with an elegance and grace of manner that I never saw excelled. I dared not look at her for some moments, but when I ventured to do so, I found not a muscle of her face was moved. She was as calmly unconscious of what her son was saying as if he was talking in Arabic."

I study and prepare for the pulpit as if there were no Holy Ghost to help me there, and when I enter upon my public work I cast my preparation at the feet of Jesus Christ, depending upon divine influence as much as if I had not premeditated.—REV. J. LONGDEN.

## AROUND THE EDITOR'S TABLE.

## Dr. Hammond's Criticism on the Ministry.

We note briefly a few points in which we think the good Doctor's reasoning, which we publish on another page, is not sound; at least his critical sword is a two-edged one. For instance, he says 1. (p. 829.) "I think clergymen should preach about what they know, not what they think." This opinion is based on a total misconception of the preacher's function, which is unlike any and all of mere human authority. "Preach the preaching which I bid thee;" "preach the word," is God's solemn injunction to every authorized ambassador. No minister has a right to preach what *he* "thinks"—that is his speculations. He is "God's mouthpiece." The Scriptures are his warrant—the sole basis and rule and substance of his preaching; and so long as he keeps within their proper meaning and scope, he but gives utterance to revealed and eternal truth. A "thus saith the Lord," in matters of religious faith and practice, carries more weight than the combined thinking of the scholars and sages of the world. Besides, the critic's thrust returns upon his own profession, and indeed upon the profession of the scientist as well. If absolute personal knowledge is essential to one who teaches; who has a right to the office? Do medical writers and teachers, or our scientists, in their theories and disquisitions, teach only "what they *know*?"

2. "The scientific man marks the change that has been wrought in the teachings of the Church;" and the critic instances the doctrine of future punishment, and the creation of the world as recorded in Genesis. But the "change," thought by some so vital, is a change mainly *in form, and not in substance or in essence*. The Evangelical Church of all Christendom to-day, with rare exceptions, holds to the doctrine of future eternal punishment; not in a hell of literal fire, it may be, but in a hell which is the inevitable sequence of wrong doing. And does it matter in

the least whether the "six days of creation" are interpreted to mean six natural days of twenty-four hours each; or six grand periods of time, distinctly marked in the genesis of creation, during which period, as declared in revelation, and testified to in nature, the creative energy of God brought into being and order, man and the earth, and all living creatures? If the Church has attained to a better scientific interpretation of Genesis, without offering any violence to the record itself, it is a matter of congratulation, and not of reproach. Will the learned doctor venture to affirm as much as this of the manifold and great changes which have taken place in medical science, and in other departments of knowledge, during the last fifty years? Had Dr. Hammond taught his theory of mental derangement a generation or two ago, no one knows better than he how he would have been laughed at. Touching his belief in hypnotism: does he forget how Braid was almost driven from England by the scientists of his day for advocacy of a similar belief. And yet nature is true. It is only the interpretation of nature by the scientists that changes. So the Bible remains true in all ages, and Christianity remains essentially the same in all conditions of the Church and of human society, notwithstanding varying theories of interpretation on scientific and other points of minor importance.

3. "If Scripture be true, as it is assumed to be, why should not the doctrines that prevailed fifty years ago be the same doctrines now?" In all essentials, in substance and in effect, they *are* the same. Not one of the leading creeds of Christendom has undergone any material change. Christians as a body stand by every fundamental doctrine as held by the Reformed Church 400 years ago. But if "nature" is true, "as it is assumed to be" by the critic, why should not the teachings of science, medical, geological, astronomical, sociological, be the same to-day

as they were formerly? But they are not.

4. "Too much attention is paid to questions of doctrine, and matters of faith, and too little to matters of fact;" "to practical topics." We take issue here with Dr. Hammond. We beg to refer him to "A Veteran Observer's" reply to John Swinton in the *Homiletic Monthly* for August (pp. 650-55). Clergymen are the leaders and most active promoters and workers in every department of practical life, charitable, humane, philanthropic, evangelical. They give in proportion to their means, and they labor in word and deed, more abundantly than any other class in the community. Without their aid, every organized form of practical philanthropy and Christianity would languish, if not die out.

#### The Feast for 1885.

We congratulate our numerous readers in view of the richness and abundance of the feast which the liberality of the publishers of the *HOMILETIC MONTHLY* have provided for them during the coming year:

1. The increase in the size of the work—one-half—making each number 96 instead of 64 pages, and that *without any increase of price* to all who subscribe before the first of January.

2. The host of writers engaged to furnish original contributions in the sections other than Sermonic and Editorial, among whom are such well-known scholars as Prof. George P. Fisher and Prof. Timothy Dwight, of Yale College, Joseph Cook, Drs. Phillip Schaff, William M. Taylor, Howard Crosby, John Hall, T. W. Chambers, Jesse B. Thomas, George R. Crooks, Arthur T. Pierson, J. M. Sherwood, Joseph T. Duryea, F. W. Conrad, Herrick Johnson, of Chicago, John A. Broadus, of Louisville, Ky., George F. Pentecost, J. M. Ludlow, Samuel T. Spear, H. J. Van Dyke, Henry M. Scudder, of Chicago, A. J. F. Behrends, Professors F. Godet, of Switzerland, M. B. Riddle, of Hartford Theological Seminary, John DeWitt of the O. T. Revision Com., J. O. Murray, of

Princeton, W. C. Wilkinson, Bishop Coxe, Judge Noah Davis, ex-Surgeon-Gen. Hammond, Presidents E. J. Robinson, of Brown University, D. S. Gregory, of Lake Forest University, H. A. Buttz, of Drew Seminary, S. F. Scovel, of Wooster University, D. H. Wheeler, of Allegheny College, and many others whose names will be hereafter announced.

3. Among the papers to be given will be a continuation of the Symposium on Romans begun in this number with a paper by Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, which will be replied to by that eminent commentator, Dr. F. Godet, of Neuchâtel, Switzerland, who will be followed by Prof. Timothy Dwight, Prof. M. B. Riddle, Prof. R. F. Wiedner, Dr. T. W. Chambers, and Dr. Geo. R. Crooks. There will be also a Symposium on: Is the Pulpit Declining in Power? if so, what is the Remedy? to be participated in by Bishop Coxe, Dr. Herrick Johnson, Dr. John A. Broadus, Dr. Jesse B. Thomas, and others. Another Symposium will be: Are the present Methods for the Education of Ministers Satisfactory? Among the writers will be President Robinson, of Brown University, Dr. John Hall, of New York, Dr. Eaton, of Louisville, Ky., Dr. Van Dyke, of Brooklyn, Dr. Buttz, of Drew Theological Seminary, President Milton Valentine, of Gettysburg. Also a Symposium: Ought Prohibition to be made a Political Question, if so, with what Limitations? Dr. Howard Crosby, Joseph Cook, Dr. Henry M. Scudder, Dr. Samuel T. Spear, Judge Noah Davis, and other writers of note, will participate.

Dr. John Hall will write on Prison Reform; Dr. A. T. Pierson will contribute twelve papers of a novel and highly interesting character, entitled: Leaves from a Pastor's Note Book; Dr. D. S. Gregory a series on new methods of Sabbath-School Bible Study; Dr. G. F. Pentecost a series on Evangelization of Cities; Dr. John De Witt a series on Studies in the Psalms, Dr. Conrad on The Call to the Ministry; Dr. Wm. M. Taylor will write on Elements of

Power in the Preaching of John Knox; Prof. J. O. Murray on Homiletic Illustrations from Shakespeare; Prof. G. P. Fisher on The Modern Sermon; Prof. W. C. Wilkinson on Conditions of Pulpit Power; Judge Noah Davis on The Relations of Crime to Intemperance; Dr. Phillip Schaff, Reminiscences of Neander; Dr. James M. Ludlow will supply for each number two or more pages of Sermonic Illustrations from History; Dr. Pierson, of Philadelphia, will edit a Missionary Department, in which will be given suggestive thoughts on Missionary themes, also a comprehensive survey each month of the Missionary Work carried on by the different denominations. Misquoted Scriptures, by Dr. Howard Crosby, and Light on Important Texts, by Dr. Chambers, will also be continued. Many other papers of equal interest from

American and European Scholars, are being arranged for.

While furnishing all these valuable papers during the year 1885, we propose at the same time to enhance the value of our Sermonic section, and enlarge and enrich the several editorial parts. Our Helpful Data will be fuller and more useful than hitherto. The whole field of current Literature, American and Foreign, English, French and German, will be laid under survey, and a brief digest will be given of such articles as will have special interest to our ministerial readers. No effort will be spared to furnish a Homiletic Magazine unequaled by any in the world, and at the same time a Popular Review for the discussion, in brief, condensed, practical forms, of the great questions and issues which concern the Church and the Ministry of our day.

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

1. The Private Character of Public Officers. "Thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God; men of truth, hating covetousness, and place such men over them."—Judges v: 20. L. W. Bacon, D.D., Philadelphia.
2. Deborah's Astrology. "They fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera."—Judges v: 20. J. H. Worcester, D.D., Louisville, Ky.
3. The Ark in the Household. "The Lord hath blessed the house of Obed edom and all that pertaineth unto him, because of the ark of God."—2 Sam. vi: 12. John A. Broadus, D.D., Baltimore, Md.
4. The Crisis of Decision. "And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, The Lord, He is the God; the Lord, He is the God,"—1 Kings xviii: 39. Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, Brooklyn.
5. Contrasts of Character. "The spirit of Elijah doth rest upon Elisha."—2 Kings ii: 15. Rev. Archibald McCullagh, Brooklyn, N. Y.
6. The Religious Aspects of Night. "Thou hast proved and visited mine heart in the night season."—Ps. xvii: 3. Canon Liddon, London, England.
7. By Love or by Fear. "Return unto Me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of Hosts. But ye said, Wherem shall we return?"—Mal. iii: 7. Morgan Dix, D.D., New York.
8. Holy Violence. "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent taketh it by force."—Matt. xi: 12; also Luke xvi: 16. Dean Vaughan, D.D., London, England.
9. Paul's Mission to Rome. "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ."—Rom. i: 16. John Hall, D.D., New York.
10. The Christian Life a Transfiguration. "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your hearts."—Rom. xii: 2. Alexander Maclaren, D.D., Manchester, Eng.
11. Christian Liberty on a Doubtful Basis. "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? . . . If thy brother be grieved with thy meat," etc.—Rom. xiv: 4, 15. H. C. Hayden, D.D., Cleveland, O.
12. The Perpetuity and Supremacy of Love. "Now abideth faith, hope, charity . . . but the greatest of these is charity."—1 Cor. xiii: 13. Newman Hall, D.D., London, in Memorial Presbyterian Church, New York.
13. The Law of Social Being in Christ Jesus. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."—Gal. vi: 2. Bishop H. W. Warren, Rockford, Ill.
14. Faith in a Person Rather than in a Creed. "I know whom I have believed."—2 Tim. i: 12. C. H. Parkhurst, D.D., New York.

#### SUGGESTIVE THEMES.

1. Compromises Dangerous. ("If ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land . . . those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you."—Num. xxxiii: 55.
2. A Lying Messenger. ("He [King Eglon] was sitting in a summer parlor . . . And Ehud

said, I have a message from God unto thee. And he arose out of his seat. And Ehud took forth the dagger from his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly."—Judges: iii: 20-25

3. The Curse against Meroz. ("Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord . . . because

- they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."—Judges v: 23.)
4. A Wonderful Legacy. ("And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the Lord God of Elijah? And they parted hither and thither."—2 Kings ii: 14.)
  5. Bravery in God's Service. ("Should such a man as I flee?" [Nehemiah to Shemiah.]—Neh. vi: 10, 11.)
  6. Promptness in Duty. ("Say not unto thy neighbor Go, and come again, and to-morrow I will give thee; when thou hast it by thee."—Prov. iiii: 28.)
  7. Ill-timed Merriment. ("As he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, and as vinegar upon nitre, so is he that singeth songs to a heavy heart."—Prov. xxv: 29.)
  8. Womanly Compassion. ("The babe [Moses] wept. And she [Pharaoh's daughter] had compassion on him, and said, This is one of the Hebrew children."—Ex. ii: 5, 6.)
  9. Hardened by Calamities. ("I have smitten you with blasting and mildew . . . yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord."—Amos iv: 9.)
  10. No Peace with Sin. ("I came not to send peace, but a sword."—Matt. x: 34.)
  11. The Impostor Unmasked. ("Thy money perish with thee. . . . thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter," etc.—Acts viii: 20, 21.)
  12. The Moral Functions of Memory. ("By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain."—1 Cor. xv: 2.)
  13. The Harvest Home on High. (" whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."—Gal. vi: 7.)
  14. The Power of Prejudice. ("Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?"—John i: 46.)

### GERMS OF ILLUSTRATION.

BY EDWARD JEWITT WHEELER, A. M.

*Use well the moment, and, with seeing eyes,*

*Peruse the thing that's next thee, and be wise.*—GOETHE.

**Sin** is like the Spheralca, a flower which, according to Edgar Allen Poe, first attracts the bees with its blossoms, and then actually intoxicates them with its honey.

**Intemperance** was well typified by the Greeks, whether consciously or not, when they represented Bacchus, the god of wine, as riding upon a panther. The stealthy, bloodthirsty beast, whose every leap means death, was a fitting steed for the god of strong drink.

**Genius** may well be compared, in the suddenness of its appearance, and, too often, the brevity of its stay, with the  $\star$  discovered in 1572 by Tycho Brahe, in the constellation Cassiopeia. It appeared suddenly, attained in a few days a brilliancy surpassing that of Jupiter, then as suddenly disappeared, and has never been seen since. The incident is used by Poe as the basis of his poem, "Al Aaraaf."

**Public opinion** is a force one is very apt to underestimate, until he attempts to resist it. Even such a giant as Webster went down before it, like a reed in the blast. If one would know its power, let him do as Sir Isaac Newton did. When a boy, he hit upon the odd device of measuring the wind by leaping against it and by the length of the leap estimating the force of the wind.

**Cynicism** was well repaid in the fanciful incident related by the Italian satirist, Trajano Boccalini (1556-1613), in his "Advertisements from Parnassus." Zoilus, he tells us, once presented to Apollo a very caustic criticism upon a very admirable book; whereupon the god asked him to specify the beauties of the work. Zoilus replied that he had busied himself about the errors only. On hearing this, Apollo, handing him a sack of unwinnowed wheat, bade him pick out all the chaff for his reward.

**The Star of Bethlehem**, as our guide in the nights of sorrow, at once comes to mind on reading of the following incident: When General Wolseley was setting out for his final battle in Egypt, he took an intelligent young Scotchman for his guide. Before the army started on his night march, he charged the young man most solemnly: "See that you guide me straight; guide me by that star." The guide was mortally wounded in the battle which followed. The commander, hearing of this, visited him; and when the dying man saw him his eye brightened, and he said: "Didn't I guide you straight, General? Didn't I guide you straight?" And the General was glad to answer, "Yes."

**Lifeless Christians**—if one can call that which is lifeless, Christianity—were recently illustrated most strikingly by Dr. Gill, of Brooklyn. There was, said he, on the island of Malta, a certain monastery, in one of the chambers of which a person entering beheld a most thrilling sight. The walls of the chamber were of rock, and all around stood (or seemed to stand) a row of monks, erect, silent, rigid. Their attitudes were those of the living, and their eyes seemed to gleam in the darkness; but when one approached and placed his hand upon them, he recoiled in horror. They were corpses all! The rock was said to have a peculiar preservative power that gave them something of the roundness and hue of life, and the secret of their attitude was found to lie in an iron ring passing around the body and fastened to the rock, holding each corpse erect against the wall. Such is the nature—so ran the Doctor's application—of many of those in the Church of to-day: bound to the Rock, Christ Jesus, by the bands of ceremony and creed and ordinances, apparently strong and upright in the faith. But alas! the spiritual life has fled, and they are but as the monks in the monastery of Malta.

## HELPFUL DATA IN CURRENT LITERATURE.

By J. M. SHERWOOD, D.D.

## Books.

*A. C. Armstrong & Son.* "Manual of Preaching." By Franklin W. Fisk. The author has been twenty-five years Professor in Chicago Theological Seminary, and these twenty-three lectures are the condensation of material which has been accumulating in his hands during this period. They are therefore practical and the fruit of long experience in teaching. The work is well done; not striking or original, but a very sensible performance. His method has an advantage over that of some other writers on Homiletics: it is first to take a sermon to pieces and inspect its principal parts, and then to show how to gather materials and construct a sermon. First, the analysis, then the synthesis. If we do not have a generation of good preachers, it certainly will not be for lack of homiletical instruction, and much of it of a high order of merit.

*American Baptist Publication Society.* "The Old Theology Restated." By Henry H. Tucker. The title of the book is not a happy one. Instead of a Body of Divinity, or a Scientific Statement of the good old doctrines of the Gospel, it is simply a volume of sermons in the ordinary forms, and delivered on ordinary occasions. The sermons, too, are mainly on practical subjects. There is very little "theology" in the book—we mean a formal or scientific statement of doctrine. The great themes of repentance, faith, conversion, atonement, the judgment, and the like, are treated with discrimination, fidelity and ability. Evidently the author has no leaning towards the "New Theology," which has turned away so many from "the truth as it is in Jesus." His trumpet has "no uncertain sound." Two of the sermons are on Baptism, and of course inculcate the Baptist view on this ordinance, but not in an offensive spirit.

*Lutheran Publication Society.* "The Folly of Profanity," by Rev. W. H. Luckenbach. A volume on this subject, we believe, is something never before attempted. It is not an attractive subject for literary ambition. We remember the powerful sermon of President Dwight on "The Guilt of Profaneness." That would have been a more fitting title for this book. "Folly" is not strong enough. Profanity is a *sin*, and the most wanton and inexcusable form of guilt, as the author clearly shows. We have elsewhere used some of his material to endeavor to arouse public sentiment on the subject. It is a crying, we we fear a growing, sin. We are a fearfully profane people. "Because of swearing the land mourneth." Every minister will find abundant material in this book to enable him to prepare a strong and impressive sermon on the subject, which we hope he will do, and boldly preach it to his people.

*Congregational Sunday-School and Publishing So-*

*ciety.* "The Divine Authority of the Bible." By G. Frederick Wright. The author is Professor of the language and literature of the New Testament in Oberlin Theological Seminary, and one of the editors of the *Bibliotheca Sacra*. His "Logic of Christian Evidences," "Studies in Science and Religion," and "Relation of Death to Probation," have made him widely and favorably known as a writer. The question here discussed is the question of the inspiration, interpretation, and authority of our present Bible—a question fundamental to every distinctive principle of Protestant Christianity. The work lays no claim to being exhaustive, and will not supersede the special works upon the various subjects which are here brought together in one view. As a guide through the logical mazes of a vast field, and a clear, incisive presentation of the substance of the argument, it is an admirable work. It is learned, simple, logical, condensed; meets the main difficulties of the subject, and is just the book to put into the hands of our busy pastors and intelligent laymen. It is worthy of a wide circulation.

*Kegan, Paul, Trench & Co.* [London]. "The Witness of St. Matthew." By F. J. B. Alnatt, B.D. This work is designed to "represent a survey of St. Matthew's Gospel, in the attempt to trace the indications of a divine plan governing their order and arrangement, to elucidate the sequence of thought and its advance in progressive stages adapted to the development of the soul's growth in spiritual knowledge, with the links by which these are connected; and thus to demonstrate the general result of unity, symmetry and completeness as a picture, from one point of view, of the Person and Work of Jesus Christ." The work is unique in its plan. It is not exactly expository in form, nor a commentary. We have first an analysis of the Gospel, indicating the special purpose of it to be to establish the connection between the two dispensations. The author shows that the one great theme of it is the "Kingdom of Heaven." The principal divisions in it, which are treated at length, are I. The Shadow. II. The Person. III. The Manifestation. Under these, the salient points of Christ's life, ministry, kingdom, and sacrificial death are discussed with great discrimination and fulness. Our main objection to the work is the bewildering array of points, parts, divisions, and sub-divisions. They break the unity of thought, confuse the reader, and lessen the effect. The author has evidently devoted a good deal of patient thought and study in the preparation of the book.

## Periodicals.

*MORAL CHARACTER IN POLITICS.* By President Julius H. Seelye; *North American Review* (Oct.), 9 pp. This brief paper is timely and pertinent to the times. It assumes that very significant

changes are taking place in the political affiliations of the American people. Party ties have become weak, and with multitudes cease to control. And this is attributed to an increase of moral earnestness. The people are not interested in merely "playing at politics;" will not be excited over "make-believes." They demand a "real issue, which the Republican and Democratic parties no longer offer." The writer briefly traces what was once the issue between them, and asserts that it was largely a moral one, which the Republican party, unconsciously, perhaps, has abandoned. Neither party any longer contends for principle; nevertheless, he holds that the moral interests and relations of the State are paramount. Hence the first quality of statesmanship is moral. And it is not safe to commit great interests of State to a man who is only "politic," or to "an impure man." "Votes are not thrown away, which are cast for right measures and right men." His ideal of public men is a lofty one; but he argues from the example of Lincoln, Gladstone and Bismarck, that it is not too lofty to be practical.

**THE ESCHATOLOGY OF THE PSALMS.** By J. B. Bittenger, D.D. *Andover Review* (Sept.), 22 pp. A very scholarly article from an accomplished pen, and one which cannot fail to interest and instruct the Bible student. We have not space for an analysis of it. It starts with the theory that Eschatology is a moral problem. It is not so much the simple question of a future state, its reality, duration and constitution, as it is the question of a moral order in the world. Instead of traversing the whole field of the Psalter, the writer selects the first and fifth books. "Five hundred years intervene between the composition of the first book by David and the compilation of the fifth by Ezra." During this long interval the national life underwent many changes, from the zenith of its glory under Solomon, to the nadir of its humiliation during exile. The difference between the tone of the Davidic Psalms and the fifth book is shown to be marked. Among the characteristic features of the Psalms named, are the theistic feeling which pervades them, the enormity and consciousness of sin, as expressed, and the judicial tone everywhere observable. The theistic element is never absent. Sin is that abominable thing which God hates, and the great burden of complaint. We have therefore all the elements of eschatology in the Psalms, and we have them in their highest potency.

**Commonplace Books,** by Prof. James Davie Butler, LL D. *Bibliotheca Sacra* (July), 28 pp. It is surprising how much matter of fresh interest and value may be crowded into an article on so old and hackneyed a theme. We advise every minister and literary character to read it. The subject is treated with remarkable fulness and skill, and abounds with practical suggestions of great utility. Strange how much can be said, and wisely said, about "commonplace

books." The writer clearly shows that a commonplace book, of the proper kind and rightly kept, is an important element in liberal culture. Many of the illustrations he gives of the utility of such auxiliary aid in literary work are apt, curious, and make the reading exceedingly pleasant.

**Evolution,** by James Woodrow, D.D., LL.D. *Southern Presbyterian Review* (July), 28 pp. The writer of this article, which has excited no little commotion and called forth sharp criticism in the Presbyterian Church South, is Professor in the Theological Seminary at Columbia, S. C. He is a man of distinguished ability and of rare candor and discrimination, as this contribution evinces. He writes in an independent yet reverent spirit, conceding to science all that it can fairly claim, and still retains his faith in the Bible record intact. "I have found nothing in my study of the Holy Bible and of natural science that shakes my firm belief in the divine inspiration of every word of that Bible. The alleged contradictions of science and the Bible are such as cannot affect any moral or religious truth." After discussing the various theories respecting the genesis of creation and shown the absence of contradiction between the Scripture account of creation and the doctrine of evolution, he considers a few facts which ought to keep us from summarily rejecting the doctrine as certainly false. And his conclusion is not an alarming one. He stands substantially where Dr. McCosh and some other Christian scholars stand, though his views of the creation of Adam and Eve (bodies) are peculiar and fanciful. Revelation remains intact. God is still the God of creation. "Instead of being tempted to put away thoughts of Him, as I contemplate this wondrous series of events, caused and controlled by the power and wisdom of the Lord God Almighty, I am led with profounder reverence and admiration to give glory and honor to Him that sits on the throne, who liveth forever and ever; and with fuller heart and a truer appreciation of what it is to create, to join in saying, 'Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.'"

"The Personality of God," by James S. Candlish, D.D. *Princeton Review* (Sept.), 20 pp. The source of this essay entitles it to special consideration. It is the contribution of no ordinary mind, whether viewed as a philosopher or theologian. The subject is here discussed mainly from the theological side, and the conclusions of philosophy considered in their bearing on the doctrine as a part of the system of Christian truth. We cannot do justice in a brief reference to so carefully written and philosophical an argument on "the great and solemn doctrine of the personality of God." But we advise our readers to procure and read the article for themselves.