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## SERMONIC.

### GOD'S IDEA OF MAN.

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*What is man, that thou art mindful of him?*  
—Ps. viii: 4.

Considered as a part of nature, man is insignificant. Without our modern knowledge of astronomy, by which the ancient conception of the universe is immeasurably expanded, the royal Psalmist, looking from his native Judean hills, as he watched his sheep through the stillness of the Oriental night, beneath the lustrous canopy which spread above him, was forced to exclaim, in his communing with Jehovah: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him?" Seen from some lofty height, as an object in an expanded landscape, man is but a speck in the wide field of vision. Compared even with his fellow-creatures of the animal kingdom, denizens of the jungle or the sea, he is but a weak and diminutive being. Lifted by the strong hand of the storm, or tossed by the waves of the ocean, he is like a feather on the tornado's breath,

or a leaf upon the rushing waters. Even the silent, invisible forces move him at their will, the sun's light extinguishing his vision, a change of temperature chilling his heart, the electric current blotting out all consciousness, and the unseen fever wasting him away as by the cursing touch of a magician.

As a product of nature man seems to possess a higher dignity. He is the last result of the vast systems of forces that play about him. Summing up in his composite being all the kingdoms of nature, the inorganic, the vegetable and the animal, as man does, the Psalmist could truly say, "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hand; Thou hast put all things under his feet." Apart from man, apart from the consciousness and reason, that are his attributes, the glory of the visible universe has little meaning. What is the beauty of the earth, vast and wonderful though it be, with its oceans and mountains, its wealth of treasures, and its fertile plains, its forest solitudes, and its animated waters, without its rational inhabitants? What is the grandeur of the heavens, with their infinite space and innumerable orbs, their immeasurable energies

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and their marvellous mechanism, if no comprehending eye is lifted to behold and admire their magnificence?

And yet, conceding man's pre-eminence as the noblest fruit and the only interpreter of nature, he must still seem insignificant when measured by the highest standard. The slow, creeping progress of humanity, the dullness of faculty, the rarity of virtue, the variety and abysmal depth of vice, the debasing superstition, the constant and almost universal missing of high and worthy ends of being, are the conspicuous characteristics of our race. The names that history has preserved are, for the most part, those of monsters whose cruelty and rapacity have rendered the life of man a dreadful drama of unutterable woe. The results of pre-historic speculation do not ennoble the picture. To the facts of tradition and record, we must add the inferences of the anthropologist, which display to the imagination rude tribes of savages as the primitive men, more animals than rational creatures, living in cannibalistic borders, without art, literature or law, battling with one another in a cruel struggle for existence, and possibly retracing their origin to the muttering apes of primeval forests, where murder was the law of life. But without adding to the certain facts the conjectures of theory, we find truth enough to bring a blush of shame to the cheek of humanity. Comparing the career of our race with the beauty, the magnificence, the harmony, the serenity and the constancy of nature, we are compelled to repeat with the Psalmist the expression of wonderment, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?"

Man's opinion of his own importance and inherent dignity has fluctuated, because he is moved by feeling. His thought has ever vibrated between two opposite conceptions of himself. Today, in the fullness of his energy, he fancies himself the noblest of beings, and the measure of all things. Tomorrow, in a moment of weakness and humiliation, he becomes conscious of the hollowness of this high pretence,

and confesses to himself his utter incapacity to comprehend the simplest facts of his own being. And not only is he thus swayed by the emotions that sweep over him; he is also ignorant of the truth by which he can estimate his own worth and relative significance. Striving by natural knowledge to comprehend his own nature, he compares himself with every mode of being that comes under his observation. He finds himself unlike them all, yet having, to some extent, the attributes of each. His body is made up of chemical elements. It grows under the biological laws that rule in the vegetable and animal world, and these furnish him with a constant replenishment of energy, and when they fail him, he droops and dies. In higher attributes he is more like the animal creation, and some of its higher orders approach him in power to feel and to know; so that he almost fancies that he and they are of one nature, and his supremacy only that which is decreed from a larger accumulation of advantages.

He attempts to discover his own origin, and retraces with studious care the indications left in the mute history of the earth, engraved on sea-cliff and alluvial valley, or left in the mighty sarcophagi of geological strata. With patient diligence he strives to connect their fossil contents into lines of gradual evolution and descent; if, perchance, he may find herein the evidence of his own ultimate ancestry and thus know whence and how he came to be. But he finds a broken and imperfect record, which no human intelligence can decipher, requiring at almost every point the aid of an ingenious imagination to make the scattered leaves present an intelligible story. At last, after all his efforts, when he has reached the remotest backward limit to which his fancy journeys, he finds himself upon the border of a measureless past, stretching far away beyond the ken of mortal vision, perplexing and confusing his unsatisfied intellect, and leaving him weary, baffled, and as helpless as before.

The effort, by mere natural knowl-

edge, to look into the future, is quite as futile. Hamlet's question, "To be, or not to be?" has never been settled by human thinking, and never can be. Here, more than anywhere else in the whole realm of questioning, personal hopes and desires agitate the mind and obscure the truth. Nor have we more agreement as to the true end of being—the instant ideal toward which the whole creation moves. Clamorous voices proclaim to us, with the emphasis of conviction, that the secret has been discovered; but their utterances conflict, and, clashing in irreconcilable opposition, effectually neutralize each the others. Let us turn to-day from the confusion of tongues which men have made in philosophizing about man, to listen for a few moments to God's Idea of man as presented in the Scriptures.

I. *God has revealed that man is the result of a special creation.*

There are two processes by which finite existences come to be. One is that of evolution, by which pre-existing substance is transformed through a series of derivations and unfoldings of what was latently contained from the first. The second is that of creation, by which a being having the power of absolute origination causes that to be which was not, and which could not be without such originating power. The Biblical description of man's origin plainly teaches that man was created, not evolved, in the sense in which the terms have just been defined. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." This account of creation does not, indeed, deny a gradual progression from the inorganic elements of the earth up to man's final consummation through stages of animal development; but it teaches that beyond this there was the addition of that which such animal forms did not contain: something directly from the Deity himself, partaking of His life by immediate and special impartation, whereby man became a "living soul."

Our most recent and authoritative

science has nothing to oppose to this conception. The homology of bodily parts is so complete as to lead the comparative anatomist to believe that man and the lower animals have some intimate relation, possibly extending beyond the similarity of types, and even reaching unity of descent. But the interval between the highest brute intelligence and the rational soul of the lowest man, is so wide and impassable a gulf, that all but the most extreme and immoderate theorists find need to suppose the intervention of a supreme life-giving power that transcended all previously existing natures in bestowing upon man a rational soul.

The one objection to creation which sturdily persists in presenting itself, is its inconceivability. But the profoundest thinkers have taught that conceivability is not a test of truth. If every reality were conceivable, this objection would have much force; but, in truth, we are surrounded with the inconceivable. We can neither conceive of an entity without the properties of extension and impenetrability, whose function it is to think; nor can we conceive of matter as performing the functions of thought, becoming self-conscious and directing its intellectual energies toward natural ends. And yet we cannot dispute the fact that two orders of existence, a material order and an intellectual order, are real and coexist. It is enough that we have evidence of the fact, without knowing the method by which the fact becomes possible.

II. *God has revealed that man is a spiritual being.*

And God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." The organism was complete; the organs of motion and of sense were perfect; the light fell upon the retina, reflected from scenes of Eden beauty; the tympanum vibrated with the music of bird voices, and all the tremulous throbs of primeval life-stirring; the nostril was laden with the microscopic effluvia of fruits and flowers—the rare scents of an eastern garden; but there was no perception until

the divine breath filled the waiting nostrils, when, lo! the living soul saw and heard, and drank in the fragrance of the Eden life.

Happily, we have in consciousness a witness that helps us to comprehend, though it might not have taught us to originate, the conception of man as a spiritual being. There is within each of us that which says "I." It is not the parts that say "I." It is not the bodily eye that sees, or the ear that hears, or the nostril that smells. It is "I." It is not the sum of the parts, or the totality of the organs, for we lose these without feeling that we are diminished, but have merely lost instruments that are not ourselves. In our moral relations this truth appears more clearly. We do not praise or blame the organ for actions, or the senses for knowledge or ignorance, but the invisible and intangible being that resides within them and presides over them. And we do not blame the lower animals at all, either for actions or for ignorance, because we do not consider them as possessing this power to say "I." We find in them a conscience of feeling, but not a consciousness of self. Not one of them gives evidence of this knowledge of personality which we all possess. Our plans, our hopes, our fears all centre about it. From it our actions radiate, and for our actions we are justly held responsible.

And here we discover the secret of man's worth in the divine valuation. From the naturalistic point of view man is insignificant. Projected upon the background of the heavens, measured in comparison with moons and stars, man is an atom, a mere point in the infinitude of space. Considered as a spiritual personality, he looms up before the understanding as the most significant object in the universe, excepting his Creator. He can originate plans of action and carry them into execution. He alone can. The moon must follow the gravitation of the earth with even, unchanging pace, never through the centuries once deviating a hair's breadth from the prescribed course. The stars

are fixed in space at established distances, and each is held relentlessly to its position, and moves only as the motion of other bodies opens for it a path in which it may sweep on among its sister stars in the majestic waltz of worlds. The tides of the ocean obey the moon, their mistress, with silent acquiescence. The storms rise and travel in the lines of least resistance which the changes of temperature make for them. Thus the seasons come and go; the fruits ripen and decay; the flowers bloom and wither; and the whole ceaseless panorama of the material world moves according to inherent laws that determine the time and the place of every outward occurrence, as surely as the channel of a stream necessitates the plunge of a cataract when the abyss is reached. But amidst this awful automatism, this endless, resistless sweep of blind forces, man alone is free. Not even he is without limitation; but within the narrow circle of the inner empire he is autocrat, and, surrounded by forces that, if let loose upon him, would crush him into nothingness, he threads his way toward self-selected ends, seeking the good or the evil according to his own election, scattering blessings among his fellows, or trampling all their rights and interests beneath his feet, according to his own determination. It is a grandly terrible thing to be free: free to choose in what direction the delegated energies of the soul may leap out into activity; free to transform self by accepted impulse, customary action and crystalized habit, into a seraph or a demon.

III. *God has revealed that man was created in His image.*

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." We have seen wherein this similitude, in part, consists. God is a person. He says "I" as man does; but, infinitely transcending this, He says "I am," expressing the eternity of His being; and further, "I am that I am," declaring His supremacy over all modifying and transforming conditions, the immutable and absolute One. He, too, is free; and



it is in the possession of freedom that man is in His image—after His likeness. "He doeth his will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" And yet this supreme Sovereign has permitted creatures to exist who are free to be out of harmony with His will in the little circle designated as their own!

This fact of disturbed harmony indicates that the image of God which men now possess is an imperfect one. Originally there were features in it that have now faded beyond recognition. There is in the Scriptures some outline of how this original similitude was lost—not exhibited with precise scientific exactness—but through the suggestive symbolism of Eastern parable. The reality of this loss is easily attested by an appeal to consciousness. There is still found the intuition of the perfect law—often disregarded, often strangely blended with superstitions and erroneous judgments, but still the possession of every normal human creature. In the presence of this law, known as having emanated from the highest authority, the soul recognizes its obligation to obey. As soon as it is formulated in intelligible words the soul instinctively responds "*I ought*," but not "*I will*." And this is the condemnation, "that men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." Formulate for them and strive to apply to them in any practical way the supreme law to which they themselves appeal when their rights are invaded, and they either refuse to listen to the response, "*I ought*," that reverberates through the recesses of consciousness, or attempt, with sophisms and evasions, to escape the appeal to duty. And herein is the image imperfect: not in substance, not in constitution, not in completeness; but in the loss of that line of curvature which reflects all truth upon its focal point, which focal point is righteousness.

And when we think of man as the image of God, we must remember that

it is a *vital* likeness that is intended, a likeness that has its source in a community of life, that is outwardly revealed as an expression of a vital principle, and whose imperfection is a vital, not a formal, imperfection. Christ is called the "express image of his person," by which we are to understand that in Christ, the life of God, His secret, uncommunicable personality, has its expression; so that Christ stands as the image, the apparition, the visibility of God. Man was created to be this, but by a deflection of the life-currents which shape the outward presentation, he is now but an imperfect image, because the vital law—law for man's life, as it is a principle of God's character—has been disregarded.

And now we can understand why God is mindful of man, in spite of man's natural insignificance. Man is God's image, and God would not have His image marred. Something dead in man has stopped and dammed the moral currents of his life. "As in Adam all *die*, so in Christ all shall be made *alive*." "*I am the resurrection and the life*," said Jesus. "God is in the world, reconciling the world unto himself." "I am the way, the truth, and the *life*."

The image of God has the gangrene of death in it, but it is His image still, and He would cleanse away the dead infection. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly," again says Jesus. The imperfection of man as the image of God is outwardly of the nature of a *scar*, inwardly of the nature of a *disease*. Inwardly and outwardly it is a *vital* defect. Its remedy is *life*; a new breathing into man's nostrils of the breath of life, as when he first became a living soul. And yet Jesus says: "Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life." It is to win and capture this refractory will that Christ has come forth from the bosom of the Father. The atonement is a bloody one, because God would be known to man as a life-giver, and the blood contains the life. Is it symbol, or is it potency? It is a sym-

bol of potency and potency in a symbol. "Lo! I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." The cross expresses man's need of a transfused life, the actual effusion of life from its great source, and the fullness of it in a resurrection from the dead. And so God's gift to the world is *life*. He lingers lovingly over fallen man because life will render him the image of God himself. But, destroy man's freedom, *force* upon him life against his *will*, and God's image would again disappear: for God is *free*, and so must man be, or he cannot be God's image. A free life in accordance with the regnant law of God's own life, is God's only way of imaging Himself. Man in Christ is God's perfect image. Looking to the heavens, we wonder that God is mindful of man: looking to Christ, we see that God cares for man more than for the heavens; that He aims to bring all who will be brought "unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." God can do nothing grander than to produce perfect images of Himself. Herein is man's hope and God's glory; herein is the heart's peace and the reason's satisfaction.

#### GUIDANCE IN DOING GOOD.

BY CHARLES S. ROBINSON, D.D. [PRESBYTERIAN], IN MEMORIAL CHURCH, NEW YORK.

*Then the Spirit said to Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.*—Acts viii: 29.

In the introduction of this narrative, we are told that "the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert." It is not stated just how such a heavenly visitant made himself known. It cannot be doubted, however, that a real angel appeared to him, perhaps in a vision or a dream. There was an unseen chance of serving a fellow-man down in a distant desert. Christ offered that chance to this Christian preacher. It is an inspiring thought to be borne in one's mind in such a hurrying world as this, that, if

a true believer's heart is alert and his temper is willing, the Lord will surely put him, and keep him, in the way of doing good. Only he must watch for heavenly providences to summon him, as no doubt Philip watched for the angel, and he must instantly obey the call, and force his entire zeal into the duty.

This Philip, it must be remembered, was the deacon, not the disciple. We have reason to believe, from the opening verses of the chapter, that the whole apostolic band remained at Jerusalem.

Gaza was one of the five chief cities of the Philistines, south-west from Jerusalem, down near the sea, the last town upon the frontier of "the great and terrible wilderness" between Syria and Egypt. The road was then, as it is emphatically now, uninhabited. The long journey is desolate, barren of incident, and lonely. Such a change must have seemed violent to Philip, then in the full tide of his wonderful success among the Samaritans.

And in that is found our earliest lesson from this story. *No exertion should be considered too difficult, no prospect too discouraging, if doing good is our purpose.* Nor will it be, if the heart is zealous. Here we find Philip cheerfully starting to go sixty or seventy miles just to save a single soul. The phraseology of the story is specific: "he arose and went." It intimates briskness and alacrity. He sprang to meet the command.

At this point the sacred history shifts the scene so as to introduce another picture. Just how Philip traveled in order to reach his destination, we are not informed; there were several direct roads, and all of them were dreary. But the peculiarity of his errand lay in the fact that he did not at all know where his man was going to be found. That waste region was uncrossed with beaten paths. Two persons might pass each other a hundred times in the trackless desert, and never know it. It was like starting out on the ocean to meet a ship, when nobody could tell what line of sailing it would come in on. And we must leave Philip

to do the best he can, while in imagination we push on before him down by the road to Hebron, and watch for a lonely traveler out in the sands.

Suddenly our eyes are arrested with the unusual spectacle of a foreign grandee with his retinue toiling on in the sunshine: "And behold a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace, Queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet." So he must have had a long journey from the far interior of Africa clear across the desert up to Jerusalem. It offers a most suggestive comment upon our laggardness in duty, when we find one like this African noble putting forth such supreme efforts in order to render his worshipful obedience unto God. He traverses an entire continent in his seeking after peace. How selfish and silly are our complaints in view of such fidelity as that!

A question may arise here as to the nature of this man's office and position at home. In the kingdom of God "not many wise or great or mighty are called;" and when one of that rank of men is in sight, it is worth while to look up his record somewhat.

Usually great monarchs transferred their business cares in large measure to some such person, making him a Grand Vizier, or a treasurer—that is, their confidential minister, having a patronage and power almost supreme in authority. Now, nothing is historically known about this man's mistress. She is nowhere else mentioned in the Scriptures. Some ancient chroniclers assert that an august queen bearing this name reigned about that time in an African capital, and that a dynasty of sovereigns was called after her. It is evident that this eunuch had a lofty position, great wealth, and some education. He was a man of standing and influence.

More to our surprise, however, is the fact which transpires here, that he was a Jew. At any rate, he understood

something of the Hebrew faith. He may have been a proselyte to their religion. He certainly was a devout, an inquiring, and, most likely, a conscientious man. So here comes out one of those remarkable instances recorded in Scripture, which show that *the Holy Spirit chooses the best people sometimes in unlikely places*. Christ had saints among Cæsar's household, and Christians in the very family of Herod. So we need not be afraid to attempt converts anywhere.

The reason why this Ethiopian Jew, if such we must consider him, had been traveling up to Jerusalem at this particular season, is found in the fact that this was the time for the annual observance of the Passover feast. And when we recall the unusual history which had been transpiring on this special occasion, we cannot help thinking how much must have happened to arrest both the mind and the heart of such a stranger in Jerusalem. He may have been in those vast crowds at Pentecost. He may have heard Simon Peter's sermon. He may have witnessed the stoning of Stephen. Indeed, he may even have wondered and wept when Jesus of Nazareth was crucified. For there were throngs of thoughtful people who came together to that solemn sight, and who, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts in silent sorrow as they returned from Calvary.

And now we catch another lesson: *religious convictions are in value simply inestimable, and ought to be cherished as we would cherish our life itself*. One may go through a most extraordinary season of so-called revival, and yet may remain unregenerate. A man may be held beneath the pressure of most helpful privilege, and not find any improvement; he may suffer in spirit, and still not be saved. If the mind be dark, or the will be hard, mere emotion goes for nothing. This eunuch came across the known world in fatiguing travel just to find peace in the worship of the true God. What he needed beyond everything else was a knowledge of the

Christ of whom the prophet Isaiah wrote.

Look at him for a moment closely. He has been up to Jerusalem, and has returned, without any hopeful illumination in grace. We learn from his demeanor that his heart is not at rest. He has gone his round, and is now on his way home disappointed. But the one grand thing in his action is that he clings to his purpose. He will not give up without a blessing. Oh, there is nothing, nothing, in human history like that impressive moment in which an aroused soul begins to ask the question, "What must I do to be saved?" If those gracious feelings pass away, they may never arise again in one's heart. The Spirit, grieved, may never return.

It is interesting to note how this weary traveler was seeking to beguile the time when Philip found him. In early days, it was the custom for those who could afford it to make their extensive journeys in chariots—mere open wagons, sometimes covered with a light awning. These were low and easy to alight from or enter. Generally those of rank were accompanied by a suite of attendants.

It must always have been tedious to cross the desert alone. And the climate was hot, and the way was waterless, and the sights were dull, and the advance was lamentably slow. So this nobleman was trying to while away the hours in reading. He had in his possession, as we suppose, a copy of the Greek translation of the Old Testament. It was what is called the Septuagint Version of the Hebrew Scriptures; his quotations are taken from that; and *Esaias* is the Greek name for Isaiah. This he was studying with some perplexity.

One could almost wish he had a picturesque pen to enable him to describe the meeting of those two men out in the desert. Such a spectacle arrests the imagination powerfully. Two atoms of sentient life in this vast universe float up to each other on the unperceived winds of divine grace. Yet eternal ages cannot so much as begin to exhaust the

chapters of that soul's history, which was written during the tranquil hour beside the Gaza fountain. Apparently they catch sight of each other near the same moment. In an open country, level and treeless, one sees very far away.

At once they came together: "Then the Spirit said to Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot." Now, we all understand, of course, that this was the Holy Spirit. And the same gracious Agent probably powerfully influenced the Egyptian's mind likewise, so that he did not resent Philip's somewhat abrupt challenge. Strangers in the East are quite supercilious toward those they happen to meet in desolate places. They force the conversation to be very short when any one accosts or interrupts them. Here Philip found the access remarkably easy, although the traveler he approached was a grandee of the highest aristocracy. The good deacon does not appear in the slightest measure embarrassed, and we remember he had excellent success.

We know that the Lord will never set a timid or a diffident man to speak to a rich nabob or a politician like this, about his soul, or to any other awkward difficult person, without going beforehand, and, as it were, clearing the way by making him courteously inclined, and disposing his heart toward the truth.

So we learn that, without hesitancy, Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" It is not everybody who would put up with such an interference as this. And there must be times when even deacons would go too far, if they should intimate that people who read the Bible have often the poorest sort of success in getting the meaning of it. Still, the eunuch preserves his tranquility. And he ends with inviting Philip to a seat in the chariot beside him. And I think we shall all agree that this busy deacon never rode in such state before.

Now, before we attempt to go on any further with this story, I want you to

pick out a few exceedingly interesting hints offered as really helpful suggestions in the doing of our duty.

See those two persons together. Just look first at Philip. Remember that he had traveled down from a great wide popular city district, and was acting now as a sort of missionary for the foreign mission field. He was evangelizing Africa in a small but amazingly effective way. He had an African whom the Lord had put directly before him; and when Ethiopia stretched forth her hands, Philip stretched forth his hands also in the best way he knew how. Hence we see *it is wrong to be fastidious about opportunities*. Wherever souls are, there is the place for us to go and try to save them, as the Holy Spirit seems to suggest.

Nor is this all: another lesson follows right on from that. This bears on our persistent fidelity; *we are never to despise the day of small things*. Philip had an audience that day of only one person; and that was just what Jesus had at the well in Sychar. And Philip's audience consisted of a large, strange black man in a desert. But this deacon did his duty, and went straight ahead as he was told; and his whole congregation was converted before he left it in the afternoon.

Keep this entire thought in mind, for it leads to another lesson. Consider *the measureless worth of a single chance of telling a fellow-being about Jesus Christ*. You note here that the record says Philip "ran" when he started toward the wagon. See what pre-eminent alacrity in obedience! But you mark that it was now or never with the eunuch. Philip had not met this man before; there is no assurance that he should ever meet him again. A moment lost might have lost a soul for a vast eternity.

Now look, finally, at the eunuch: Philip's conduct was instructive, but that of this African treasurer was not less so. When the abrupt stranger asked him if he understood the chapter in Isaiah he was trying to read, he was not at all angry. Perhaps it may occur

as a question to some one how Philip happened to know what he was doing. In eastern schools the teachers are accustomed to tell orally to their pupils what they desire them to learn; and the scholars repeat it over and over audibly in a sort of concert exercise after them. Thus even the best educated people get in the habit of reading out aloud. In such silent solitudes of the desert the voice of a human being goes a great way, and seems quite distinct; the likelihood is that Philip heard the man long before he came up to him.

Hence, the first thing we notice in the behavior of this Abyssinian noble is his high-toned and unmistakable *politeness*. A churl would have told this stranger to move on and attend to his own concerns. But this colored man had some fine instincts, which always evidence good breeding, or long association with excellent society. *Courtesy is never lost on anybody in this uneasy and somewhat rough world*. This Ethiopian gentleman is to be imitated by those whom Christians try so often to benefit.

Then, next to this, you notice his *humility*. He wanted help, and he acknowledged it; such religious matters were quite too much for his management. It may be he had had some experience with interpreters before in his own land. There was then a class of wandering expositors in Jewish synagogues; wherever they had any converts to be instructed, the rich sometimes employed and paid them. It is evident from the first glance that the prime minister of Candace had no spurious pride or prudishness under confession of real ignorance. And once we remember it was a prime minister of England who said: "To be conscious that you are ignorant is a great step to knowledge." It is never a shame for one not to know; it is only a shame not to learn.

Now let us notice, as we end our study, that the story before us closes with a fresh assertion concerning the presence and working of the Holy Ghost. "And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught

away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing." Philip was sent by the Spirit, guided by the Spirit, and withdrawn by the Spirit; and our lesson is this: *whoever desires to do good must find out where the Spirit of God is leading him or leading others, and then must simply and humbly follow on.*

And let us be sure that, in this vast desert of a world, no inquirer shall be missed, to whom we might give help; *watch even chance chariots passing by, in the hope to save souls.*

### AMONG THE POTS.

BY J. O. PECK, D.D. [METHODIST], IN  
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*Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.*—Ps. lxxviii: 13.

ANY one who can look on the plumage of a dove without seeing the glory of God, is blind to half of His revelations. The rainbow is crude in beauty compared with the delicate, exquisite motting of the feathers of a dove's neck. Her wings are so beautiful that the immortal pictures of Rubens or Raphael, in comparison, appear like the daubs of a tyro. Yet these beautiful doves, in the Orient, often make their hiding-places in unlovely retreats, out of which they spring and spread their wings to be glorified in the benedictions of the sunlight.

The text has been a sealed passage for ages. Bishop Lowth declared it "unintelligible." In the latest work on the Psalms, "The Treasury of David," Mr. Spurgeon calls it "a hard passage, a difficult nut to crack." But new light is constantly breaking out of the Scriptures. Miss Whateley, traveling in the East, observed a fact which gives us the lost key to this text, and unlocks its beautiful imagery. In her work entitled "Ragged Life in Egypt," she thus speaks concerning the flat roofs of the houses: "They are usually in a state of great litter; were it not that an occasional clearance is made,

they would assuredly give way under the accumulation of rubbish. One thing seems never cleared away, however, and that is the heap of old broken pitchers, sherds and pots that are piled up in some corner. A little before sunset, numberless pigeons (or doves) suddenly emerge from behind the pitchers and pots and other rubbish where they have been sleeping in the heat of the day, or pecking about to find food. They dart upward and career through the air in large circles—their outspread wings catching the glow of the sun's slanting rays, so that they really resemble 'yellow gold'; then, as they wheel round and are seen against the light, they appear as if turned into molten silver, most of them being pure white or else very light-colored. This may seem fanciful, but the effect of light in these regions can scarcely be described to those who have not seen it. Evening after evening we watched the circling flight of doves, and always observed the same appearance." "Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold."

I. This beautiful passage is thus illuminated for the first time in modern days. It is a precious, comforting truth to the children of God. The doctrine unfolded is the promise of God, that a holy character may be maintained in this sinful world, despite unfavorable surroundings. From among the pots, covered with dust and dirt, these beautiful doves rise clean and unsoiled, to soar into the heavens, flashing their wings covered with silver and their feathers glistening like yellow gold.

Many Christians find their lot in life cast amid the dust and grime of the pots, but they need not be soiled thereby. Out of such conditions they may soar unsoiled, on wings of faith gleaming like silver and clothed in beatitudes shining like burnished gold.

Only in the sunlight do the doves shine in this transfiguring beauty. Only in the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, does the



Christian glow with the beauty of holiness.

1. The Christian may be clean as a dove in business.

No honorable business will grime the soul. The machinist, mechanic, artisan, and laborer may have grimy work to do, but he can be clean as a dove in character. Far better is the laborer's soiled hand, with a clean soul behind it, than the gentleman's clean hand with a soiled soul behind it. Though you have lain among the pots of the shop, store, wharf, foundry, or coal mine, you may have a soul clean as a dove's silver wing. Your character is not cheapened because your work is in the kitchen or at the forge, nor is it ennobled because you handle diamonds, write poems, thrill, breathless auditors, or sit behind mahogany office desks. There are men in coal mines with souls like the wings of a dove; and there are men in decorated mansions with souls sooty and black with sin as the miner's face with coal-dust. One has the soot on his face, the other on his soul. How beautiful a sight to see a man who has spent the day amid the pots of business, environed by the dust and grime of greed, of selfishness, of fraud and falsehood, fly home at sunset unsoiled and clean as the wings of a dove covered with silver!

2. The Christian must be clean as a dove in social life.

Man has needs which only social life can meet. In this there is a great good, and great evils lie close beside it. "Society" is not loyal to Christ, but is obedient to the spirit of "the world." Its ethical code is not the morals of the New Testament. Here are the pots dusty and grimy. We may mingle in social life only on the plane of our Christian birthright: "Brethren, ye are called unto holiness." To mingle in society and not touch its wines, not patronize its demoralizing amusements, not bow down to its false maxims, customs and conventionalities, not lose the zest and fervor of a holy life, is proof of the constraining love of Christ. But no one can touch pitch without being

defiled, nor take fire into his bosom without being burned. To join in social life and yet be clean as a dove's wing is not only a possibility but a privilege; not only a duty but a beauty. Demanding watchfulness, firmness, self-denial, nevertheless it has its reward in robust Christian character. The one thing we may not do is to compromise the highest moral tone of conduct. Better be a holy hermit than a social leper.

3. Clean as a dove in religious life.

Perhaps no other passage of Scripture more impressively teaches the privilege of a holy life under the most unfavorable conditions. "Though ye have lien among the pots, yet ye shall be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold." Surrounded by defilement, yet ever clean; rising out of unfavorable circumstances, with graces of silver and virtues of yellow gold, we shall glorify the grace of God. The sweetest promises of the Bible are full of paradoxes. "He that loseth his life shall find it." "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee."

The things impossible with men are possible with God. The things impossible to the unregenerate are possible to the regenerate man. Born again by the Spirit of God, and filled with divine grace, he can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth him. If the lines fall to him among the pots, still he may emerge "as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold."

This does not cover presumption and reckless precipitation of one's self into moral dangers. Had Daniel been recklessly roaming around that lions' den, and fallen in, God would not have sent an angel to shut their mouths. We must use all prudence to avoid evil influences: then, if our path of duty lies

through a fiery furnace, God will keep us from all harm.

A true Christian shrinks from unnecessary exposure to evil and moral danger. Then in his hour of need he can trust God to deliver him. The dove is a clean bird. Its instincts are clean. It hates defilement. It keeps its plumage anointed with an "unction" that preserves it from impurity. It loves, and lives for, cleanness. God is able to anoint us with an unction of the Holy One, so as to preserve us in holiness before Him. Many fail because their faith does not grasp His Almighty grace. We lack faith because our consecration is not entire, nor our obedience unqualified. External rules and aids will do little for us until we are made right within. You cannot make a ship sail steadily by external supports, but you must put the ballast inside. God has provided grace to ballast our souls for a safe voyage. He is able to keep what we have committed to Him. Life may be rugged, trials sharp, difficulties manifold, burdens heavy, and circumstances unfriendly; but, united to Christ, we may be more than conquerors. "Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold."

#### THE GOSPEL THE POWER OF GOD.

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

*I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.*—Rom. i: 16.

VIEWED in any and every aspect, Christianity is immeasurably superior to every other system of religious truth. As a speculative scheme it excels human philosophy both in the range and in the methods of its teachings. It tells of God, His nature and perfections, His creative power and providential care. It tells of man, his faculties and destiny; of eternity and its issues. Its aim is higher than the inculcation either of science or philosophy, while its scope includes both. No discovery in

the one, nor sound principle in the other, but serves to strengthen its evidences or to illustrate its mysteries. It overpasses both in the disclosure of truths upon which earthly oracles are dumb. It teaches, not by virtue of human discovery, but upon the authority of an inspired testimony, by which conjecture is reduced to knowledge, and opinion is converted into faith.

In the sphere of morals it transcends all human ethics—not only that it places man in wider relations, sets forth duty with greater precision, and supplies principles of action which are higher—but pre-eminently in the fact that it presents a more perfect and unvarying standard of obligation in the divine law, emancipating us from the shifting canons of utility and expediency, or from the still more capricious sense of fitness and propriety. We are no longer subject to the whims of fancy or of taste, but have a definite law for the measurement both of character and of conduct.

The full power of Christianity, however, is not felt until we accept it as a Gospel; until we rise into the sphere of religion and consider it as the kind of religion which is suited to the case of a sinner. This precisely is what the text affirms: that "the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." When we wish to be most deeply impressed with a sense of God's power, we are apt to select our illustrations from the visible and material universe—perhaps for the reason that the movement of physical force gives us the first conception of what we call power; which, once obtained, is readily transferred from the sphere of the natural to that of the spiritual and moral. But Paul finds the highest evidences of divine power, not in the kingdom of nature, but of grace. True, he proves the heathen to be without excuse, since "His eternal power and Godhead are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made." (Rom. i: 20.) But, for one reference to the works of creation he makes a dozen to the scheme of grace, when he would

impress us with the vast resources of Jehovah's wisdom and power. Hear him in the text, "For I am not ashamed"—which is but a suggestive way of describing the triumphant joy with which he contemplates "the Gospel of Christ" as being "the power of God unto salvation." He brings out the thought on this, its positive side, in Galatians: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (Gal. vi: 14.) He writes to the Corinthians: "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God. \* \* \* But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but to them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God." (1 Cor. i: 18, 23, 24.) In his epistle to the Ephesians, he prays that they might know "what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe; according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places." (Eph. i: 19, 20.) These are but instances of the frequency and unction with which Paul sets forth the Gospel as exhibiting the fullness of divine power, which is the topic to which I will restrict your thoughts this morning.

Two difficulties obviously oppose the salvation of a sinner. The first is external, arising from his relations to the divine law as one condemned under the penalty; the second is internal, arising from his actual character unfitting him for fellowship with his Maker. In other words, the guilt and the disability of sin must both be removed—the one in the complete justification of the believer, the other in his perfect sanctification.

#### I. THE PROOF OF POWER IN THE REMOVAL OF HUMAN GUILT.

1. *Power is displayed in constituting the substitute who shall take the sinner's place*

*under the law.* No creature was equal to the task of vindicating the law and atoning for sin. A divine sacrifice was necessary; and how shall the divine suffer and die? The conjunction of infinite extremes in the one person of the Mediator should impress us with the power that accomplishes it: and yet we have not touched the core of the mystery. The incarnation of Deity in "the seed of the woman," supernaturally conceived in the womb of a virgin, is the greatest wonder and miracle of the universe.

2. *Power is displayed in sustaining Christ's human nature under the pressure of the penalty.*

3. *There was a vast exhibition of power in exalting Him, through the resurrection, to universal Mediatorial authority and rule.* Says the apostle: "According to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." (Eph. i: 19-21.) Think, too, of the change wrought in what is purely human in Christ Jesus when, in company with the divine, it is "seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. iii: Acts ii: 33, and v: 31), and is there exalted to universal priesthood and royal supremacy. It is not for me to expand, much less to explain, the thought. The suggestion of it suffices to fill the soul with adoring wonder. How is it that God's power confederates the human nature in Christ with the divine in a state of exaltation and glory; how "this man," Christ Jesus, shall have capacity to "judge the world in righteousness, whereof we have assurance in that God hath raised him from the dead" (Acts xvii: 31); how the human in Him shall be glorified into power to wield that providence which is committed to His hands (Matt. xxviii: 18). Nay, more: when the kingdom shall be delivered to the Father, that God may be all in all (1 Cor. xv: 24),

how He shall remain in His complex person, the God-man, eternally the head of His redeemed people, and the fountain of their blessedness and joy. Under all these forms we behold the power of God exhibited in co-ordinating the finite factor in our Lord's person with the infinite and eternal, so necessary to the fulfilment of His functions as the Priest and King of His Church. In revealing the righteousness by which the sinner is justified forever, the Gospel is truly "the power of God to salvation."

II. We consider next THE EVIDENCE OF POWER IN THE SUBJECTIVE CHANGE BROUGHT WITHIN THE SINNER HIMSELF.

1. And right upon the threshold is the power displayed in regeneration, when we are made new creatures in Christ Jesus. The highest prerogative is that of bestowing life—it is creation, in the fullest conception of the term.

2. There is power in preserving the Christian amid the temptations and under the discipline of this unfriendly world.

3. But the climax of this power is reached in the believer's final translation to heaven, where he is made perfect in holiness and bliss forever. It may seem incredible to us in the hour of severe temptation when, for the moment, we go down under the fierce assault; or in the hour of our penitence, when we weep tears of shame over the sin which has clouded God's face with a frown of displeasure. It seems impossible then that the last stain will be purged from the conscience, and the last wrinkle be taken out of the character, and that we shall be presented without blemish before the throne of the Father. What a wonderful transformation, when we shall be made meet to lie in the divine bosom and to drink eternal draughts of divine joy! Yet this is the destiny which awaits every child of grace, however obscure may be his experience now. The nature will be holy; the habit of holiness will be perfectly formed; the acts of holiness will be easy; the exemption from temptation and fear will be complete; the delights of holiness will rush in upon the soul

through every spiritual sense; and the saint's capacity for joy will be filled to the brim. "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" And well may we, with Paul, glory in that Gospel which is thus "the power of God unto salvation"—that salvation which is threefold in its form: a salvation from the guilt of sin, a salvation from the dominion of sin, a salvation from the presence and being of sin.

#### THE PROPORTION OF FAITH.

BY R. S. STORRS, D.D. [CONGREGATIONAL], IN CHURCH OF THE PILGRIMS, BROOKLYN.

*Let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith.*—Rom. xii: 6.

THE Greek word rendered "prophet" in this passage means one who speaks for another, who conveys a message, and is the expounder and interpreter of another's thought. In the Hebrew word there is involved the idea of a fountain bubbling up as from between rocks, subjected to pressure from without. The prophet had often the function of declaring future events; but we must not always limit the word "prophet" by the predictive element in it. It is more inclusive. Abraham, Moses, Samuel, Nathan, and Isaiah were prophets—Miriam and Deborah as well. There were schools of prophets. They brought messages to men pertaining to the present practical duty of life. So in the New Testament, Barnabas, Paul, the daughters of Philip and many others declared the message of God, and were inspired by His Spirit. He who now does this, stands in the line of all before him, has the same aid and the promise of the same attending efficacy.

"According to the faith." We make the sense clearer by inserting the article, or, as the Revised Version reads, "our faith;" that is, the objective system of truth, the Gospel which makes us wise unto salvation. It is a vast, vital, co-ordinated system, built up a unity, like the root, the stem and branch, or the wall, the tower and spire of a building. The balance of every part with

every other part is hinted at. In this symmetrical and majestic scheme of thought we are to study and to preach, each in its place, and all in their ultimate and transcendent unity.

What is it that God's Word brings? Great doctrines concerning God's attributes and offices. It tells us that every house is builded by some man, and that He who built all things is God. The eternal personality of God is the grandest of thoughts. The pagan mind did not grasp it. They, and others since, have spoken of "The All," and of "a principle of order;" but the Word of God enunciates the central truth of His personality. Science has its glory in showing this, and it is dwarfed when it hides this pivotal thought. We learn, not only of the Creator—the almighty, immortal and immaculate One—but of His providential goodness and redeeming grace. His hand is in history. This gives it its rhythm, order and beauty. The history of the race is the history of redemption. It was God who led Paul to Damascus, Augustine to Rome, Savonarola to Florence, and Luther to Worms. His creative power, His providence and grace, like the mysterious trinity of being to which they are related, fill us with adoring wonder. The Bible lifts the race, exalting its intellectual as well as its moral capacity. When one brings to you one of the small, insignificant skulls found in some ancient cave, as a relic of a primitive race, you may well say, "The Word of God never entered the mind that once wrought in that skull!"

Again, the law of God is as great as the doctrine of God. It is high and holy—far above the range of human ethics or the codes of uninspired teachers. It is universal as gravitation, and lofty as God himself. Love to Him, the Supreme, and love to man, are the essential elements. Every element of life is reached and ruled by it. As one sunshine floods the breadth of the sea and the face of the smallest flower, so the law touches alike the mightiest and the meanest. It enters into the whole

man. Courtesy in manner is philanthropy in a trait, and heroism of character is shown in the patience of love. In a word, the law is matched to the doctrine in its supernal character and reach.

Great as either stands the Savior. He was announced by angels in the midnight sky; a star led worshipers to His cradle; like a dove the Spirit descended upon Him at His baptism, and a voice from the excellent glory proclaimed Him the well-beloved of the Father. He, too, laid audacious claims on man's service to worship—blasphemous, indeed, were He not God. He revised and reconstructed human relations, putting Himself between parent and child, wife and husband; or, rather, above them all, in supreme authority. "Follow me;" "Let the dead bury the dead;" "He that forsaketh not father and mother cannot be my disciple." In these and other words He exacts our fealty and service. The heart recoils and rebels; it expels Him from the soul's sympathy if it does recognize in these commands the august behests of God. By His pierced hands, Christ, the crucified and risen Redeemer, has been guiding the course of empires, and is bringing in millennial eras. Really, though often dumbly and unconsciously, has the world in its advancing civilization reflected the glory of this majestic Prince of Life. He shall yet see the travail of His soul and be satisfied. On His head will rest "many crowns."

The universal spiritual kingdom of Christ is co-incident in majesty and might with the foregoing elements we have examined. The idea of such a kingdom is unique and grand. To the Greeks, other nations were but barbarians. Rome made other peoples her captives, without extinguishing their enmity or assimilating their life. But Christ founded His throne in the love of His redeemed people. He predicted the supremacy of that throne. He promised His abiding presence. He was with the Church when her members hid in the Catacombs, when they were burned, or buried alive, and when the darkness

of mediæval ages rested on the earth. Then, as truly as in our days of light and knowledge, He said, "Fear not!" His pledges will be fulfilled. Law shall be revered; all genius shall be developed, and all wealth shall be consecrated under the supremacy of Christ. Christianity shall be the glory of the nations. No eye hath seen the future, nor heart conceived its grandeur when His imperial sway shall extend over the earth. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." Even on the highest summit of thought, and in the most brilliant cloud-land of ecstasy no word can utter the divine experience any more than a moment of time may contain eternity.

The great warnings which the Word of God has brought to us constitute a fifth and final element of our analysis of Gospel truth. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so GREAT salvation?" "Fear him who hath power to destroy both soul and body in hell." These, and many other menaces of grace are ever echoing in our ears. In their awful grandeur and solemnity they are in harmony with the other elements of truth above named, Law and Doctrine; the Savior and this wide-extended realm of empire. Here is, then, the "proportion of faith," the harmony of truth, the "analogy" which knits all together in a definite unity. These are the sub-structural truths of revelation, which are to be studied and proclaimed, each in its time, place and proportion.

As we infer the genius of the architect from the grandeur of the building, the genius of the poet from his verse, or that of the statesman and jurist from what emanates from each, so we infer the sublime greatness of God from the matchless unity and power, wisdom and grace displayed in this revelation of truth. Can any one say that the Scriptures are the product of the Jewish mind? As well might we say that the Atlantic came from the upsetting of a child's breakfast cup!

Attacking one point of this revelation is an attack on the whole. If one part be in error the value of the whole is vitiated, the entire edifice tumbles to

pieces. If there be no Law there is no Savior; if there be no Law there is no penalty; if either of these five facts be questioned, all are in doubt or are undervalued. It is not a light matter to regard the law as mere advice, or to belittle the work of Christ, or to doubt the penalty He has taught. All these facts of our common faith stand or fall together, as heart and brain are united. If one be paralyzed, the whole suffers. If one stone be plucked from the arch, they all tumble in one heap; but in their entirety they reflect the divine unity and eternity.

Finally, we thus rise into sympathy with God as we come into fuller comprehension of His wondrous truth. How unwise it is for one to try to banish God's word from his thoughts! Here is the romance of the world. The imagination, as well as the conscience of the race, is exalted by the truth of God. It ennobles the whole man. It enriches the life that is, as well as the life that is to come. Do not neglect this great salvation, or listen carelessly to its proclamation here in church, as if it were the story of some indifferent matter in Japan. Let us all feel as we enter yonder door that we are to listen to the message of God; to truth, the grandest and loveliest conceivable; to that over which the angels themselves bend with admiring and scrutinizing gaze, and which, received and obeyed, will make us the heirs of immortal life with God himself.

#### "THE GRASS OF THE FIELDS."

BY REV. GEORGE E. REED [METHODIST], IN THE HANSON PLACE CHURCH, BROOKLYN.

*Now there was much grass in the place.—*  
John vi: 10.

THE words of our text, as they stand in the chapter, are parenthetical, as if, to the mind of the writer, intent only upon describing the wonderful miracle of the loaves and fishes, there had suddenly come the remembrance of a feature of that memorable scene, unessential to the continuity of his description, and yet one upon which his thought



gladly dwells, and which he cannot forbear to mention—namely, *the green and abundant grass upon which Jesus commanded the multitude to sit.* "Now there was much grass in the place."

And so, just as when in the country, walking the dry and dusty highway, you sometimes see branching off from the beaten path a quiet and grassy lane, embowered with trees, and bright with sunshine and flowers, into whose winding way your feet are sorely tempted to wander: so here we have a text which seems, by its very position, to invite us to leave for a time the familiar and beaten paths, traversed again and again in the rounds of pulpit ministrations, to speak upon a theme which, amid the bright summer days upon which we have entered, must be more in harmony with the thoughts pervading the minds of all.

Let us, then, this morning consider, not the lilies, but the grasses of the fields, how they grow; that from the contemplation of these humblest of the leafy families of the earth, no less than from their gayer companions, the flowers, we may learn more fully the meaning of the Master, when, standing amid the green grass of His native hills, His feet kissed by the lilies blooming in their wild luxuriance about Him, He opened His lips to say: "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

1. And, first, speaking of the grass, *consider it for its beauty.* Behold it as everywhere it spreads its soft and velvet carpet about you; as it rolls away in the lawns before your dwellings; as it covers the landscapes in the distance; as it reaches over the hills above you—hills half white with clover, and whereon herds of cattle are feeding; as it runs over the meadows, stretching in pensive quietness between; as it shimmers in the summer wind, or waves beneath the golden glory of the setting sun; and, as you behold it, cease to wonder that on the evening of that creative day when God said, "Let the

earth bring forth grass," He should have pronounced it—"good;" or that the Psalmist, looking out upon the mountains standing around about Jerusalem, green to their very summits, should have cried in ecstasy, "He maketh his grass to grow upon the mountains."

2. *Consider it for its utility.* What a world this would be were there not abundance of grass—grass to cover its nakedness, hide its deformities, and to furnish food for men! What wonder that poets, like David, like Homer, like Dante, delighted in it—the Hebrew for its beauty, the Greek for its color and beauty, and the Latin for the combination which it presented of all!

Dante, in Purgatory, has in his happy resting-place no other delight than its grass and flowers, and thinks the righteous spirits of the heathen sufficiently comforted by having even the *image* of green grass put beneath their feet.

And the poets of our modern times have shared with the masters of old in the delight occasioned by the springing grass upon which their weary eyes have rested. How Shakspeare loved the green grass of the fields! How dear it was to Burns, to Scott, to Thomson, to Wordsworth, to Bryant, to Longfellow, and to a host more of those who never wearied to sing its praise! How dear, too, it is to the common people, the hewers of wood and drawers of water! Behold yonder laborer, as at the close of the day he sits in the shade of the vine of his cottage-door! What spot in all the world to him so sweet as that little plot of green whereon in the twilight his children are playing; upon which, for years, in noonday heat he himself has rested, even as rested his fathers before him?

And yet, as compared with the rose or the lily, how humble, how insignificant appears that little, fluted, sword-shaped strip of green we call a blade of grass! Take it in your hand; examine it. What is there in it of beauty or of strength? Let Ruskin answer: "A very little strength, and a very little tallness,

and a few delicate long lines meeting in a point—not a perfect point either, but blunt and unfinished, by no means a creditable or apparently much cared for example of Nature's workmanship; made, as it seems, only to be trodden on to-day, and to-morrow to be cast into the oven; and a little pale and hollow stalk, feeble and flaccid, leading down to the dull brown fibres of its roots." That is all. "And yet," he adds, "think of it well, and judge whether of all the gorgeous flowers that beam in summer air, and of all strong and goodly trees, pleasant to the eyes and good for food—stately palm and pine, strong ash and oak, scented citron, burdened vine—there be any by man so deeply loved, by God so highly graced, as that narrow point of feeble green."

Consider, then, the grass of the fields! Consider it, particularly, in the places where your dead are lying. What Golgothas would be our cemeteries did not the grass grow there more green and more abundant, if possible, than almost anywhere beside! How unwilling we are to turn away until above the freshly opened grave the turf has again been heaped, making the place restful and holy, and causing us to think of it with sad, yet pleasurable emotions.

3. Consider what may fitly be termed *the characteristic virtues of the grass of the fields.* (a) Consider its humility—humility in that it seems made for lowliest service, made to be trodden down, made to minister rather than to be ministered unto—teaching us, over and over again, when we look upon it, the great lesson taught us by the picture of that girded figure "who, on the night that he was betrayed," washed His disciples' feet, saying after that He had done it: "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet." Let, then, the lowly grass upon which you tread teach you to remember, that while "God resisteth the proud, he giveth grace unto the humble." (b) Consider its cheerfulness.

It never complains, never murmurs, never repines, is ever content. It seems to exult when in tribulation. Cut it, and it grows more luxuriously than before; roll it, and it is the stronger for the rolling; tread upon it, and it is but the more elastic to your step; crush it, and it breathes a perfume upon the hand that deals the blow. Spring comes, and it rejoices that "the time of the singing of birds has come;" summer and its heats wither not its spirit; autumn frosts come, and the frosts change not the greenness of its hue; it is *yet* green, greener, if possible, than ever when seen over against the hoar frost that covers it. If it could speak it could almost adopt the very language of the apostle: "Troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed."

Anxious and troubled soul! burdened with care, weary and heavy-laden, consider the grass of the fields, and learn from it how to "take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in distresses for Christ's sake," knowing that when you are weak, then are you strong.

Learn from it, too, to be grateful to God for His mercies. How quickly the grass responds to the touch of the falling rain! Dry, dusty, and withered, the shower comes, and in a moment all is changed. Every blade of grass in the meadows, every flower in the fields, every leaf upon every tree, seems to quiver, as with grateful joy; while the low-flying winds seem burdened with their freightage of perfume and of praise. So let the heart of man speak forth the praise of Him who sends to man—as dew upon the grass, and as the former and the latter rain—the blessings of His years.

Finally, *consider the grass as the emblem of human life.* "The grass withereth; the flower fadeth." "As for man, his days are as grass." "In the morning it flourisheth and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down and withereth." *So shall man fade away in his days!* As the grass! As the grass! But the

grass fades, to come again. It sinks, to rise. It dies, to live. So, at last, shall it be with man, for thus is it written: "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. *Believest thou this?*"

If thou dost, then to thee the withering of the grass, the fading of the flowers, shall have in them no gloomy shadowings forth of the thoughts of thy own sad heart. Rather shall they cause joy and gladness that at last the empire of death shall be broken, *and mortality be swallowed up of life.*

Consider, then, the grass of the fields. Think of the lessons it teaches, and be humble. Think, and be like unto it in the cheerfulness with which you face the ills of life.

Think, and be grateful to God, that as in our otherwise dreary world He has provided abundance of grass, so in the realm of the spiritual has He provided much of the comfort of which that grass is but the perfect symbol.

Think of it, until from every green field that shall greet your eyes, amid the wanderings of the summer, there shall come a voice, saying: "Be not anxious about the things of to-morrow, 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 those things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

#### GOD'S PERFECT REVELATION.

By REV. ARTHUR B. COIT [PRESBYTERIAN], ST. GEORGE, UTAH.

*God . . . hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.*—Heb. i: 1, 2.

LISTEN! God speaks by a myriad tongues. The beating of your heart tells that your life is given by God; the wonderful mechanism of your body bespeaks His skill; the more wonderful powers of your mind, His intelligence. The orderly movements of the heavenly bodies proclaim an infinite Lawgiver; the perfect adaptation of means in na-

ture to accomplish the ends desired, His wisdom. Truly "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork." "The invisible things of God are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." He is most guilty who denies there is a God, and that He possesses wisdom, power and goodness; for these are plainly revealed in nature.

But God has other revelations than those of nature. He touches men lips, and they speak His words; He guides men's pens, and they write His thoughts. Adam hears His voice at midday, Samuel at midnight. He speaks to Moses out of a flame; to the children of Israel out of a cloudy pillar. In dreams and in visions, by Urim and Thummim, He communicates His will. Angelic forms appear to men, bearing divine messages. For hundreds of years this was God's method of revealing Himself.

But Israel, to whom He vouchsafed these glorious revelations, misunderstood, neglected and forgot them. Seeking a tangible object of worship, they were ready to pay divine homage to the brazen serpent, the ark, and the very stones of the Temple; and time and time again they fell into the idolatry of the nations around them. Yet there was a goodly company of saints to whom these revelations were sufficient, whose faith wrought glorious victories. But God had prepared some better things for those who follow even a new revelation.

A little child is born into the world, as weak and helpless as any infant is. He gradually attains manhood, his body grows, his mind develops; he is wearied by toil, he is refreshed by food and drink, and by slumber. Yet when He spake perfect wisdom sat on His lips; extraordinary authority accompanied His words. A love and compassion that were marvelous marked His whole life's work. All power in heaven and earth was His when He chose to use it. To the raging sea He said, "Peace, be still!" to the lifeless corpse, "Lazarus, come forth!" and He was obeyed.

This new revelation of God is Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son. He, as a revelation, answers all our needs and makes plain the mysteries of an unseen God. "No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." Do we want something tangible, something palpable to our senses? Such is Christ. Where He is known idolatry flees away. He who suffers shows his kinship to men. In suffering, Christ was chief. "Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be like unto his brethren. . . . For in that he himself suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." How does God regard sin? As such a terrible thing that only the blood of the God-man can wash out its stain. What are the demands of divine justice? Go, learn all that Jesus suffered while on earth that justice might be vindicated. Do the attributes of God seem incomprehensible? But the wisdom, the mercy, the love, the justice, the power displayed by Christ was *divine* wisdom, mercy, love, justice and power, and that is easily understood. It is a mystery, that God would robe Himself in human flesh; but the One so robed is no mystery. Jesus Christ is more easily understood than a Napoleon or a Caesar. He is more easily comprehended than a system of theology or ethics. To know Jesus Christ and Him crucified is salvation. To trust Him is faith, which is an act of the heart more than of the head. Blessed be God, that salvation is made so easy!

It is vain and wicked to expect any other revelation from God. In Jesus it is perfect: "For he is the effulgence of God's glory, and the very image of his substance." In Him, also, it is complete. God will give no other. Paul gives expression to this thought, when he says: "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

Jesus claimed that He was the last messenger of peace and love from the Court of Heaven, in the parable of the

vineyard, where He said: "But last of all he sent unto them his Son, saying, They will reverence my Son." Oh, my hearer, accept the Son as God's messenger of love and mercy! Let us see in Him God's last and perfect revelation. Let us rejoice that "God hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."

### THE BLESSEDNESS OF OVERCOMING.

BY REV. C. L. BURDICK, VALLEY FALLS,  
NEW YORK.

*He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels.*—Rev. iii: 5.

WE have here divine encouragement in the battle of life. The pledge of the text implies the possibility of success to all who contend for the faith.

#### I. WHAT ARE WE TO OVERCOME?

1. *Self.* (a) In its hostility. "The carnal mind is enmity against God." Rom. viii: 7. (b) In its indifference. "Go thy way for this time." Acts xxiv: 25. (c) In its insincerity. "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." Jer. xvii: 9.

2. *World.* (a) In its frowns. "The friendship of the world is enmity with God." Jas. iv: 4. (b) In its flatteries. "If sinners entice thee consent thou not." Prov. i: 10. (c) In its applauses. "And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god." Acts xii: 22.

3. *Death.* (a) In the fears of his approach. "And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Heb. ii: 15. (b) In the pains of his attack. "Oh, death, where is thy sting?" 1 Cor. xv: 55. (c) In the desolations of his triumph. "He that believeth, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." John xi: 25, 26.

#### II. HOW ARE WE TO OVERCOME?

Only through Christ as our wisdom and strength, and our redemption.

1. *By thought.* "I thought on my ways." (a) The condition of the soul lost. Ps. cxix: 50. (b) The means of

recovery, Christ. "He is the propitiation," etc. (c) The end of faith, "salvation of soul."

2. By *purpose*. (a) To do; (b) to do all; (c) to do now.

3. By *faith*. (a) Lively; (b) progressive; (c) saving.

4. By *effort*. (a) Cheerful; (b) continual; (c) mighty.

### III. THE RESULTS OF OVERCOMING.

1. *A pure and spotless nature*. "Clothed in white."

2. *An enduring name*. Registered in "the book of life."

3. *A public honor*. "I will confess his name before" God and angels. Sinner, enlist, be loyal, conquer, and you are a pensioner forever.

### THE DANGER OF NEGLECT.

BY REV. BENJAMIN F. WHITEMORE  
[CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN], ARROYO  
GRANDE, CAL.

*How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?* — Heb. ii: 3.

#### I. OUR DANGEROUS CONDITION.

1. The inquiry, "How shall we escape?" implies it: bitten, depraved, dead, lost.

2. We need relief—salvation. "All we, like sheep, have gone astray." Isaiiii: 6. "Our hope is lost." Ezek. xxxvii: 11.

3. We cannot relieve or save ourselves. "Then a great ransom cannot deliver thee. Will he esteem thy riches? No; not gold nor all the forces of strength." Job xxxvi: 18, 19. "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." Ps. xlix: 7.

4. Christ brings salvation to us. "God so loved," etc. John iii: 16. "Jesus," etc. Matt. i: 21.

"God sent not His Son," etc. John iii: 17. "The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Luke ix: 56. "— is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke xix: 10. He "gave himself a ransom for all," 1 Tim. ii: 6.

#### II. IT IS A GREAT SALVATION.

1. God in Christ is its Author. "Salvation is of God." All-wise, all-powerful—the Creator.

2. Jesus is its Finisher. How? His love. "Greater love," etc. "God commandeth," etc. His sufferings. "O, Jerusalem," etc. Gethsemane: "Eloi," etc.: "It is finished."

3. It is plenteous and full. Will freed, undersanding enlightened, spirit renewed, heart cleansed. "Old man" renewed. We "walk in newness of life." "With the Lord there is mercy, and with him there is plenteous redemption." Ps. cxxx: 7.

4. It saves from great sins. "As scarlet," etc. *All* sin, however aggravated; all sin, black, heinous, great. No *little* sins.

5. It saves from greatest dangers—the danger of an eternal hell. All do not see it or believe it; yet it is real. Everlasting burnings, unending ruin and woe. Gospel did not make hell or misery. Sin made it; man sinned, hence in danger. The only mission of the Gospel is to *save*.

6. It is free. "A fountain for sin," etc. "Whosoever, freely." "I will give freely." "Ho, every one," etc.

7. It is the *only* salvation. "None other name." Only way, only bridge, "*one Mediator*."

8. It is great in heaven. Infinite honors, eternal crown. "Kings and priests," etc. "Like Jesus." Truly this is *great*.

9. It is everlasting. "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded, world without end." Isa. xlv: 17.

#### III. THERE IS DANGER OF LOSING IT.

1. By simple neglect? Ah, yes! Here is the secret of the destruction of hosts of our race. This is the fatal thing that is peopling perdition to-day, as it has been doing in the centuries past. Not great sinfulness alone, but simple *neglect* is sufficient to destroy your soul. The man in business has but to *neglect* it to be ruined. The sick man *neglects* the means of recovery and he dies. The man on Niagara *neglects* at the proper time to use the oar, and he plunges over the cataract. Ah, ruinous *neglect*! Let no one infer because he is moral, upright, and truthful; is not a drunk-

ard, an adulterer, a murderer, or some red-handed, black-hearted criminal, that he is safe. Why, if your own morality and goodness were enough to save you, then Jesus need not have suffered and

died. Salvation is not forced upon us. We must *want* it, and then *make an effort* to secure it. We may neglect to make that effort, and be lost. Oh! neglect no longer. *Now* is the time to seek the Lord.

### THE INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY-SCHOOL SERVICE.

#### God's Works and Word.

(Lesson for Aug. 31, 1884.)

By BISHOP H. W. WARREN, [METHODIST],  
DENVER, COLORADO.

*Thou has magnified thy Word above all thy name.*—Ps. cxxxviii : 2. Lesson, Ps. xix : 1-14.

THE Bible recognizes no conflict between science and religion. It asserts a unity of origin for the Word and the worlds. It never hesitates to allude to the natural and the supernatural as perfectly harmonious. It always holds that the natural owes its origin, constant support, term of existence, and mode of ending, to the supernatural. Men say, "in the beginning, force and world-stuff," not knowing whence; in the continuance, "conservation of forces;" and in the end, "exhaustion," quite forgetful that they have denied conservation. The Bible says, "In the beginning God;" in continuance, "upholding all things by the word of his power;" in the end, "As a vesture shalt thou, God, fold them up, and they shall be changed" to new heavens and new earth. The divine Word differs from man's, because it is more penetrative and fundamental. Faith takes God's Word; science takes man's. But lately,

"Science walks with humble feet

To seek the God that faith has found."

It has taken the following step:

1. *That the Bible nowhere contradicts established science.* This is an amazing statement. The Bible was written in ages ignorant of the science of to-day, and by unlearned men. They could avoid opposition to the discoveries of to-day only by divine guidance. Pythagoras, and other wise men, taught the reverse of what is proven truth to-day. Every truth of to-day has been opposed by men, *not by Scripture.*

It is conceded that the Bible often speaks of things according to visual appearance, as sunrise and sunset; and so does that embodiment of mathematics and science, the Nautical Almanac. Some interpretations and translations of Scripture have opposed discovered science; but translations made in the light of the greatest knowledge cause Scripture and science to agree.

2. *The Bible has always been, and is yet, far in advance of the discoveries of science.* Science claims to have discovered an order of progress in the developed world—chaos, light, sun, moon, lifted land, gathered waters, tender grass, herb, tree, moving creatures that have life in the waters, bird, reptile, beast, cattle, man. The Bible makes the same an order of God's creation. Science says the strata of the earth were formed by the action of water, and that the mountains were once under the sea. It is more vividly stated in Ps. civ: 6-8, marginal reading. And Peter says, "there were heavens of old, and land framed out of water, and by means of water." For ages men thought the earth to be flat. God said of Himself, "He sitteth on the *sphere* of the earth." Men knew not how the earth was upheld, and imagined serpents, elephants, tortoises, etc. The Bible says, "He hangeth the earth upon nothing." Men counted the stars. The Bible said they were innumerable. Torricelli discovered that the air had weight. Men denied it, but the Bible was constantly saying, "God gave to the air its weight." The pet science of to-day is meteorology. Vast tomes record its discoveries; daily probabilities publish its utility. All the essence of the science is in Eccl. i: 6, 7. The finest discovery of our most delicate thinking and manipulation is that light makes music as it



flies. The Bible long since said, "The morning stars sang together, and that God makes the outgoings of the morning (sunrise) and of the evening (sunset) to sing." (See marginal.) The earth's axial rotation is possibly recognized in the statement that the earth is turned to the dayspring as clay to the seal. Verse six of our lesson says the sun's "going is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit to the ends of it." Men sneered at this as a supposed assertion that the sun went round the earth. It took many centuries for men to grow large enough to believe that the sun is itself a superior planet, and flies in an orbit or circuit of its own for millions of years from one end of the heavens to the other.

How is it possible for unlearned men in distant ages to escape error, and especially to anticipate truth yet to be discovered, except on the ground that the wisdom that made the worlds inspired the Word? There are yet other statements in the Bible about the universe waiting for man to add cubits enough to his mental stature to be able to understand them. Job could not answer God's questions about the brilliancy of the clouds, the suspension of frozen masses of hail, the *breadth* of the earth, the sweet influence of the Pleiades, etc. Neither can we. The Word is as full of undiscovered wisdom as are the worlds.

3. *Very few scientific men recognize any antagonism between the revelation by Word and that by works.* The American Association for the Advancement of Science embraces the great names in this country. At its last meeting it was found that seven-eighths of these were professing Christians, or habitual attendants on divine worship. Such a statement could not be made of any other secular body of men—lawyers, merchants or doctors. Newton, Herschel, Mitchell, Agassiz, and the magnificent development of German and Anglo-Saxon mind sees God in nature to-day. What kind of a man is he who cannot see?

4. *Nature is a universal revelation of God, but of the lowest kind.* Every flower

or spire of grass shows more wisdom and skill than any man or all men can exercise or understand. The heavens so declare the glory of God, and the firmament so sheweth His handiwork, that even a heathen savage is without excuse if he do not discern eternal power and Godhead. Nearly all do so discern it. If the earth were tied to the sun with steel wires of a tensile strength of 1,500 lbs. each, they would have to be so near together that a mouse could not move among them on any part of the side of the earth next the sun.

5. *The law of the Lord is the next higher revelation.* It is perfect, converting the soul, rejoicing the heart, enlightening the eyes, and making wise the simple.

6. *The highest revelation is Christ.* He brings life and love to light; reveals a greater power in spiritual realms than gravitation is in material realms, and by the revelation of incomprehensible wisdom and power in the natural, suggests the more incomprehensible power of love in the supernatural. All these revelations are one, and of one God.

#### Confidence in God.

(Lesson for September 7, 1884.)

BY REV. EMORY J. HAYNES [BAPTIST].

Ps. xxvii: 1-14. *The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear?*—v. 1.

AN immense gain in several of these strophes by a corrected translation.

"That I may dwell," etc., "to behold the favor of Jehovah;" not "beauty," which scarcely conveys a practical meaning: but to experience His kindness and nameless, beautiful services while a guest in His household.

"To meditate in his temple": not "inquire," but to sit in dreamy contemplation of Jehovah's greatness and goodness; as a visitor might sit in a king's palace, that king his host, now by quiet fountain, now by vista of gardens, now among royal archives, now by costly works of art. Oh! to so loiter in the ante-chamber of prayer, and meditate on God. I like the churches which are open all the days of the year—especially off the hot streets of the

city—to invite the weary passer-by to enter and meditate in Jehovah's temple.

"He shelters me with the shelter of his tent" (verse 5). Poor battle-worn fugitives, in full retreat of defeat and in danger of capture, lo! Jehovah, the Great Captain of our salvation, comes forth to arrest you, makes you prisoner, hides you in His tent. Who will dare seek you there? Who would even think of looking for you, a wretched, bedraggled runaway, in the gorgeous tent of the chieftain?

Slave of sin, become a guest of the Christ! Hid? Among what treasures concealed? Garments of praise thrown over you. The blood-stained robe of His Calvary covering you. The banner of His love, struck at sunset, flung across your crouched form. To find you, they must lay profane hands on His crozier and staff, His sword and armor. What a word it is! Hid in His tent! Then let the battle break again at daybreak. We are being nursed of our wounds in the tent of the great Captain!

Verse 8: "Seek thy face." Dost thou ask, command it? To think that I should need such command! It were enough had it been permission. "Thy face, Lord, I will indeed seek!"

In the 13th verse, leave off the inserted words, and read it as an overmastering exclamation: "Had I not believed—exercising faith—till I saw the goodness of the Lord in a world of living men!" What if He had given way to moments of despair? All that kept Him was simple belief, against all appearances. So He died not, but outlived the storm. He is yet alive; but only by faith did He escape death.

Let the 14th verse read: "Wait on the Lord; be steadfast and show thyself strong," etc. The royal singer exhorts himself to work with Jehovah. It is not a supine, lazy dependence on Providence to strengthen the heart. It is an evoking of all known manliness. "Let me be firm, and let my heart show itself of sterling temper."

God will, no doubt, have mercy on a coward, for He pities us all; and who is

not at times faint-hearted? He must pity most the most pitiable, I suppose; and who is so pitiable as the coward? Yet you and I crave that more sympathizing success which the Lion of the tribe of Judah must feel toward the brave and stout-hearted who are fighting with high hopes against the odds of despair. Do your best—then wait on Jehovah.

Wait? How? As the soldier waits for reinforcements on the actual, stricken field—that is, not inactive. It is with drawn sword, right foot advanced, meditating on his latest orders from the chief, facing upward in prayer as his ears list for the sound of the rescuing bugles. Wait not in bed; wait on your feet. Wait not by clocks and divisions of time for a favorable opportunity, but wait, utterly oblivious of time. Wait on God as if you had ages of time—all the time you needed in which to do your duty. Wait on Him as if time was no more, and eternity were begun. It is our clocks which make cowards of us. Many a man can bear the thunder of breaking war with more calmness than he can the ticking of a chamber clock. Ah! the clocks—the clocks: the calendars, the birthdays that jangle in impatient chorus to us: "Hurry! haste! you are getting old; you are losing your opportunity. Think what successes other men have achieved long before they had reached your age! Time's up! Be desperate. Do something, however foolish it be, if so be you do something." He is a brave heart who is not afraid of his watch. It takes great courage to outface a regiment of thirty serried days, a brigade of twelve such regiments, a whole army of five or ten such brigades. Ye long-suffering invalids, know ye not that I speak the truth?

"The will of mine enemies." You haven't any? I cannot congratulate you. There are, to be sure, enemies and enemies. Alas for one whose enemies are the wise and good! That reflects on you. But the good are not always wise and discerning. Never a great philanthropist, never a great re-

former, never a great servant of humanity who was not hated by many good people who were not wise enough to understand him. The most difficult task in this life is to do men good. It is far easier, at present, to do men evil; they welcome it more naturally; they desire it, and recognize the gift—evil—with quicker cordiality than the strange good which, too often, they know not how to prize. The pay is larger for hurting than for helping men. The Christian martyrs attest what enmity virtuous service meets.

You have no enemies? Then I fear you are not of Christ's company: they called the master of the house Beelzebub. Should a modern preacher feel at ease if he has roused no popular antagonism? Alas for you, preacher, if all men speak well of you! Did the rum-seller never have the mouth to curse you? Has fashionable wealth never rustled its silks, like a serpent's hiss, because you rebuked it? Has greed never gotten up in high dudgeon and stalked out of church, surrendering its pew and withdrawing its subscription? Have you never merited the wrath of the modern newspaper? It would seem simply impossible that a faithful preacher in these days, with the millennium not yet come, should pass the time of his ministry in perfect peace, beloved of all, tenderly dandled and lapped in luxury. There is no such picture in the New Testament.

Enemies? If you have them not yet, still prepare; for, if you are a faithful disciple, you shall have them. Yours will be a surprise to you. It will at first seem to you that you did not deserve them. You will be astonished at their malice and the intensity of their pursuit of you. They will "breathe out" their cruelty like racing, panting hounds; like eager pursuers, whose hearts are in their throats, whose bad intent keeps loading their breaths with curses, since they cannot yet reach you with their hands. There is no enmity so bitter as causeless enmity. The hardest haters are the persecutors of the righteous.

Nevertheless, be sure you have God for your light as you run, and your salvation at the end.

### Christian Joy.

(Lesson for Sept. 14, 1884.)

By REV. WILBUR F. CRAFTS [PRESBYTERIAN].

*I delight to do thy will, O my God.—*  
Ps. xl: 8.

It is thought that this 40th Psalm was composed by David as a song of deliverance after he had fled from Saul to the Philistines (instead of fleeing to God), and had been recognized in Gath as the slayer of Goliath, and so had been compelled to feign insanity by letting his spittle run down his beard and scrabbling on the doors of the gate, in order to escape with his life. (1 Sam. 21.) When God had forgiven his distrust and delivered him out of that "horrible pit," this "new song" was put in his mouth as a hymn of praise for the deliverance past, and a prayer for deliverance from perils yet to come. David is still wandering in the mountains, pursued, like a hunted deer, by Saul; but his trust bursts forth in a joyous song that celebrates the blessedness of the man that maketh the Lord his trust, even though beset with dangers.

With similar joy, Paul and Silas sang at midnight in the jail at Philippi, and Madame Guyon in the Bastille. All through the ages God has given to those that trust Him such "songs in the night."

What is the secret spring of this irrepressible Christian joy?

There are pleasures in sin, in intoxication, in licentiousness, in revenge. Not dogs alone delight to bark and bite. Joseph's brethren, doubtless, found a momentary sweetness in their revenge when they sold Joseph into slavery, as they had found temporary enjoyment in the adulterous and other vices, by the exposure of which and his superior purity Joseph had incurred their envy; but at the last their sins stung them like adders, as they came back to memory again and again, for more than a score of years, and made

them often exclaim in shame and remorse, "We are verily guilty concerning our brother." There is not a forbidden pleasure that is not really a forbidden pain. God forbids only what true joy forbids.

There are helps to happiness apart from religion. Sidney Smith once gave a lady twenty-two receipts against melancholy. One was a bright fire; a second was to remember all the pleasant things said to her; a third was to keep a box of sugar-plums on the chimney-piece, and a kettle simmering on the hob. These and other things that he named are helps to *happiness*; but how many of the race will never happen to be thus favorably environed? and if *joy* also is dependent on such agreeable surroundings they will have to be joyless. David, in his wanderings, seldom had a bright fire, and he had the very opposite of pleasant things said about him to remember, and was wholly cut off from sugar-plums and the simmering kettles of a quiet home. He had none of the *conditions of happiness*, and yet was full of *joy*, which depends on *character alone*.

"And from his love's exhaustless spring  
Joys like a river come,  
To make the desert bloom and sing,  
O'er which we travel home."

If this stanza and David's psalm fairly represent the normal joyfulness of God's people, how is it that the popular idea of Christianity has come to be that it is a stern and solemn life of self-sacrifice, which subtracts rather than multiplies the joys of those who accept it? This error comes in part from the fact that modern churches have in many cases taken their pitch from the awful semitones of the dark ages, rather than from the high notes of joy that came from the lips of David and Paul, even in the midst of their persecutions. Some of us were raised in churches that were framed in grave-yards, the only sign on the front being the undertaker's, as if to intimate that his was the principal business conducted within. Joining the Church in those days was to many like the cloth which nervous peo-

ple throw over a canary's cage to stop his singing, when it should have "put a new song in their mouths."

But when we think of stern Christians of the past or present, let us not pity them too much, as if they were joyless. As Gladstone takes his recreation in wood-clopping, so the very pleasures of some Christians are serious.

There can be no doubt, however, that many Christians have not even serious joys, because they are serving God with reservations, and so with condemnation; because they are seeking to go two ways at once, and so are being rent asunder; and because they have not yet realized that joy is a Christian duty as well as privilege—something to which the Christian is commanded to attain when God says, "Rejoice in the Lord always." It is a sin to be petting our troubles, when God says, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe." It is a sin to murmur to-day as much as it was when, for the sin of murmuring, God whipped the Israelites with serpents.

But many Christians are solemn only because it is the fashion. Some of the gladdest Christians I know would no more smile behind a pulpit or before one than beside a coffin, simply and only because they have been trained to think that religion is never to be mentioned cheerfully except in newspapers and conventions. They read, without daring to smile, Elijah's humorous and satiric address to the priests of Baal about their god being asleep or on a journey; and the Bible picture of Ephraim, as "a cake not turned—done on one side, but dough on the other;" and Elijah's word-picture of idolaters carving a god out of one end of a log and burning incense to it with another. A young man, in purchasing his first silk hat, asked the hatter to put a crape-band about it, not because he was mourning for anybody, but because he had seen others wear such a band, and thought it looked well and was becoming. So, many Christians wear melancholy faces at

church, not because they are not really glad in the Lord, but because they think it is the proper thing to do. But it is not. I appeal from Christianity solemn to Christianity joyous; from church customs borrowed of the dark ages to the glad worship of the Bible.

Great injustice is done to Christ in making Him champion this unscriptural solemnity as "the Man of Sorrows." In the Catacombs and elsewhere, the earlier pictures of Christ represent Him, as the gospels do, as *the Man of Joy*. It was the dark ages that invented that libel, that "Jesus was never known to smile." How, then, did the children

dare to come to Him? How did it happen that a smileless man was wanted at Cana's wedding feast? He *suffered* much, but practiced His own precept, to "rejoice and be exceeding glad," even in persecutions. In the very shadow of the Cross He "rejoiced in spirit," and said to His disciples, "My joy shall remain with you, and your joy shall be full." Let us be like David, and like David's Son and Lord, in the gladness of Christian sacrifice and service. What David said first of himself, and second, as the New Testament tells us, of Christ, let us also learn to say: "I delight to do thy will, O God!"

### THE PRAYER-MEETING SERVICE.

By J. M. SHERWOOD, D.D.

Sept. 3.—*Missionary Service*.—MODERN MISSIONS.—*Watchman, what of the night?*—Is. xxi: 11.

We refer our readers to Dr. Pierson's stirring articles in the last and present numbers of THE HOMLETIC MONTHLY, entitled "The Finger of God in Modern Missions," and "The Transforming Power of the Gospel," as of special interest in this "Missionary Service." In connection with them we will simply present a few facts of missionary history, in response to the prophet's bugle-call, "Watchman, what of the night?" These statistics show the relative strength of Christianity to-day, and refute the oft-repeated assertion that it is dying out.

Estimated number of nominal Christians at the end of the 1st century, 500,000; at the end of the 7th, 25,000,000; of the 14th, 80,000,000; 17th, 155,000,000; 18th, 200,000,000; in 1880, 410,000,000! In A.D. 1500, the population under Christian government, 100,000,000; in 1876, 685,459,000!

*Strength of the Evangelical Church in the United States:* In 1800, 3,030 churches, 2,651 ordained ministers, and 364,872 members; in 1880, 97,090 churches, 69,870 ministers, and 10,065,963 members. Increase of population from 1800 to 1880, 116 per cent.; members of evangelical churches, 184 per cent. This

does not include Roman Catholics, who claim a following of 6,367,330, but do not report communicants.

*Foreign missions* is a characteristic enterprise of the present century. The entire annual contribution of Christendom to this cause, down to 1800, according to Prof. Christlieb, was but \$250,000; in 1883, England and America gave over \$10,000,000! while the funds collected for Home Missions in the United States from '70 to '80 amounted to over \$31,000,000!

*Strength of Missions in the Foreign field.* The reports of Protestant Mission Societies in 1830, gave 122 missions, 656 ordained missionaries, 1,236 lay helpers, 70,289 members, 80,650 scholars. In '80: Missions, 504; missionaries, 6,696; lay helpers, 33,852; members, 857,332 (148 missions not reporting); scholars, 447,602, with hearers and adherents estimated from the actual reports of the missions amounting to 2,000,000. In 1880 there were 14,000,000 teachers and scholars in the Sunday-schools of the Church. The Anglo-Saxon race is the missionary race of the world. At the time the Pilgrim Fathers landed on our shores that race numbered 7,000,000; to-day, 100,000,000, and is extending its influence and growth on every hand. Surely, the friends of Christ may thank God and take courage.

Sept. 10.—LITTLE SINS DESTROY MUCH GOOD. *Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour; so doth a little folly, etc.*—Eecl. x: 1.

A fly is a tiny insect, and yet it is sufficient to corrupt and spoil the costliest compound of the apothecary. So, little sins, as we call them—the seemingly slight defects of character—ruin a man's good name. A peccadillo, a small offence, may undermine confidence and effectually neutralize a score of virtues. The little "but"—the few "dead flies" that get into the ointment, make sad havoc with the world's estimate of men's actions and character. "A little folly" spoils much "wisdom and honor." A single defect or fault nullifies the testimony of a life! It is the "dead flies" in the life and testimony of the Church, and not her glaring sins or unbelief, that infidels rejoice over and the world stumbles at. At first sight this seems arbitrary and unjust, but, on reflection, we find such a judgment has a good foundation. For,

1. What we call "character" and "reputation" are the resultants of *innumerable little traits, qualities, acts*, and not the effect or fruit of a few grand actions or characteristics. Little things, the minute, every-day details of life and conduct, have more to do in making one's real character and reputation than occasional acts or manifestations, however splendid and praiseworthy in themselves.

2. *Little things, after all, are a better exponent of a man's true character than great ones.* They are spontaneous, and spring from the actual inner life, and thus indicate the real state of things. They are not conventional, not studied, not acted out under the gaze of the world, not governed by expediency. A man's *home, every-day* life, his unseen, unpremeditated acts, his numberless habits or courses of thought, speech, sentiment, conduct, will tell the story. If he is pure, honest, truthful, conscientious, gentlemanly, careful of the rights of others and anxious to do right, you may trust him. There are no "dead flies" in the ointment.

3. *Little things* are not only mainly conducive to the formation of character, but they *make up* life, for the most part. Not the princely gifts of millionaires, but "the widow's two mites"—the small, loving, constant sacrifices of the comparatively poor, sustain the grand charities of the world, and replenish the Lord's treasury. Not the ostentatious display of virtue and piety in the public sanctuary in the presence of the great congregation, testify of the love of Jesus burning in the heart, so much as the practice of virtue and godliness in the obscure and humble walks of life; the tear of sympathy quietly shed by the cot of some poor sufferer; the ministry of relief kindly reaching out its hand to the poor and friendless; the uniform, unobtrusive Christian demeanor of a life hid with Christ in God, drawing all its sweetness and purity and fruitfulness from the unseen and eternal Fountain of Life in the skies.

*Look out for the "dead flies!"* The more delicate and precious the ointment, the more destructive the power of little sins!

Sept. 17.—CRITICAL PERIODS IN A SINNER'S LIFE.—Luke xiii: 6-9; xix: 42-44; Prov. i: 24-31.

Every sinner, while unreconciled to God, is in constant and imminent danger of the loss of all things. He is "condemned already," and nothing but the mercy of God in Christ stays the execution of eternal wrath upon him. And yet there are seasons of *special* danger, periods in his life when, unless he repent and turn to God, he *ripens very fast for judgment*, if he be not actually given over. We have space to note only a few of these critical periods.

1. The season of *youth* is one. God is specially nigh then, and makes special promises. The mind is receptive, the heart is tender, the character is unformed, evil habits are not yet matured, and all things invite. All the motives of the Gospel and all the means of grace are at their height in their influence upon him. It is "*flood-tide*," and is sure to lead on to victory, if he takes



advantage of it. But, neglected, thrown away, and the future is almost sure to miscarry.

2. The period of *conviction of sin* is one of extreme peril. The most solemn hour of the sinner's life is when the Spirit of God opens his eyes and smites his heart and forces him to cry, "What must I do to be saved?" He is on the threshold of life, and eternal destiny hangs in the scale! But, hesitation, grieving the Spirit, turning back, losing his conviction, and he may be ruined forever; it may be "impossible to renew such an one to repentance." The words of Christ over Jerusalem, or the awful words of God in Prov. i: 24-31, may be applicable to him. Also, "The harvest is past," etc.

3. The period of *divine chastisements* is a critical period. God's end in these usually is to reclaim men. To sin on in spite of them; to refuse to be corrected; to wax worse and worse in the day of trial and under God's afflictive dispensations, is to run a fearful risk of final and eternal abandonment. "Why should ye be stricken any more; for ye will revolt more and more?"

Sept. 24. — ZEAL IN RELIGION.—Gal. iv: 18.

To be always zealously affected in a good cause is commendable. There is "a zeal not according to knowledge;" and there is a good deal of this kind of zeal in the Church. But of genuine zeal—zeal springing from an intelligent understanding and appreciation of the truth and the reality of things, there is far too little in the world.

REASONS WHY WE SHOULD BE ZEALOUS IN CHRIST'S SERVICE.

1. *Mankindness* requires it. A cause that is worth espousing at all is worthy of a hearty support, and a timid or half-hearted acceptance and advocacy is inconsistent and mean. Many a cause is well-nigh ruined by the lack of zeal and whole-heartedness on the part of its professed friends. Religion and the Church suffer tenfold more from the timidity, the lukewarmness, the half-hearted faith and advocacy of their pro-

fessed friends than from all the assaults of open enemies. Either stand up boldly for Jesus and bear a warm, decided, faithful testimony, or never link your name with His, or with His people.

2. The *character and services of the Master* render anything short of this a crime, and a betrayal of an infinite trust. Think what Christ is; what He has done and suffered for us; what He expects of us as His disciples and friends and soldiers; and what He has committed to our hands, and then say if it be not perfidy, ingratitude, of the extremest type and degree, after confessing Him before angels and men, to show indifference, a wavering in our allegiance, a lack of interest and devotion to His holy and blessed cause.

3. The *reward promised* may well stir our souls to their deepest depths, tax every power of our being to its utmost capacity, and hold us true to our allegiance and trust by an irresistible and steady attraction. Life, eternal life, in the kingdom of God, a harp of gold, a crown of glory, a mansion in heaven! And all as the reward of a few years of burning love, faithful testimony, and devoted service in behalf of Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.

## MORALS IN FICTION.

By JOHN HABBERTON.

FROM being the unclean thing which our religious ancestors regarded it a century ago, the novel has come to be an apparent necessity of mental life. There are very few people who read at all, but buy and read novels. Tastes differ as to authors and styles, and every reader has his favorite; but the story is superior to the teller, for the reader who can not find exactly the novel he is looking for, generally brings himself, without much effort, to take one entirely different. The motive of novel reading is entirely honorable; whether expressed by the reader, or unknown to him, it is the desire for company—for news—for change. Good company—intelligent, cheerful, well bred company—is not always within call, even for those who are part of "good society;" but between

the covers of books may always be found interesting men and women, with their romances, trials and triumphs, and to become interested in them is as easy as to be absorbed in gossip about one's own neighbors.

Hundreds of novels have been written by clergymen, hundreds of thousands are in Sunday-school libraries, after having first been carefully looked through, for fear of moral breakers; novels—avowedly so, in distinction from the other novels disguised under the appellation "moral tales"—are read by Christian fathers and mothers, and given by them to their children. And yet, from the pulpit, and sometimes from the pews, is not unfrequently heard an agonizing cry of "Beware!" Can that which was bad for our grandfathers be good for our children? Because an occasional story has a high moral purpose, must all the licentious emanations of the French press be unloaded upon the community? Let us banish all novels, so that the bad may not come in with the good.

Such are some of the arguments against the modern novel, of good souls whose undoubted earnestness in the cause of morality is coupled with ignorance of the fact that the steady tendency of English fiction has been toward probability, morality, cleanliness, and even fastidiousness. The representative modern novelist sometimes introduces bad characters and treats of vices—he would be untrue to life did he not—but he never clings to them or caresses them. As to French novels, they are not read to any great extent in America; neither the art of some of them, nor the filth of others can make them popular here. "French novels do not pay to publish," said a well-known bookseller recently; the gist of that one sentence may be depended upon to protect America from French fiction, good or bad.

But the abundance and cheapness of fiction during recent years, the fact that novels are being more read than ever, and that the flood can not be turned back, has caused the more thoughtful wing of the protesting class to demand

that there shall be discrimination in novel reading, and that all novels which have not a distinct moral purpose shall be tabooed in religious circles. It is not enough that vice shall fail and virtue triumph, as they already do in nearly every novel; but the author must start with an avowed moral purpose, like a minister with his text, and have all his characters and incidents conform to it.

That this plan, although full of artifice, is destitute of art, has been frequently and fully explained. But it has a worse fault; it compels the writer to be untrue to life, to make his characters and incidents unreal, and so to transgress the greater moralities while doing lip service to others. This is the plan on which the old-fashioned Sunday-school library books—all of which were novels in every particular—were written; is there in the memory of any adult Christian a class of books that he detests as he does the old Sunday-school library? There are some religious novels, so-called, that have been written on the same method and have gained some popularity through the glorification of certain moral and religious theories in which men like to have their faith stimulated, because it is not really strong; but the only religious tales that take permanent hold of the public are those of which sentiment, not dogmatism, is the note.

To put a plea, political, moral or religious, in the form of a story, is of course entirely permissible. It is of no consequence if the story so written lacks wit; so long as it satisfies those for whom it is prepared, no one has any right to complain. But who can contemplate without wonder, which develops into horror, the spirit that prompts a man to sit down and write as if he were fresh from the secret councils of the Almighty? There are moral and religious novels in which the mysteries of life and death, of misfortune and affliction, of enforced association of natures that the world would keep apart—mysteries about which the Inspired Word is silent, and which reverent and thoughtful men expect to see unraveled only in the great

hereafter, are handled as airily and confidently as a juggler handles his toys. The impossible is explained away by the home-made impossibilities, lack of facts is made good by happy accidents and coincidences, and the method of the story, from first to last, is that of the detested "dime novel" and the trashy romances which fill the columns of the *Shop Girl's Weekly*. Every character develops in the direction of the stronger faculties, and if upon any are imposed burdens grievous to be borne, it is only that a speedy and glorious deliverance may come.

Against this method, which, because it is avowedly based on moral purpose, is said to exert a good moral influence through its works, is that of the leaders and models of the modern school of novelists: Hawthorne, Thackeray, Hugo, Turgeneff, one or other or all of whom each promising modern novelist has studied, whose influence for morality exceeds that of the entire swarm of writers of "purpose novels." They do not picture life as they would like to see it or to have it, but life as it is. The men and women who enter their pages as sufferers often pass out with their grievous burdens still on their shoulders; frequently the wicked flourish and the good are tormented, not for a day or a year, but long enough to modify the future of whole families and communities. What the heathen call fate, and some Christians are weak enough to name "luck," seems to be against many of the noble characters and to be utterly cruel, undeserved and inexplicable. Yet by modest, patient, but intelligent study, with their readers, of the springs of action, and of the effect of character on character, these great novelists never complete a book without convincing their readers that although life contains much of sorrow and mystery, life is yet noble, every one may live nobly, and that morality is the order of humanity and cannot be transgressed in any particular without infinite consequences.

How does this method differ from that of the sacred writers? Were the

good men of the Scripture records always good or ever wholly good? Are not their great sins and harmful weaknesses all set down in black and white beside their virtues? Are not the Bible stories so many standards by which the alleged "moral novels" of to-day are to be condemned? Or, to appeal to a standard which every right-minded man can find in his own life, does not all human experience show that the method—though not necessarily the influence—of the current religio-moral novels is unmoral and unchristian! According to these books man grows only in the direction of his greatest strength, but human experience proves, and Christianity teaches, that perfect manhood and character come finally through the training and toning of all the weaker qualities of our nature. The burdens which men have to bear are not placed where they can most easily be carried, but often on the weakest part—often where they pinch, gall, grind, crush. The business reverse which would be hardest to bear is the one that comes. It is the dearest child, not the worst one, which dies. Almost any of us would prefer our neighbor's troubles to our own. Though men have gone mad over this great mystery, and even close students of life sometimes lose heart in the maze, only the truly religious nature can hopefully contemplate the end of some human complications, the beginnings of which have been sad and inexplicable.

Therefore, truly moral fiction is that which presents life as it is. It must be realistic, and it must show the effect of joy, sorrow, work and association on human character. It will have its counterfeits—is there anything good which is not counterfeited?—but these can be detected and avoided. It may be well for some unskillful writers to brand their books "purpose novels," just as the awkward school-boy writes "This is a horse," under an early attempt at drawing; but the true moralists in fiction are those who regard life largely, curiously, reverently, but never venture to describe it other than it is, leaving

the reader to draw his own conclusions.

### A POSSIBLE FULFILMENT OF A REMARKABLE PROPHECY.

BY PARSONICUS.

The forty-seventh chapter of the prophesy of Ezekiel contains a very remarkable prediction which, manifestly, has not yet been accomplished. It is mainly physical in its features, and relates to the land of Palestine. It indicates natural changes to occur in the future, and describes the effects of such changes in very extraordinary language.

The element which is to cause all these natural changes and transformations and blessings, is "water"—water in great and unheard of abundance for an oriental country—a "river," so deep and broad that it could not be "passed over." "These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea;" and these waters shall be purifying, "and there shall be a very great multitude of fish," and "fishermen shall spread forth their nets" where there has been no water certainly from the beginning of Jewish history.

We have had hitherto no rational explanation of this positive and well-defined prophecy; and no events have transpired which can be regarded in the light of a fulfilment of it. It describes great physical changes to occur, in a natural, and not supernatural way. The scene of the change is to be wrought in Palestine. And there is no mistaking the effects to flow from them.

Commentators do not seem to understand the passage, certainly do not explain it satisfactorily. They treat it in a vague and metaphorical way. Indeed its meaning is beyond the ken of human wisdom, with the light of history alone to guide us. But two solutions seem possible to us now: first, a great cataclysm, such as is indicated in the fourteenth chapter of the prophesy of Zechariah; or, second, the skill and power of modern engineering. It is hardly necessary to say that the latter is far more in keeping with the spirit

of the age, and in consonance with God's government of the world.

Seemingly, there is nothing physically impossible in human skill and prowess bringing Ezekiel's prophesy literally to pass. The contemplated "Jordan Canal," if carried to successful completion, in the judgment of competent engineers, will meet fairly all the conditions of this remarkable prophesy. The project is to cut a broad canal from the Mediterranean to the Jordan, and another from the Gulf of Akaba, which is the northeastern arm of the Red Sea, to the Dead Sea. This plan is said to be feasible by engineers who have made preliminary surveys of this region. The chief obstacle to it, as an engineering feat, will be found in the bluffs south of the Dead Sea. The Red Sea ends on the north in the gulfs of Suez and Akaba. There are bold bluffs and upland regions between the Gulf of Akaba and the depression in which the Dead Sea lies. But we are assured that this obstacle, although serious, is not insurmountable. Indeed, in view of actual accomplishment—the Suez Canal, the Mt. Cenis tunnel, the Pacific railways, the canal across the Isthmus of Panama, and the Brooklyn Bridge—*nothing* in this line seems impossible.

And the same may be said of the *cost*. Great as it would be, once demonstrate the feasibility and the immense practical benefits to flow from it, and the money will be forthcoming. Greater and costlier enterprises by far have been undertaken and pushed to a successful issue by the daring and indomitable spirit and the exhaustless resources of this wonderful age. And what has been done in this line may be done again. The Suez Canal was thought to be a highly visionary scheme; but already a second one is to be built by the side of the first. Vast commercial interests demand it. Competent judges affirm that it would be cheaper, and in many respects preferable, to cut the new one through Palestine than through the sands of Egypt.

It is a well-known fact that this project has awakened no little interest in

London, and full and accurate surveys are now being made by English engineers. There are many reasons, both of a commercial and political nature, why England should favor such an enterprise. The Suez Canal is a complicated affair. France dominates in its control, though English commerce is its main support. It is not reliable in case of war. Cholera, or other Asiatic pestilences, may enforce a rigid quarantine. The matter is discussed in the *London Times*, and a company has been formed to execute the new undertaking. So that it is by no means improbable that by the close of the century, or even before, we may see great ships making the transit from European to Asiatic waters many hundred feet above the present level of the Dead Sea. Such a sight would not be any more wonderful than what is seen to-day—a fleet of immense merchantmen making its way through the African desert!

If carried into effect, this engineering enterprise will work important changes in the physical geography of Palestine, in the commercial relations and interests of the country, as well as its climate and social life. The depression of the Dead Sea region is said to be 1,300 feet below the level of the Mediterranean and the Red seas. In order to bring the three seas to a common level, the entire valley in which the Dead Sea is located, would be converted into a large inland body of water, extending from the bluff, south of the Dead Sea, way up to the north shore of the Sea of Galilee, filling up of course the intervening valley of the Jordan, and bringing the water to within a few miles of the city of Jerusalem. Thus that now inland, dead city might come, in time, to rival Constantinople itself in commercial importance, as its physical advantages would be equally great in relation both to Europe and Asia. A large inner lake would also have a highly beneficial effect on the climate of Palestine; whilst an extensive system of irrigation, made feasible and easy by such an abundance of water, would more than restore it to its pristine fertility and glory. It is

only twenty-five miles from the Mediterranean at Acre, near Mt. Carmel, across the plains of Esdraelon to the river Jordan. A century ago such a thing were impossible, for there was no engineering skill equal to the task.

In the light of such possibilities the prophecy of Ezekiel possesses fresh interest; and it is not impossible that it may receive a literal fulfillment during the lifetime of the present generation. The writer is no prophet; and it may be that we do not interpret aright the prophet's words; and it certainly does not belong to us to help out unfulfilled prophecy by speculations, however curious or plausible. Still it is proper for us to note the remarkable terms of this prophetic utterance in the light of this great engineering project, and point out how such a grand waterway would accomplish what Ezekiel foretold nearly 2,500 years ago.

Three prominent changes are described: 1. The dry valleys before Jerusalem are to flow with pure water, the water rising higher and higher until their upper terraces are inundated. 2. The waters of the Dead Sea are to be "healed" or purified, and the lands along its borders to be richly fertilized. 3. The waters of the Dead Sea, having been totally changed in character, are to teem with fish; "as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many." Two places are mentioned as resorts for busy fishermen—Engedi and Eneglaim: "They shall be a place to spread forth nets;" "and there shall be a very great multitude of fish." The fish from the Mediterranean would have free passage to the Red Sea; and so would the maritime commerce of the nations. In the gulf of Akaba there is a depth of two hundred fathoms of water, amply sufficient for the largest demands of traffic.

To say that the Jordan Canal will be built, might be rash. To assume that it will be built in fulfillment of prophecy, might be criticised as foolish. To bring its possibilities forward as probable proof that the Jews are one day to be restored to their ancient possession, might be pronounced "hobby-riding."

And yet, stranger things than any or all of these, have come to pass in God's wonder-working providence.

### THE TRANSFORMING POWER OF THE GOSPEL.\*

By ARTHUR T. PIERSON, D. D.

The Divine Hand has been conspicuous in the missionary work in the direct transformation of character, both individual and national. The fiercest, hardest, rudest of heathen have been subdued, softened, refined by the Gospel. Africaner, that monster of cruelty, who would kill an innocent man to make a drinking cup of his skull and a drum-head of his skin, was, at the touch of that Gospel, turned from a lion into a lamb. Guergis, the ferocious Koord, who would have killed his own daughter as she prayed for him, was struck by it into penitence, as bitter as Peter's, and as potent. He laid aside gun and dagger for Testament and hymn book, and made the mountains echo with the story of his great sins and great Saviour, shouting with dying breath, "Free grace!" Even Fidelia Fiske could scarcely believe she saw the miracle of such a conversion. San Quala, the Karen, was by that same Gospel changed into an apostolic worker. He aided the missionaries in the translation of the Word, guided them for fifteen years through the jungles; then himself began to preach and plant churches—within three years gathering nearly twenty-five hundred converts into more than thirty congregations—and refusing a tempting government position, rather than mix up God's work with secular labor, though his poverty forced him to leave his lovely wife in loneliness.

So has the Gospel transformed whole communities. In 1878, the Ko Thah Byu Memorial Hall was consecrated, commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the first Karen convent, whose name it bears. Karens built it at a cost of fifteen thousand dollars. It represented twenty thousand living disciples converted from demon worship, maintain-

ing their own churches and schools, beside twenty thousand more who had died in the faith of Jesus. That hall confronts Shway Mote Tau Pagoda, with its shrines and fanes on an opposing hill—the double monument of what the Karens *were* and *are*.

The story of the Gospel in the South Seas should be written in starlight. John Williams, the blacksmith's boy, and the apostle of Polynesia, found idolatry of the most degraded type, and savages of the lowest grade. Yet his progress was one rapid career of conquest. Churches and schools grew, he knew not how. A lawless people adopt a code of laws and trial by jury. Printing presses scatter their leaves like the tree of life; and even a missionary society is formed with King Pomare as its president, and twenty-five hundred dollars as its first year's contribution. Within a year after he landed at Rarotonga, the whole Hervey group, with a population of seven thousand, have thrown away their idols, and a church-building is going up, six hundred feet long. He turns to the Samoa group, and shortly has the whole people, sixty thousand, in Christian schools.

The tale of Fiji is not less wonderful. These cannibals built the very huts of their chiefs upon the bodies of living human beings, buried alive, and they launched their canoes upon living bodies as rollers; they slew infants and strangled widows. Human language has no terms to describe the abasement of this people, or their atrocious customs. Such deeds of darkness should be written in blood and recorded in hell. The Fijians are now a Christian people. In 1835 missionary labor began among them; seven years later the island of Ono had not one heathen left on it, and became the centre of Gospel light to the whole group. To-day every village has its Christian homes and schools, and there are nine hundred churches on those islands.

So it was with the new Hebrides. It was written as Dr. Geddie's Epitaph, that "when he came to Aneityum, there were no Christians; when he left, there

\* See note in August number, page 638.



were no heathens." These are but a few representative cases. Madagascar was so hopeless a field that the French governor of the island of Bourbon told the pioneer missionaries that they might as well try to convert cattle as the Malagasy. Yet the Gospel barely got a foothold there when it took such root that twenty-five years of fire and blood failed to burn out or blot out its impression. And now a Christian Church stands on the court grounds, and on the coronation table together lie the Laws of the Realm and the Bible, as the Higher Law of Madagascar, "that crown of the London Missionary Society."

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, however, in 1879, declared at Syracuse, that the previous seven years in Japan furnish the most remarkable chapter in the history of the world, eclipsing not only Madagascar, but the early triumphs of Christianity. The "Lonestar" mission among the Telogoos, almost abandoned as both helpless and fruitless in 1853, in 1878 blazed forth with a brilliancy like that of Sirius; within forty days nearly ten thousand converts were baptised. The experiences of Powell at Nanumaga, Buncean at Columbia, Judson in Burmah, Wheeler in Turkey, Johnson in Sierra Leone, Grant in Persia, Scudder in India, Wolfe in China, Mc'All in France, and David Brainard in New Jersey, besides many more which we have not space to mention, furnish unanswerable proof that the Hand of God is in this work of modern missions.

While looking at the marvels of this missionary history, we must not forget how the subsidence of opposing systems has prepared the way for Gospel triumphs. When the first seventeen missionaries landed at Hawaii, God had gone before them, the old king was dead, the idols burned, the old pagan faith cast away as worthless, and the first death blow struck at the tabu system. The isles were waiting for his law. When Mc'All crossed the English Channel, the fields of France were already white for the sickle. Bouchard, Re-

veillaud, and others, had already forsaken Romanism, as the ally of ignorance and superstition; and a whole people were ready for a grand insurrection of thought, and resurrection of conscience. Tired of feeding on the ashes of Atheism and priestcraft, they hunger for the bread of life. God has let down the continent below the sea level. It is not so much a rising tide as a sinking land. But is His hand any the less conspicuous, when He thus floods the continents with the Gospel?

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#### DRIFTS AND DEFECTS IN PREACHING.

BY PRESIDENT D. S. GREGORY, D. D.

Much is said about the decline in the power of the pulpit. Our skeptical friends would have us believe that it has lost its power, never to regain it. What is the real state of the case? For the man who has anything of the scientific spirit, there is no logical escape from the fact of the tremendous progress of Christianity in the world during the present century, a progress far outstripping anything in the history of the past, and infolding within itself the germs of a larger and still more rapid development in the near future. It is true that the more perfect organization of the forces of Christianity has had much to do with this increasing efficiency of the Church; but at the same time it is pretty evident that if there has been any marked decline in the power of the pulpit, it must have been local, or temporary, or both. That there are signs of a local and temporary decline, those who have observed most carefully will probably be most inclined to admit. The writer's observation has led him to the conclusion that there has been such a decline in the case of many of the rich churches of our great metropolitan cities, and the object of the present paper is to note some of the drifts and defects to which this result seems to him attributable. The special field of his recent observation has taken in some four or more of our largest cities, including the great commercial metropolis.

1. There is a manifest tendency in some of the great churches to become churches of the elect according to property, family and culture. They are in danger of being blinded to the great principles of the Word of God, through the deceitfulness of riches and the outward show of high life. The immense recent accessions to the wealth of the commercial centers, with the general rush and momentum of our material civilization, make this result almost inevitable. The preachers in such churches are expected to be the *apostles of secularism*.

Jesus Christ emphasized character, and man's relation to God from which it springs, as the essential things. In His sight men, by nature, are all alike—sinners. He came to seek and to save the lost. A complete transformation of character is the only way into His kingdom: "Except a man be born again he cannot enter into the kingdom of God"—cannot even "see the kingdom of God." To those who are born "Not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," to these gives He the "right to become the children of God." It is just as true now as in Christ's day, that God's judgments are according to truth or reality; that He is no respecter of persons, of wealth, of show, of sham. And yet he must be a man of rare character indeed who is to have the respect and public recognition of the attendants and ministers of a great and aristocratic church, simply on the basis of Christian purity and manhood. A most excellent officer in such a church once said to his pastor, in tones of indignation, concerning the sexton who had seated a poor stranger in a prominent place: "He isn't fit for a sexton; he doesn't know broadcloth."

One natural result has been in many cases that "bondage of the pulpit," of which Professor Wilkinson wrote so trenchantly some years since, in *Scribner's Monthly*. The reality of that bondage was fairly and fully attested by the howl of opposition raised by the setting of it forth. The evidence has increased since then, that there is, in many cases,

a growing feeling, on the part of the rich pews, that the minister is hired by them to bring a message that suits them. In such circumstances, is it any wonder if the old message of sin and salvation is sometimes at a discount, and its place likely to be taken by the latest novelty in religiosity?

From the aristocratic spirit has likewise sprung the silent division of the Protestant churches, in our great cities, into rich churches and poor ones, and of the rich churches into the central congregation where the wealthy meet to worship God, and the mission chapel where the poor are to receive the Gospel. God's ordinance is, "the rich and the poor meet together, and the Lord is the maker of them all." The poor may stand the separation, but the rich cannot. He has read the Gospel and history to but little purpose who has not come to know that the great problem of every age is not, "How shall we evangelize the poor?" but "How shall we evangelize the rich?" Christ propounded it when He said, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven." Paul understood it when he wrote to the rich, luxurious and cultured citizens of Corinth, "Not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." A distinguished engineer and professor once said, in the Yale Literary and Theological club, in the hearing of the writer: "I would consider the task of evangelizing a thousand bigoted Irish Roman Catholic laborers on a railroad a vastly easier one than that of practically reaching with the Gospel an equal number of the godless aristocracy of Fifth avenue." He had some notion of the problem. The Church has always depended for her power and growth upon the plain people, the poor of this world. Dr. Charles Hodge understood the truth when he wrote his late article for the old *Princeton Review* (January, 1871), just before laying down that potent pen forever, on "Preaching the Gospel to the Poor." Those who have read history to good purpose, know of a surety that Christianity is a power working from below upward,

rather than from above downward. As Dr. Hodge said, the Church that fails to preach the Gospel to the poor may expect to have its candlestick removed.

The natural consequence is that in such churches the pulpit fails to secure any adequate results of the kind for which it exists, results in souls saved and transformed into Christ-likeness.

2. In some prominent pulpits of the present day there is a manifest tendency to yield allegiance to quite other masters than Christ and Him crucified. Confining attention to preachers of the higher order of culture and power, there is reason to think that some of them, under the influence of the so-called advanced science and philosophy of the times, are spending their strength—conscientiously and earnestly no doubt—in work which must inevitably result in absolute failure to compass the essential ends of the Gospel. These are the *apostles of high thinking*. Culture, science, philosophy, the humanities—these have been the themes which the writer has most frequently heard discussed in the so-called popular metropolitan churches. Matthew Arnold, Herbert Spencer, Charles Darwin, secularism, agnosticism, evolution, have been the catch-words. Able essays, brilliant apologies, eloquent orations, in many instances they have been; but as preaching, with a view to the salvation of souls, the doom of failure is upon all such work.

One illustration of the working of the theory of these able and cultivated men—that of John Richard Green, the distinguished historian, who has just passed away—will suffice. Mr. Gell gives a sketch of his life and career in the *Fortnightly Review* for May, 1883. Dr. Blaikie brings out clearly the lesson of that life, in an article, in the *Catholic Presbyterian* for August, 1883, on "An Unsuccessful Ministry." "He preached," says Mr. Gell, "with the deepest thoughtfulness and most serious utterance upon the problems of the daily conduct and morals and aspirations of the men before him, reasoning chiefly of temperance and justice rather

than of judgment to come." To use his own words, his idea was: "high thinking, put into plain English, is more likely to tell upon a dock-yard laborer than all the simple Gospel sermons in the world." With his "liberal" views, thought to be so popular at the present time, he carried into his work among the masses in London, a furnishing, an enthusiasm, an earnestness, a genius, an unselfish and high-toned moral purpose, and a sublime heroism in effort and self denial, such that scarcely any other man of this generation can expect to approach his vantage ground even remotely. He failed utterly in his experiment, wrecked his own health and faith, and gave up in despair! The "high thinking" is not God's ordained means for saving men. Whether it deal with morality, or culture, or aesthetics, or philosophy, there is not in "high thinking" alone any power that lays hold permanently upon the hearts of the people. Within the present century the "simple Gospel" has, however, transformed the inhabitants of Madagascar, and the Fijians; has made such moral deserts as the Cowgate of Edinburgh "rejoice and blossom as the rose;" and has wrought miracles of reform in many lands. Alone of all agencies, it has abundantly demonstrated itself with its Christ to be the power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation.

3. In many of the pulpits of the present day, in the great centers, even where the attempt is honestly made to preach the preaching that is unto salvation, there is a more or less manifest tendency to incompleteness in the presentation of the essential truths of the Gospel. These preachers are the *apostles of a fragmentary Gospel*. Two things are absolutely essential to complete an effective Gospel preaching: the law of God, by which the sinner is made to feel his lost condition and his need of the Gospel, and Christ, as the only way of deliverance.

The first and most commonly noted failure—too common in all the churches because of *zeit-geist*—is the failure to ap-

preciate and present the law in its slaying power over the lost sinner. There are churches in which, if presented at all, it is explained away, since it is an unwelcome theme to the sovereign pews. If by chance it is presented in such places, it begets disgust, rather than conviction. "Miss S., how did you like Dr. V. this morning?" said one member of such a church to another member, as they passed out. "Ah! the vulgar man! He said, 'You sinners.'" That was the response. Imagine such a people listening to Edwards' sermon on "Sinners in the hands of an angry God"; or on the text, "Their feet shall slide in due time"! That is the preaching they need; but they say, "Times have changed." Where the law is never brought home to the conscience, there can of course be no need for the Gospel, and no force to the Gospel. He who does not feel that he is lost, does not want to be saved. There is a larger number of churches in which the law is preached instead of the Gospel, as the way of life. The call is constant to do this and to do that. The forms and duties of religion are made a fetish. Self-righteousness is systematically cultivated by these constant calls to works as the way of life. Works are indeed indispensable as a proof of the faith that is in us; but when men forget to put the inspiration of Christ and His cross back of them, it is time to lay down this "deadly doing." When will men learn that no true Christian work ever comes about in that way? There must always be the two-sided preaching of the law: for the sinner, setting it forth in all its demands as a way of life to convince him of his death and hopelessness without Christ; for the saint, holding it up as the rule, the ideal, to which God in saving him is seeking to conform his life. Without it the sinner will perish in his blindness and self-righteousness, and the saint will bring dishonor upon his Saviour by his imperfect living. Candid observation must convince any one that here is the fatal weakness of many of our pulpits of the present day.

But even where the law is to some extent preached, there are grave defects in the presentation of Christ and His salvation. Any complete preaching of Christ must present Him in these aspects at least, as *Jesus*, as *Lord*, as *example* or *ideal*, and as *helper*.

Some of the pulpits are powerless for *saving souls*, because, while they sometimes mention the name of Jesus, they never recognize His office as the Divine Saviour from sin. Several years ago a prominent preacher published a tract on "What must I do to be saved?" in which neither the name nor the work of the Saviour was mentioned. This is of course building without foundation. In some of the "great" pulpits the Jesus is exhibited in His completeness—the sacrificial atonement, the moral influence, and the delivering power of the Gospel all being presented. In many of them, however, some one of these aspects of His work is dwelt upon to the neglect or exclusion of the rest. Comparatively few of them in this day emphasize the vicarious sacrifice; it is not the popular thing in the high places where the "holy respectables" do not relish being called "sinners," and so do not feel any pressing need of salvation. A few, where there is some familiarity with the later developments of science, dwell upon redemption in its dynamic relations to law and transgression, ignoring its sacrificial aspects. By far the greatest number of them hold forth the moral suasion view, putting sentiment in place of divine righteousness, and power and sacrificial offering.

Some pulpits of the same class are powerless to make *right Christian conduct*, because of their failure to present Christ as *Lord*, requiring obedience of all who accept Him as Saviour; the popular thing being a Gospel of license, rather than of obedience. Others, however they may "draw" and add to the church roll, are impotent to *transform character* and make men Christlike, for the reason that they exalt Christ as the *Ideal*, and dwell upon culture and manliness, leaving out sacrifice and obedience. Still others are failing to make

*effective Christian workers*, through failure to set Christ forth as the *Helper* through the Holy Ghost; the Source of power in both preacher and hearer; the Inspiration of all true progress, according to His ascension promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

This fragmentary Gospel, so prevalent in the high places, often going along with an open contempt for "theology," is one of the great sources of weakness in the Church of the present day. It is found in pulpits that are sought for and patterned after. It will be seen that it readily runs into the preaching of "another Gospel" than the genuine; and when it does this it may become, because of the partial truth in it, a more injurious thing to the Church of Christ than either the Gospel of secularism or that of high-thinking.

Personal observation in the larger cities of our country has shown the existence of these drifts and defects in the preaching of the day; but the Christian may derive comfort from the fact, also made evident by observation, that the evils are local and partial rather than national and universal. The question how they are to be remedied is one of great importance. There is only room here to say that they will be remedied when the preachers come to find messages of sin and salvation in the Word of God, instead of messages of worldliness in the public opinion, the sentimental aestheticism, and the secular movements, of the times. This they will do when they find their inspiration in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, rather than in the applause of the ablest pews.

**PURPOSELESS SERMONS.** — There are men who make admirable sermons: as specimens of reasoning they are conclusive; in style and structure, splendid. On hearing one of these sermons all admit it was a noble production. But it failed to do the appropriate work of a sermon. It aroused no dormant conscience, reached and troubled no obdurate heart, because the preacher did not mean to do any such thing. His object was not present, redeeming effect.—GEORGE SHEPARD, D.D.

## THE GERMAN PROTESTANT PULPIT OF TO-DAY:

Its Characteristic Elements of Strength  
and its Elements of Weakness.

### NO. III.

By THEODOR CHRISTLIEB, D.D., PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY, AND UNIVERSITY PREACHER IN BONN, GERMANY.

#### ELEMENTS OF STRENGTH IN THE GERMAN PULPIT.

The elements of strength in German sermonizing are not as prominent as among some other nations. In the French method these elements are to be found especially in the brilliancy of language and in captivating rhetoric. In the Anglo-American, if I am not mistaken, in the power of practical application. In the German method there are, first of all, the general elements that characterize the strength of a sermon from a formal and material point of view. I shall particularize but a few of these elements, which especially distinguish the German manner and custom.

From a formal point of view the German sermon of to-day is mainly characterized by a strict homiletic order in its construction, by "the architecture of the oration," by its firm and simple yet not artificial handling of the synthetic method, by its clear and logical divisions, and by its comprehensive connection of thought. In Germany the lay-sermon, free from rules of art, is as yet rarely heard—all preachers being theologically educated and homiletically trained. Hence we find the synthetic method, so well calculated to satisfy the educated classes, with theme and parts, prevailing in the Sunday sermons, while the form of homilies is, as a rule, adopted for the weekly lecture (Bible lesson). The German preacher speaks, for the most part, to a soberly thinking and calmly proving audience; therefore he is obliged, above all things, to study order and perspicuity. Without these two elements the preacher is lost anywhere, but more especially in Germany. Hence the universal exertion

of German preachers in this direction. Fortunately the science of homiletics has made correspondingly great progress in Germany during the past sixty years. Its many formal rules and regulations have been very much simplified, and have been reduced to a few necessary laws; and, therefore, the German sermon is now progressing along more attractive ways. No longer do we hear the monstrous double and triple introductions of olden times; the manifold divisions that no one could remember; the fivefold compulsory rule of application; the unyielding, artificial correctness of the once much-admired Reinhard (Court preacher in Dresden, died in 1812); the mania of a logical and dialectical virtuosity, according to which the text appears to exist solely for the sake of its homiletic divisions; and the unnatural length of the discourse. Everywhere there prevail, at the present time, in the construction of the sermon, order and perspicuity, simplicity and naturalness, a complete Theme, rarely more than two or three divisions, moderate length (thirty to forty-five minutes), repeated alternation of explanation and application. Thus only can preaching continue to attract the educated.

*Language and diction* also correspond with the above. Even if the language is not "as polished as the French"—we lay less emphasis upon rhetorical brilliancy nowadays—it is, nevertheless, much purer German, in contrast with the past mingling of the German language with Latin, Greek, and French fragments. And, besides, as indicated above, it is strictly in keeping with the solemnity of the church services, free from all common and slang expressions, avoiding, as a rule, both the vulgar and too familiar, as well as the strained and too ornate, and retaining that which is becoming, dignified and powerful.\*

\* Luther's translation of the Bible, that struck the language of the common people in so plastic and classic a manner, furnishes us with the best model of a dignified and popular style. He that is able to use its language will reach the heart of the German people.

A principal element of strength in German preaching is its *free delivery*. The practice of reading from manuscript in the pulpit is well-nigh an impossibility in Germany. In a number of instances the church authorities have actually forbidden it—at least, to all ministers under fifty years of age. This is a legacy of olden times—of Reformation days; just as in England the opposite custom is an inheritance from the days of Cranmer. Yet in no case is the German sermon purely extemporized—*i. e.*, after brief meditation "shaken, as it were, out of one's coat sleeves"—but rather, in nearly all cases, carefully developed in writing, read and re-read a number of times, and then freely delivered. New thoughts are often interwoven, but, as a whole, the sermon is preached as written.

Thus, the German sermon partakes, on the one hand, of the character of a vigorous directness, and avoids, on the other hand, everything irregular, accidental, unpolished and coarse in expression, all of which so easily creeps into extemporaneous preaching, save, perhaps, in the case of a few specially gifted preachers. This feature will always remain a bright side in German preaching. That which proceeds directly from the heart without the aid of the manuscript, finds its way more readily to the heart, especially if it be as well arranged and finished as if it were written and read. And the method is not a result, as foreigners usually seem to think, of an extraordinary gift, an unusually good memory, but simply of a *homiletical training*. For less ably-gifted preachers soon become accustomed to this method, since they, too, are obliged to deliver their discourses extemporaneously in the seminary; at first in short sermons before their fellow-students, then in somewhat longer ones before a congregation. True, much labor is required in the beginning, but afterwards, after a few months' practice in the pulpit they succeed with very little difficulty.

From a *material point of view* I call attention next to the great *self-reliance* as



exhibited by nearly all German preachers in the construction of their sermons. Among them nothing is known of the sale of sermonic manuscripts (as in England, at sixpence apiece), and of thus "plowing with another's heifer." All have been trained to stand upon their own feet. The German preacher will not readily yield his right to exert the influence of his subjectivity, even in his sermons, within certain limitations; and this right, he feels, at the same time, to be his privilege. Practical helps in the preparation of the sermon are, to my certain knowledge, sparingly used. Schleiermacher already declared that it would be a most meritorious *auto da fe* if all homiletical magazines were destroyed by fire.

Leaving out of consideration the relatively small number of rationalistic preachers, we find to-day that the *practical exegesis* of the German pulpit is, for the most part, *sound, churchly, and positively evangelical*. We do not hear of any artificial, almost repulsive, straining of every individual word of the text, as at one time by the followers of Cocceius; nor a preference given to certain favorite themes, according to a subjective, personal taste as formerly by Rationalists and many Pietists; nor yet that willful selection of individual passages, and that emphasis laid upon certain doctrinal questions at the expense of others, which often leads to the founding of new sects. Both the explanation and the application are, as a general thing, conducted according to the good old rule, "Scripture explains Scripture." Since the German preacher is theologically trained he can the more easily view the entirety of the Scriptures and their historical development of doctrine with its sound kernel as well as its errors and aberrations, and the more readily confine himself to the evangelical golden mean. This explains, at least in part, the fact that the German Evangelical Church has been less disturbed by the formation of new sects than any other church.

### IS THERE ANY THEORY OF EVOLUTION PROVEN?

By CHARLES F. DEEMS, D.D.

EVOLUTION is a word used to designate a certain theory of the universe. It may be represented as the doctrine which sets forth the production of all things from a primordial germ by a process which may be described as a change from that which is homogeneous to that which is heterogeneous; from the indefinite and undetermined to that which is definite and determined; from the incoherent to the coherent; from the simple to the complex. The cause of this change is supposed to be in the ultimate laws of matter, force, and motion. Mr. Spencer, who, more than any other man, has endeavored to "elaborate a consistent philosophy of evolution on a scientific basis," sets out with "the assumption of a limited mass of homogeneous matter acted upon by incident forces." Prof. Huxley ("Critiques and Addresses") says that the fundamental proposition of evolution is "that the whole world, living and not living, is the result of the mutual interaction, according to definite laws, of the forces possessed by the molecules of which the primitive nebulousity of the universe was composed."

There are very many difficulties in this theory. These, however, do not prove it false. They simply postpone its acceptance. One serious difficulty lies in the very fact of this postponement. When a question has been fairly before the world for hundreds of years, and when the ablest minds in three most recent generations of scientific men have been devoted to its investigation, and yet no approach is made to unanimity, men practically say that there must be some latent but powerful vice in the reasoning by which it is upheld.

It is to be observed that all the difficulties have a scientific basis. There is no religious reason for its acceptance or rejection. One theory of evolution does not touch the question of origin. It simply describes a process of devel-

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"Goodness is beauty in its best estate."

opment. It is easy to conceive a man believing in God the Father Almighty while holding that that God originally created a single cell, or monad, or molecule, and endowed it with all potencies, so that it might grow into all there now is in the universe. At a meeting in Boston, Sept. 11, 1882, Professor Gray, who is known as a follower of Darwin, is reported to have presented the following views: "Nature is either the outcome of mind, or mind is the outcome of nature. These are the only alternatives. The former has been more commonly held, at least till the beginning of the present generation. The question is, Has modern science proved the contrary? No. In response to the question, however, the naturalists have said not a little. They have presented many facts which help to make an answer. But the present demand is for the theologians to tell us what they think. "I, for one," remarked Professor Gray, "do not believe that after the matter has been thoroughly sifted the grounds of our faith in Jesus Christ are to be materially affected. The cause of Christianity will not suffer at the hands of physical science. We may be obliged to recast certain beliefs, but we may still be good Christians and accept the religion of Christ as contained in the four Gospels." He has since published his views in two lectures delivered to the Theological School of Yale College. It may be added that Mivart, the celebrated English scientist, is a theistic evolutionist. The question then would not reach the existence, or character, or attributes of God; it would simply affect our knowledge of the *modes* by which the Great God carried forward His processes. The question is simply this: Does evolution explain the universe in such a way as to be more consistent with most of the known facts, and is it freer from difficulties than any other theory? The doctrine of the law of gravitation was submitted to that test. It was found, and is still found, to have difficulties—as every proposition accepted as truth is known to have; but it has fewer difficulties

than any other theory on the same plane, and it consisted with more known facts. Therefore it is accepted. If evolution can thus make good its claim, it must be accepted.

The saying that there may be a theory of so-called evolution compatible with a belief in a Creator does not preclude the saying that there may be an anti-theistic theory of evolution. The fact is that where there has been opposition made to the theory on religious grounds, such opposition has always been excited by a very apparent zeal, upon the part of those opposed by religious people, to use whatever seemed in favor of evolution in order to oppose the theistic idea. There is a doctrine of evolution which is atheistic. That which requires the eternity of matter plainly is such. That which excludes the efficient superintendence of a personal Originator of force, plainly is such. Those who hold such a theory have to carry the burden of their opposition to the religious intuitions of mankind, as well as the burden of having to gather such proofs of their theory as will satisfy the scientific mind. And it is not to be forgotten that those religious intuitions of mankind are as much facts demanding attention of science as the processes of human thinking or animal respiration.

The theory of evolution demands that there shall have been a gradual but steady development from rudest and simplest forms to most complete and complex forms, *as a rule*, and not as an exception. Is that a fact as regards vegetables? If so, shall we not find that the nearer we approach the beginning, the ruder will the forms become, and the fewer the genera in proportion to the species? This is what Mr. Darwin taught. Are there facts to sustain this theory? If so they must be found in the ancient rocks. The appeal is to geology. So far is geology from sustaining this view that it antagonizes it. Mr. Darwin felt the need of bringing geology into court as the witness that must know more of this matter than any other, and his witness so contra-

dicted his theory that he was under the painful necessity of discrediting his witness. (See "Origin of Species," chapter X.) Professor Huxley says in the *Ency. Britannica*, 9th edition: "The only perfectly safe foundation for the doctrines of evolution is in the historical or rather archaeological evidence that particular organisms have arisen by the gradual modifications of their predecessors, which is furnished by fossil remains." Professor Virchow stated in his presidential address: "But one thing I must say, that not a single fossil skull of an ape, or of an ape man, has yet been found that could really have belonged to a human being. Every addition to the amount of objects which we have obtained as materials for discussions has removed us further from the hypothesis propounded." "On the whole, we must really admit that there is a complete absence of any fossil type of a lower stage in the development of man. Nay, if we gather together the whole sum of the fossil men hitherto known, and put them on a parallel with those of the present time, we can decidedly pronounce that there are among living men a much greater number of individuals who show a relatively inferior type than there are among the fossils known up to the present time." Mr. Darwin admits that their absence is fatal to his theory. If, then, Mr. Darwin admits, as he does, that none has been found, where is the foundation of evolution?

We have the statement by the eminent Dr. Carruthers (one of the highest authorities on fossil botany) that "ferns, equestums, and lycopods appear as far back in the old red sandstone (Devonian), not in simple or more generalized, but in more complex structures than their living representatives. The earliest known conifers were well-developed trees with woody structure and fruits as highly differentiated as those of their living representatives."

On this subject there is a great volume in the library of the Rock Books of Nature, from which much instruction may be gained. There is what is

called the Dakota Group, a formation of sandstone, described by Lesquereux as consisting of reddish and yellow sandstone, with variously colored clays, seams of impure lignite, and remains of fossil plants; the whole group holding a position at the base of the cretaceous series of the Northwest." If it occupied only a square mile, this Dakota group would be well worth the study of naturalists, but it extends continuously from Texas to Greenland, and is from sixty to one hundred miles in breadth. Its fossil plants have been studied by American and European naturalists, including some who are acknowledged to be among the ablest naturalists in the world. The number of plant impressions is vast. The Rev. Mr. Harsha\* says: "So far as is known, there is no place on the earth where such precise and varied testimony can be gathered as to the relation between the flora of the present and that of the past as in this formation." Prof. Wilber says: "The leaves here preserved in stone are so perfect that the skilled botanist at once recognizes every species, and makes his classification as readily as if he were dealing in the daily contributions gathered by a class in botany from our common groves in the month of June." (See Wilber's "Nebraska.")

Now, what do scientific men find in this great formation? Four things, every one of which suggests a difficulty which must be removed before any known theory of evolution can be accepted as *proved*.

1. It is manifestly essential to the evolution theory that the older any formation is, the smaller must be the number of genera in proportion to species. It follows that "in the older we should find few and simple generic forms."

"The few simple genera and many species should be prior to the many complex genera and the comparatively

\* Rev. William J. Harsha, A.M., contributed a brief but unusually important paper on the Dakota Group to the *Presbyterian Review*, Jan., 1883, to which amplest acknowledgment of indebtedness is made.

mengre species." This is the theory of evolution. But Nature flatly contradicts it, and over a continent, with capital letters a hundred miles high, writes, **UNTRUE!** According to the geologist, the Dakotah group is five millions of years old; and in this old, cretaceous formation, therefore, if evolution were true, the forms should be disorderly, and the genera few and the species many; whereas, everything is complete, the genera well-marked, and the proportion of the genera to the species is as 72 to 130—not quite two species to each genus. Does not this one fact seem fatal to the evolution theory as it now stands?

2. If evolution be true, the flora of any one formation will have a perceptible connection with the flora of the next and more ancient formation from which it was evolved. But here, over thousands of square miles we find a flora absolutely perfect, existing without any primordial germ or type out of which it could have been evolved. The characteristic of this flora is the dicotyledon leaf. It is not scarce, but appearing in measureless abundance. Now, that perfect leaf has been supposed by evolutionist naturalists to have been evolved through ages from ruder types and to have made its first appearance certainly not earlier than the middle cretaceous formation, if so early. But here we find it far back in the Dakotah group, and as perfect as it can be. The same is true of the other types in this group: *they all come forth in perfection at their first appearance.* It is not said that they were created. We are not to account for their appearance. But they are a gross impertinence to evolution. They came *un-evolved*, and they came to stay; and they have stayed through these millenniums, and so long as they are there, if there were not another fact in Nature antagonistic to the evolution theory, would not this be fatal?

3. The theory of evolution necessarily involves the agreement of any flora with the flora of any similar group. Similar groups are those produced at

the same period of development. The flora of one being subjected to the same conditions, must, in main characteristics, agree with the other if evolution be true; but they do not. The disagreements of synchronous forms has been observed by geologists in various portions of the planet. It is not necessary here to say that the Dakotah group gives a very remarkable emphasis to this fact, which has ample place for itself in Nature: but has it any place in any known theory of evolution?

4. If evolution be true the flora of to-day should be different from the flora of 5,000,000 years ago, and be more complex. But the Dakotah group shows us that the species of those far-off cycles and the species of to-day are identical. No noteworthy difference is discovered between the cedar, the poplar, the willow, the oak, the fig, the tulip, the spicewood, the sassafras, the walnut, the buckthorn, the sumac, the cinnamon, the apple and the plum, of to-day and the same species of five millions of years ago. How much longer will evolutionists demand? Is not all the ingenuity shown in Mr. Darwin's "Origin of Species" wasted, and worthless to establish his theory until some one will dig up and throw out of the planet every part, and even vestige, of the whole Dakotah group?

Let us turn from plants to animals. After all that has been said about the origin of species, we know, as Dörner has pointed out, that the lower animals have shown no advance in instinct, in notions, in memory, or in physical structure in the last several thousands of years. This undisputed fact shows that if evolution was ever the law of the universe, so far as the lower animals are concerned it has probably ceased to be. When did it cease? Why did it cease? The evolutionist must answer both questions. If there be no sign of the process now going on among the lower animals, to say that it will commence hereafter is only a prophecy: and it is only so much of a prophecy as a mere guess. Who has the authority to prophecy? If there

be no proof that the process will ever begin, and there be not a solitary proof that it is now going on, there must be the most conclusive proof that it operated in the production of the *differentia* of matter in the past. But where has that proof been produced? If there were enough indication of the passage from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous to produce the universe, there would be indications which would enable us to approximate the period when the process ceased. But no evolutionist has been able to give us any information on this subject.

The races of inferior animals which existed six thousand years ago ought to have made some appreciable approach by this time to what man was then, while man should have advanced. But the facts show that it is not so. For instance, the gorilla is said to possess vocal organs similar to the human. He has had them as long as man—longer, according to some evolutionists—and yet he cannot form a language, nor, so far as we know, even be taught a language nor the notes of music. Between a gorilla and Lauer Bridgman, for instance, what a chasm! She is almost entirely cut off from the use of the five senses, and yet her intellect is comparatively highly developed; while the most lively of all the inferior animals can only be taught some tricks of imitation.

Does not a theory of evolution which places its account of the universe wholly in matter with its potencies, necessarily involve the eternity of matter? In addition to all the burdens to be carried by every other theory of evolution, this theory assumes other loads. One is this: Eternity of matter is as difficult to conceive, as well as to prove, as is the eternity of mind. Mind is the product of matter; Matter is the product of mind. Here are two statements, both of which cannot be true. The question arises, which theory will most easily account for the greater number of phenomena? If it cannot be assumed that by proving either we can displace the other, if both be equally

beyond demonstration, we must take that which gives the easier explanation of the universe. The theory that Mind preceded Matter certainly does this.

But, for the argument's sake, suppose matter to be eternal: then all its potencies and possibilities must be co-eternal, or must have entered into or been placed in matter at some definite period. Did they enter matter? If so, where were they before they so entered? And how did they get in? If they had no previous existence, then they were created. If they were created, that fact takes away all difficulty from the supposition that matter itself was created. If they were not created they were co-eternal with matter.

The supposition that matter, with force, is eternal, is an immense weight for any theory to carry; for we must remember what "eternal" means. Millenniums written in figures, each one of which multiplied all its predecessors by ten, and standing in a line billions of times longer than the greatest distance between the two most remote fixed stars, would be but as a grain of sand to the universe in any attempt to represent eternity. Now, whatever force or forces is or are at present at work to differentiate existing matter, to promote development, to give even the suggestion of evolution, must, on this theory, have been *eternally* at work. The homogeneous must have been *eternally* becoming the heterogeneous; the simple must have been *eternally* becoming the complex; the rude and inchoate must have *eternally* been becoming the complete and perfect. But this is inconceivable, because it necessarily involves the concept of a thing being synchronously one thing and another, simple and complex, *and*, while being both at the same time, passing from one to the other; three states in which no one thing can possibly be believed to be at any one moment.

But, suppose we are obstructed by the barriers of our intellectual limitations from going back measurelessly into *eternitas post*, the evolutionist can, in imagination, retreat many millions

of years along the banks of the stream which has no source, and jump in somewhere with his theory. If the theory of evolution now considered be true, the law of nature demands that all things must be developing from the rude to the perfect, from the simple to the complex, from the lower to the higher, from the inorganic to the organic, from the lifeless to the living, from the simplest living protozoic cells to Shakespeares and Newtons. Each variation may have required millions of years, and there may have been billions of these variations to bring the drop of protoplasm up to the poet or philosopher. But we can furnish a million times as much duration as may be required, because we have eternity at our command in the argument. But, all at once, it occurs to us that the stages of progress on which we stand must have been reached eternal ages ago, and that through those eternal years the physical and intellectual universe should have ascended until the system had reached its consummate flowering, and every living thing become a man, and every man an angel, and angelic nature have developed through the eternities until there should have appeared an infinite God, and that divine product should have had eternal personal existence. The theory of evolution which, by the assumption of the eternity of matter, starts with excluding any God, necessitates the existence of an eternal God. Nay, more: If from the inorganic could be evolved the lowest form of organism in which life could reside, and if from that lowest form *man* could be evolved—and not only a specimen man, but the numberless multitudes of men which we call *mankind*—why not, from this great and innumerable human race have been evolved in the lapsing eternities an unlimited number of perfect beings—that is, of gods? If that form of the evolution theory which demands the eternity of matter be true, then polytheism must be true, and there must be an innumerable company of perfect gods still evolving into some-

thing better and higher than perfect godhood. An eternity-of-matter evolution that stops short of this absurdity commits logical suicide. If evolution has been eternally in progress it must eternally progress. An evolution which has beginning must have an end. An evolution which has an end must have a beginning. An evolution which has either beginning or end is no evolution; it is merely a *limited development* theory; and that is a totally different thing, and is not now under discussion.

Evolutionists who are not atheists require time, if they do not demand eternity. Thus, Mr. Darwin's theory of "Natural Selection," according to his own statements, on a calculation made by so competent a person as Mr. Mivart, required 2,500 millions of years, since life began on the planet, for such accretion of infinitesimal variations in succeeding generations as would be necessary to bring the flora and fauna of the planet to their present state. But physical astronomy shows that the earth has not been able to sustain life more than 50 millions of years according to Prof. Thomson, who is recognized authority, and other scientists have reduced it to 15, and others even to 10 millions. Prof. Winchell, in his late work, "World-Life," makes it 3 millions. In his admirable address as President of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, in 1883, Principal Dawson says that recently the opinion has been gaining ground that the close of the ice age is very recent; and he assigns the geological reasons for such opinion. In the same address, however, it is proper to state that he shows that the evidence is insufficient to establish any such universal and extreme *glaciation* as is demanded by some geologists. If there be, as he says, "the greatest possible exaggeration as to the erosive action of land-ice, all the strength which this statement may take from the argument in this paragraph deals a blow at the dogmatism now so unhappily prevalent in certain scientific circles.

The existence of man upon earth



must have succeeded the glacial period. When did that occur? Dr. Whedon tells us that "four independent measurements by American geologists so agree as to form a medium estimate of six or seven thousand years." The hypothesis of "Natural Selection," therefore, drops away from evolution, and fails as a cosmic theory.

The most trustworthy science, then, shows us that the theory of evolution has to disprove what has been accepted as proved in other departments before it can make itself acceptable. In other words, a great objection to evolution is that it is unscientific, on the authority of some of the most trustworthy scientists.

Let us push aside any difficulty for want of time, and assume room in duration large enough for anything; shall we then be rid of all difficulty? Let us see. Evolution is supposed to have aid from Mr. Darwin's theory of the origin of species. But it is not a theory; it is merely an hypothesis. "Suppose things were thus, then species must have originated thus." With extraordinary industry and skill Mr. Darwin gathered and stated a vast number of what he believed to be facts; and, if they should all be admitted, they show that only by the constant superintendence of human intellect over the application of human industry is it possible to make great varieties of pigeons; but (1) the very moment the human superintendence is withdrawn, the pigeons begin to go back to the original, natural type, domestication never having been able to produce forms of animals that are self-perpetuating; and (2) no skill of domestication and differentiating ever has made any species pass into another species; any line of doves produce the first eagle.

If the changes in the universe are going forward on the plan of evolution, there must be an advance from the poorer to the better, from the lower to the higher. But the facts are against this. The planet shows that multitudes of species have degenerated. Even man has degenerated. Is not the first of

everything, as a rule, better than most that follows? The phrase "the survival of the fittest" has no scientific support. It is a grim satire on nature, unless evolution teach that *the worst is the fittest*. When the wheat and the tares are sown in the field, we know which chokes the other. Now, if there be no stays or stops, everything must reach the bottom to which it tends, and evolution provides for no such pause and upward turning caused by the incoming of some force from without. Indeed, whatever proof of improvement and upward movement can be produced is a proof which stands adverse to the evolution hypothesis, because it shows the incoming of something from outside of nature. Such a simple fact as that no grain which now forms food for men, such as corn or wheat, has ever been found in a wild state, but is all the product of cultivation, which means the coming in of a force *ab extra*; and that such grain would disappear if the culture were withdrawn for a short time, stands against the hypothesis of evolution.

For the above and many other reasons, after a century of hard work to sustain the hypothesis of evolution, it is apparent that the only verdict that can be safely given—a verdict of the truth of which even evolutionists must feel sensible—is the Scotch verdict of "NOT PROVEN." When admitted to have been undeniably established, it may be time to inquire how far it is consistent with the Bible—or any thing else.

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#### "Is it True?"

"I must acknowledge, however, that of all classes in society, the clergy seem to have least of what is called among men of the world, *esprit de corps*; and a cynical man of letters once remarked that when clergymen discuss one of their own order it generally amounts to an invitation to view the remains." Thus remarked a prominent dignitary of the Church in one of our Eastern cities. Is it true? And if so, what can be done to cure the evil? X. Y. Z.

## PREACHERS EXCHANGING VIEWS.

*Among mortals second thoughts are wisest.*—EURIPIDES.

## A Critic Criticised.

I read with great pleasure Professor Thwing's "Pulpit Magnetism," in the June number of THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY, and with great surprise the criticism upon it in the July number (p. 597). In the interest of fairness and historical truth, will you allow me to state that Professor Thwing shows a much more accurate knowledge of Greek literature than his critic, which it is not difficult to prove. The point criticised as false to history, was this passage: "The chisel of Praxiteles, the counsels of Pericles, and the fiery eloquence of Demosthenes got much of their inspiration at the feet of Phryne, Aspasia, and Lais." The gist of the criticism is in these words: "As to the historical side: Pericles certainly had much to do with Aspasia; but it will be news to many that Praxiteles and Demosthenes 'sat at the feet' of Phryne and Lais, who must have been old women when they were children." To show that Professor Thwing is strictly accurate in his statement, and his critic not, I appeal to original sources: 1. There were two *ἐτραίονες* with the name Lais (*Λαῖς*): a. The one living at the time of the Peloponnesian war, was born at Corinth. She is spoken of, *e. g.*, by Aristophanes, in his *Plutus*, and many others. b. The younger Lais was a daughter of Timandra, the friend of Alcibiades, and was born in Hyecara (*Ἰνυκάρη*), in Sicily. Apelles, the painter of Kos (356-308 B.C.) is brought into connection with her; so is Hyperides (396-322 B.C.), one of the ten Attic orators. Compare, *e. g.*, Hyperides, fragment 17: orators Attici (Didot, Paris), Vol. II., 384. If Mr. Micon had taken trouble, not to read the original documents, but merely to look over the preface to Dr. Thomas Leland's "Translations of the Speeches of Demosthenes" (published by Funk & Wagnalls, Standard Series, Nos. 33 and 34), he would know that Demosthenes was born 382 B.C. (and died 322 B.C.). And now I would like to know why

Lais, the far-famous Hetaire, could not have been rather a young lady than an old woman, when Demosthenes was a young man? Does not every testimony of Greek history speak in favor of Prof. Thwing's assertion?

2. Still more evidently is Mr. Micon in the wrong with regard to Praxiteles and Phryne. I would strongly advise him to read and study authors like Plutarch, Athenæus, Lucian, *et al.*, although they do not belong to the Greek literature of a college course. He would learn there that Phryne was not only the model for Praxiteles (flourished between OI. 97-107, i. e. 392-350 B.C.) when he sculptured his famous "Aphrodite of Knidos," but also for Apelles when painting his Anodymene, that beautiful picture of Aphrodite (*Ἀφροδίτη ἀναδυμένη*) for which refer to Hesiod, Theog. 190). She was a great friend of Hyperides (396-322 B.C.), who defended her victoriously when she was accused by Euthias of ἀσέβεια before the Athenian Court (the *ἡλιαστράτι*). For the original documents I simply refer Mr. Micon to Oratores Attici (Didot edition, Paris).

Vol. II., 447, sq. (Euthias accuser.)

Vol. I., 425, sqq. (Hyperidis oratio pro Phryne, fragments extant et al.)

W. MUSS-ARNOLT.

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## "The Early Conversion of Children."

IN THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY (July, p. 576), on "The Early Conversion of Children," Dr. Sherwood gives as one of the "points settled beyond dispute" the following: "The children of believing Christian parents are *already in the Church*, under solemn vows, entitled to the ordinances and subject to the discipline of the Church." This I consider a grave error, which should not pass unchallenged. As a whole, the statement, so far from being settled beyond dispute, is, and always has been, in dispute in almost every branch of the Christian Church, except those branches which utterly repudiate it. Of the two

largest denominations, embracing vastly more members than all the others put together, the first, the Baptists, utterly deny the assumption as unscriptural; the second, the Methodists, are divided in opinion upon it—some holding it in a modified form, and some rejecting it. Of the Congregationalists, large numbers reject the theory and the practices which spring from it; and among almost all the Protestant sects which still, in measure, hold the theory, the tendency, of late years, to "dispute" its validity has steadily increased, and the practices dependent upon it steadily diminished. In the light of these facts how amazing does such a statement appear as that which Dr. Sherwood makes!

Chicago, Ill. J. SPENCER KENNARD.

A CARD FROM DR. SHERWOOD.

So far as the Brother's criticism is deserved I accept it in all meekness. From his standpoint I can readily understand his feelings and excuse his zeal. This is not the place, however, and I have not the space at command, to argue the disputed point. In the fewest possible words I beg to submit the following considerations as due to myself and the numerous readers of the MONTHLY:

1. Being given over *my own name*, I alone am responsible for the views expressed in the brief expositions and suggestions of "The Prayer-Meeting Service." The Editor is in no sense responsible for them, any more than for the views expressed in the sermons and other contributions which appear in the MONTHLY. Some liberty must be allowed, by both editor and reader, for the expression of individual opinions. No magazine that is worth the reading can be conducted on any other principle. Hence, from the nature of the case, there will be diversity of views expressed to which all will not assent.

2. It has been my uniform study in this "Service" to stand on *common evangelical ground*, and know no sect or differences among Christians. Though personally holding positive views on

doctrinal and ecclesiastical questions, I have aimed to avoid, as in duty bound, touching on denominational differences. In this instance I have offended unwittingly. As I view it the point excepted to is not a *Baptist* question at all, but is infinitely broader and grander than any question of outward ordinance, and is based on my apprehension of the scope of Christ's redeeming work and the underlying principles of the covenant of redemption in their application to the Church which He has bought with His blood.

3. My object in the particular service referred to, was not to make a *dogmatic assertion of any kind*, but to urge a *great and solemn practical duty*, in the fewest and strongest words possible. The whole drift and cast of the homily will bear me out in this. I had recently read the masterly and intensely interesting articles of Prof. Dr. Prentiss, Dr. Van Dyke, and Dr. E. V. Gerhart, in the *Presbyterian Review* and the *Reformed Quarterly Review* on this subject, and my feelings were wrought up to a high pitch. Instead of going *backward*, I believe the whole Christian Church is on the eve of a *grand advance* in sentiment and practice in reference to the early conversion of children; and this I believe is in accordance with the teachings of Scripture.

4. In logical form and relation, the point disputed is open to criticism. It is the fourth of five practical points stated, and, viewed as a *dogmatical* statement in connection with a previous remark, which I overlooked at the writing, it deserves all the censure which my critic lays upon it. But viewing it, as I viewed it, only in its *practical* light, in keeping with the other points raised, and with the obvious scope and drift of the "Service" as a whole, a more charitable construction, it seems to me, may be put upon it.

Brooklyn, N. Y. J. M. SHERWOOD.

**Bad Pulpit Manners.**

Not long since we had the pleasure (?) of listening to an eminent preacher, who indulged in the unfor-

tunate habit of expectorating very freely. It seemed as if both the principal and minor divisions of his excellent sermon were purposely marked by more or less violent expectorations. The effect upon his large audience was very bad. They bore it patiently to the

close; but the look of disappointment, if not of disgust, was unmistakably discernible upon many countenances. It was a painful church-service, and all caused by a self-acquired, careless, vulgar habit. The pulpit should be absolutely free from coarse manners.

### SERMONIC CRITICISM.

"Good reasons must, of force, give place to better."—SHAKESPEARE.

Virtues and vices and truths of the Gospel be matter enow to preach to the people.—WICLIF.

#### Morality Essential to Religion.

THERE is profound truth in the words of the great Napoleon: "No truth can exist without morality; good morals have never existed without religion; religion is the only thing which furnishes the State with a strong and durable support." The words sound in our ears to-day as if they fell from the lips of one of the prophets of the olden time. They have a deep undertone of warning both to the minister of God's sanctuary, and to the statesman.

The Christian religion is more than a doctrine, or creed, or profession; more than faith and love and worship and heart obedience. It is all that, and much more. It is a system of MORAL ETHICS, broad, comprehensive, and sharply-defined in its principles and binding and eternal in its obligations. And yet, is not this fundamental fact often practically ignored by preacher and by professor? Is there not a vast amount of popular religion in the world to-day that is destitute of *Christian morality*; wanting in manliness, in justice, in charity, in due regard for the rights and interests of mankind, both in their individual and associated relations; a religion that violates, in spirit or form, or both, many of the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount? Have not various causes combined to lower the standard of morals; to relax the restraints, and fritter away the distinctions, and break up the habits which characterized the better portion of our people in former generations? And is it not equally true that the average pulpit of to-day preaches morality, in its spiritual, far-reaching and divinely enunciated principles, less frequently and less faithfully

than did the preachers of former days—than did the old Hebrew prophets, and Christ himself and His apostles? Has not the gospel of law been thrust aside for the gospel of sentiment? Has not the gospel of charity taken the place of the gospel of moral precept; the gospel of emotion and ecclesiasticism supplanted the gospel of strict obedience to the principles of right conduct? And see we not the alarming, the tremendous consequences of this delinquency on the part of modern preaching in the general demoralization of society; in the frequent and gigantic frauds, defalcations, betrayal of trusts, divorces, and a hundred other forms of immorality, which mark the times and daily shock the public mind? There can be no denial of the fact, that the bands of moral restraint are fearfully loosened; that corruption has struck its roots deep in social, political and business life, in the body politic, and even in the Church of God, till we stand aghast at the daily unfolding record of human rascality and wickedness. A journal of high character in the literary and critical world of New York recently made this severe thrust, for which, alas! there is too much occasion given: "Has religion then ceased to teach *morality*? Have its ministers come to approve of conduct which the world condemns? Are we to attribute the misconduct of so many church members in these days to a general decline of morality among the churches?"

What better things can we expect, when the *high moralities* which Christ taught have become almost a dead letter; when "love," "sympathy," "humanity," the "love of the beautiful"

are put in the place of Right, Penalty, Justice, Law—the awful voice of God speaking in the human conscience, and by the lips of prophets, apostles, and Christ himself? It is not enough to preach the doctrines of Christianity: to preach repentance, faith and love and moral purity. It is equally essential to preach and insist upon the second table of the law—the duties every man owes to his fellow-man and to society. *The Church needs to-day a second John the Baptist.* She needs a more Biblical and ethical conception of Christianity; a baptism of righteousness as really as a baptism of the Holy Ghost; the flaming sword of divine Justice gleaming in the sunlight of Heaven, as well as a sight of the Cross lifted up on Calvary!

#### Character in the Pulpit.

In this highly cultured age, when so much attention is given to learning, style, freshness, novelty, and showy parts—when the rage on the part of churches is for a minister that will “draw” large audiences and be popular with the multitude—is there not danger that *character* will come to be considered of secondary importance? Indeed, is it not *already true*, that in the calling of pastors, particularly in our chief cities and large towns, where wealth and fashion chiefly centre, the matter of piety, personal purity and spirituality, is not so much thought of; the main stress being laid on voice, gesture, oratory, grace of manner, popular parts—elements and traits that will catch and please the popular eye and ear? Churches, ruled by such a spirit, may get what they bargain for—a *popular* preacher, a full church, and outward prosperity. But, O the leanness! the spiritual barrenness! Souls are not converted; the Holy Ghost is not sent down; the preached word has no power to save. And at the close of his ministry, such a pastor may well take up the prophet’s lament, and exclaim: “Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?” After all, it is true that *character* in the preacher is far more effective in the way

of winning souls to Christ than any or all outer gifts and graces. The man of deep, earnest piety, of singleness of purpose and high order of consecration and prayerfulness, whose reputation for sincerity, truthfulness, unselfishness, Christian honor and purity is above reproach—though he may not possess scholarly tastes and gifts, or oratorical graces, or great social attractions—will, in the long run, gather richer and more abundant fruit to the glory of the Master than the preacher whose chief power lies in the externals of the ministry. Behind the former stands an impalpable, divine Presence, as it were, giving tone, emphasis, effect to his words; while in the other case there is no such power, no inspiration back of the words; nay, in many instances there is a negative, neutralizing influence felt. Not every preacher may attain notoriety, or great popular success; but he may achieve that which is itself and in its permanent effects is infinitely better—a pure, manly, high-toned Christian *character*.

#### The Fullness of the Scriptures.

We have no sympathy with the preacher who complains that he does not know what to preach about; that he has exhausted pulpit topics, and finds it well-nigh impossible to bring forth, Sabbath after Sabbath and year after year, things “*new*” as well as “*old*” out of the Word of God. We marvel at this! The man who feels thus is either ignorant of the Divine Word, in its spirit and breadth and profundity and all-encompassing truth, or is a very superficial student of it. Exhaust the teaching of the Bible! Compass the theme of the Cross! Find nothing new in God’s infinite plan of redemption, reaching as it does from everlasting to everlasting in the scope of its purpose, and outshining all His other works and wonders! As soon think of exhausting the ocean by dipping up its waters! As soon think of exhausting Infinity, as wearing threadbare that wondrous Book which God has “*magnified above all his name!*” If a man were to study it and preach it

a thousand years he would still be but a novice in its sublime mysteries, and its worlds of facts and truths of infinite reach and infinite worth. The trouble is, we do not study God's Word as we ought — search the divinely-inspired record as for hid treasures, and master in any sense the variety and fullness and grandeur of the Scriptures. An eminent professor remarks, in this same line of thought: "There are glories in the Bible on which the eye of man has not gazed sufficiently long to admire them; there are difficulties the depth and inwardness of which require a measure of the same qualities in the interpreter himself. There are notes struck in places which, like some discoveries of science, have sounded before their time, and only after many days been caught up and found a response on the earth. There are germs of truth which, after thousands of years, have never yet taken root in the world."

### Things a Preacher Should Remember.

\*\*\* That the Holy Scriptures are the only infallible and authoritative standard of judgment, both in matters of doctrine and practice.

\*\*\* That when the fierce and terrible assaults of the devil upon Jesus in the wilderness were made, the only weapon used by the Divine Son of God to repel them was Scripture—"It is written."

\*\*\* That nothing will so soon and so effectually foil the adversary in his evil designs against us, or shut the mouth of infidelity, as a calm, bold, fearless appeal "to the law and the testimony."

\*\*\* That however proper and desirable Church "Creeds" or "Systems of Doctrine" may be, they are valuable and binding on the conscience only so far as they conform to and express God's inspired Word.

\*\*\* That you speak by authority and divine sanction only when and so far as you ground your teaching on a "Thus saith the Lord," and fairly interpret and express the spirit and letter of the written Word.

\*\*\* That no course is so fatal to religion and morals and the cause of Christ in the world, as for a minister to get in the way of criticising the Bible, insinuating doubt, and flippantly discussing the various questions which modern criticism has raised.

\*\*\* That the most effective "weapons of warfare" against "the world, the flesh, and the devil," are not "carnal but spiritual;" are not learning, poetry, science, oratory, popular parts, but the simple, direct, unequivocal words of the Holy Ghost, spoke in love and faithfulness.

### HINTS AT THE MEANING OF TEXTS.

*I have found you an argument, but I am not obliged to find you an understanding.*—DR. JOHNSON.

#### Funeral Service.

##### DEATH A SURPRISE.

*The Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.*—Luke xii: 40.

1. Death is a surprise in the time of its coming.

2. It is a surprise in the way of its coming.

3. It is a surprise, as it finds the sinner unprepared.

He meant to be ready, but death was too quick for him.

OBSERVATIONS: 1. God has wisely hidden from us the day of death, that we may be always ready and watching for His coming.

2. There is never but a step, a breath, a heart-throb, between any man and death! While the citadel is guarded, and the walls and gates are watched day and night with sleepless vigilance, an unseen foe lurks within, and with noiseless tread, at the midnight hour, enters the chamber of the sleeper, and life is extinct. Be ready, O man! The

Son of man may come at any hour, in any place, by any agency, along any one of a thousand unseen avenues.

#### Christian Culture.

##### LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF LIFE.

*And after the uproar ceased,*" etc.—Acts xx: 1-12.

What a tremendous hubbub in the theatre at Ephesus when all the people "with one voice, about the space of two hours, cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" The uproar ceases, and we have a touching scene of Christian fellowship. Paul and the disciples embrace each other, and he goes on his way rejoicing. Singular that Luke gives so much space to the accident which befell Eutychus, while he barely touches on Paul's visit to Macedonia and Greece. How full of interest must that visit have been, and especially his visit to the church at Corinth! But our wish is not gratified. Such is life here. Thousands of heroic deeds are wrought in secret and no lips tell the



story; saintly sufferings are borne, unseen by human eye, and the pen of history fails to record them.

"If singing breath or echoing chord  
To every hidden pang were given,  
What endless melodies were poured,  
As sad as earth, as sweet as heaven!"

It is enough that one eye sees, and one heart enters into our conflicts and griefs, and that "our record is on high."

### Revival Service.

#### THE THREE CROSSES.

[By T. De Witt Talmage, D.D.]

And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.—Luke xxiii: 33.

THREE crosses in a row. Stand and give a look at the three crosses. Just look

1. At the cross on the right. Its victim dies scoffing. More tremendous than his physical anguish is his scorn and hatred of Him on the middle cross. There has always been a war between this right-hand cross and the middle cross, and wherever there is an unbelieving heart, there the fight goes on. That right-hand cross—thousands have perished on it—yea, in worse agonies.

2. Gather around the left hand cross.

(a) This left-hand cross is a cross of

repentance. Hear the cry of the dying thief: "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." So must we repent. (b) This left-hand cross was a *believing* cross. (c) This left-hand cross was a *pardoning* cross. (d) It becomes the cross of *contentment*. Peace filled his heart. Peace closed his eyes in death. That dying head is easy which has under it the promise, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

"The dying thief rejoiced to see

That fountain in his day;

And there may I, though vile as he,

Wash all my sins away."

I have shown you the right-hand cross, and the left-hand cross; now come to,

3. The middle cross. We stood at the one and found it yielded poison. We stood at the other and found it yielded bitter aloes. Come now to the middle cross, and shake down apples of love. Uncover your head. You never saw so tender a scene as this. (a) It was a *suffering* cross; (b) It was a *vicarious* cross. To this middle cross, my dying hearers, look, that your souls may live. The right-hand cross shows you what an awful thing it is to be unbelieving. The left-hand, what it is to repent. The middle cross, what Christ has done to save your soul.

## LIVING ISSUES FOR PULPIT TREATMENT.

*Poverty is the reward of idleness.*—ENGEL.

*Poverty, like a lamp, shows everything bad and annoying.*—ARISTOPHON.

*There is not on earth a more powerful advocate for vice than poverty.*—GOLDSMITH.

### The Problem of Poverty, and How to Deal with It.

For ye have the poor always with you.—Matt. xxvi: 11.

WHAT ARE THE CARDINAL PRINCIPLES OF THE PROBLEM?

This question is of prime importance and deserves the first consideration, as it must give color and shape to the solution of the problem. We are confident that these principles are not clearly and generally understood and acted upon in our dealings with the poor.

1. The essential claim which this class of mankind has upon the com-

mon brotherhood is not one of "charity," but is founded in religion; it is not a humane sentiment to be gratified, but a law of Christianity to be obeyed. The relation and duty involved do not grow out of society simply, but pertain to the universal law of brotherhood, as children of the same Father, and heirs of the same divine love and grace. The first two words of that universal prayer which Christ taught His disciples, convey the idea: "OUR FATHER." The spirit, the principle of these preface words bind all who utter them to look upon and treat the poor, not in the light of charity to strangers, but of love and

service to the children of our common "Father in heaven." "Ye have the poor *always* with you." It is not an *occasional chance* call that we are to consider, but the *normal permanent* condition of a large part of mankind not so fortunate or favored as we are. Christ himself sprang from this same class, and belonged to it during His entire stay upon the earth. There was a high purpose in this. And He set an example to us in His manner of dealing with the poor and humble class. He invariably mingled with them, conversed with them, ministered to them, and bestowed favors upon them—not in the spirit of condescension or patronage; not on the principle of charity, or from the dictation of a humane, philanthropic feeling; but in love and sympathy as a brother, out of the depths of His moral nature seeking their highest permanent good—the salvation of their immortal souls. In this, as in all other things, He acted in obedience to His Father's will: "Lo, I come. . . I delight to do thy will, O my God."

2. The poor may be considered in the *light of Christ's legacy to His Church in all ages*. What if there were no poor claiming our sympathy and kindly ministry: what a lack there had been in the training of the Christian graces! Had there been no poor, no sick, no friendless, no suffering and dependent ones in Christ's kingdom on earth, the crowns of heaven had been less glorious. No one who will study the Bible can mistake *God's* feelings and purposes respecting the children of earthly poverty and suffering. And *Jesus* himself illustrated the spirit of the great Father in heaven at every step of His earthly career, and in all His teachings and doings. One of the very last acts of His life—even while dying on the cross—was to provide a Christian home for His poor mother, who stood before Him, weeping.

3. We are to perform this high and sacred duty *in testimony of our love to Christ, and in gratitude for His love and services in our behalf*. He loved us, and gave Himself for us. Utterly unworthy

and infinitely beneath Him, He yet stooped from heaven to embrace us; entered the ranks of the poor that He might minister to us; laid aside the glory He had with the Father that He might enrich us; and tasted the bitterness of the cross that He might put to our lips the cup of salvation. Hence, no return of service that we can possibly make for Him is unreasonable. We cannot minister directly to Him, as He is no longer on earth and needs no such service; but we can, and are required, alike by the obligations of gratitude and obedience, to minister to His needy disciples in every walk and condition in life; and inasmuch as we do it unto one of the least of His disciples, He accepts it as done unto Himself.

If all who love our Lord Jesus Christ will observe and put in practice these three simple, yet radical and all-embracing principles, it will go far to solve the other part of the problem—*How to deal with Poverty*, which we must reserve to some future time.

#### Well-paid Labor an Element in Civilization.

*The laborer is worthy of his hire.*—Luke x: 7.

*What mean ye that ye . . . grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord God of hosts.*—Isa. iii: 15.

There is no country in the world where labor is so liberally paid as in the United States; none in which the wage-earning class has so favorable an opportunity for social and moral elevation. The following tables of statistics in relation to wages in England and the United States are highly interesting and instructive. The first table is given in the Report of the Tariff Commission in 1882.

#### IN IRON MILLS.

England.	Pittsburg, Pa.
Pu idlers, per ton \$1.94	Puddlers, per ton \$5.50
Shinglers, " .29	Shinglers, " .77
Rollers in puddle mill, per ton, .29	Rollers in puddle mill, per ton, .68½
Rollers and heaters 1.80	Rollers and heaters 4.80
Laborers, pr. day 56 to 72	Laborers, 1.30 to 1.50

#### IN THREAD FACTORIES.

The following table was compiled in 1883 by the Clarke Thread Co., from the

pay-rolls of their factories in Paisley, Scotland, and Newark, N. J.:

Great Britain.		United States.	
Weekly wages.		Weekly wages.	
Cop winders, \$3.50		Cop winders, \$4.00	
Finishers, 2.50		Finishers, 5.50	
Reelers, 4.25		Reelers, 8.00	
Spoolers, 3.25		Spoolers, 8.00	
Foremen, 7.00		Foremen, 20.00	
Pickers, 4.12		Pickers, 7.00	
Hank winders, 3.75		Hank winders, 7.00	

#### IN POTTERIES.

This table and those following are taken from the letters to the N. Y. *Tribune* by Robert P. Porter, member of the U. S. Tariff Commission of 1882. His figures were obtained in 1882-83 by personal inspection of pay-rolls, and from the report of the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics, and other equally reliable sources.

Great Britain.		United States.	
Weekly wages.		Weekly wages.	
Flat presser, \$7.70		Flat presser, \$20.30	
Dish maker, 9.62		Dish maker, 19.43	
Cup " 9.92		Cup " 19.67	
Saucer " 7.93		Saucer " 18.58	
Hand basin maker, 9.86		Hand basin m'kr, 19.73	
Hollow ware pres'r, 8.14		Hol'w ware pres'r, 17.90	
" " gigger, 11.62		" " gigger, 21.89	
Printer, 6.55		Printer, 13.56	
Oven man, 6.86		Oven man, 13.18	
Sagger maker, 8.46		Sagger maker, 19.33	
Mould " 10.23		Mould " 20.79	
Turner, 8.00		Turner, 16.97	
Handler, 8.39		Handler, 16.62	

#### IN WOOLEN MILLS.

Yorkshire, England.		United States.	
Weekly wages.		Weekly wages.	
Wool sorters, \$6.00		Wool sorters, \$9.43	
Scourers (men), 5.75		Scourers (men), 8.84	
Dyers, 5.75		Dyers, 7.81	
" (young), 3.00		" (young), 5.12	
Carders (men), 5.00		Carders (men), 8.12	
" (women), 3.25		" (women), 5.39	
" (young), 2.50		" (young), 4.53	
Spinners (men), 5.00		Spinners (men), 9.05	
" (women), 3.50		" (women), 6.18	
" (young), 2.50		" (young), 4.82	
Weavers (men), 5.00		Weavers (men), 8.53	
" (women), 3.50		" (women), 7.45	
Giggers (men), 5.00		Giggers (men), 7.00	
Shearers (men), 5.25		Shearers (men), 8.05	
Mechanics, 7.50		Mechanics, 13.43	
Engineers, 7.50		Engineers, 11.07	
Firemen, 6.00		Firemen, 8.00	
Watchmen, 5.00		Watchmen, 9.63	
Laborers, 4.50		Laborers, 8.58	

#### IN GLASGOW, SCOTLAND.

Glasgow is one of the largest centres of the iron and steel industries, ship-building, etc. In rate of wages and cost of living it will compare favorably with any other portion of Great Britain.

Weekly wages.		Cost of living.	
Blacksmiths, \$7.87		Oatmeal, per stone (14 lbs.), \$0.54	
Engineers, 7.87		Potatoes, per stone, .12	
General smiths, 7.87		Beef, first quality, per lb., .25	
Boot makers, 7.50		Beef, 2d quality, .18	
Bricklayers, 8.50		" 3rd " .14	
Cabinet makers, 7.87		Bacon, per lb., .18	
Calenderers, 7.00			
Curriers, 6.50			

Weekly wages.		Cost of living.	
Coopers, 6.25		Pork, " .18	
Gilders, 7.87		Bread, first quality, per 4 lbs., .17	
Joiners and house carpenters, 7.87		Bread, 2d quality, per 4 lbs., .15	
Laborers, 5.00		Sweet milk, per ½ gallon, .16	
Letter-press printers & book work, 8.25		Buttermilk, per Scotch pint, .02	
Doon newspapers, 10.00		Cheese, per lb., .16	
Masons, 7.87		Fresh butter, per lb., .32	
Moulders, 8.50		Salt " " .27	
Painters, 7.87		Black tea, " .50	
Plasterers, 7.87		Brown sugar, " .05	
Plumbers, 7.87		" soap, " .05	
Porters in shops and warehouses, 5.00		Black " " .06	
Sawyers (by piece), 6.75		Coal, per cwt., .16	
Slaters, 7.87			
Tailors, 7.50			
Turners and fitters, 7.87			

It appears that, to-day, in spite of "Factory Act," and "School Board," thousands of old and young, mothers and daughters, with their little children by their sides, toil by day and by night.

In one district, only seven miles from Birmingham, about 20,000 people are engaged in making nails and rivets.

Says the *London Standard*:

"The remuneration they receive is incredibly small. It is no unusual thing for a family of three or four persons, after working something like fourteen hours a day, to earn £1 a week, from which various deductions are made, which reduce it to about 16s. 9d. These poor laborers rarely or never taste meat from one week's end to the other. Their children, ragged and ill fed, have had to lead miserable and wretched lives, with no hope before them but a life of want, ignorance and vice."

The relations of extreme poverty to ignorance, vice and crime are direct, the world over. The conditions of life are unfavorable in the extreme to personal cleanliness and self-respect, to social and moral virtue, to family training and influence, and tend constantly and powerfully to demoralize the individual and the community. Poverty, squalor and want breed disease, corruption, recklessness, contempt of law and of all restraint, and irreligion and wickedness by a universal fixed law. Hence the Problem of Poverty is one that cannot be ignored by Church or State; and the mighty and incessant inflow of immigrants into this country, mostly from the poor and laboring class, and the tendency to mass themselves in our great cities and manufacturing centres, lend additional interest and importance to it.

## AROUND THE EDITOR'S TABLE.

## A Word to Would-be Authors.

—“Am I to understand, then, that you would dissuade me from attempting to be an author?”

“No. Yet when we think of the many who try and fail, and of the sore disappointments and heart-aches which must be borne by that great multitude which no man can number, who try authorship and *partly* succeed, we feel inclined to repeat *Punch's* advice to those about to marry: ‘Don’t!’ But, were this advice literally followed, the race of authors would die out, as would the race of men were ‘*Punch's*’ advice universally accepted.

—“Rules? Rules are of little value; still it may be well for you to remember the following suggestions; but you are not likely to if the “book fever” is already in your blood:

“1. Do not write a book so long as you can keep from writing it. When you feel that you “must or die,” as the apostle felt about his preaching, then *perhaps* it is safe to conclude that you are called to authorship.

“2. Be sure that you have something to write about that is worth the while.

“3. Be sure that you have something *new* to write about it. Life is too short, and time too precious, to be spent in proving that white is white. Nor do people care for such a demonstration.

“4. Be sure that you have aptitude, by training and special genius, to handle the subject chosen. Without aptitude your work will be a disappointment.

“5. Be not afraid of criticism. Invite it. Make your friends understand that it is not praise that you are after, but a criticism that will separate bone and marrow. If critics tell you that your work is unfit for publication, take it in good spirit, and make up your mind that you must do better.

“6. But, best of all, do not be afraid of hard work. Write over your chapters again and again. Nearly all the books of permanent value are books which were written over many times—some, as Virgil’s *Æneid*, a score of times. It is the book, usually, which is the growth

of years, that endures. The great fault with the author of to-day is that he writes too much. Emerson thought it a matter for congratulation when he could show twenty lines completed at the end of a day’s work. We heard of an author boasting the other day that he had finished his book, now going through the press, in *twenty* days. We are neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, yet we run little risk in predicting that the public will *finish* it in less time than that.”

## “A Symposium on Evolution.”

We have now completed the series of papers we announced, at the beginning of the year, on this important subject. They are from the pens of some of the ablest writers and most distinguished scholars of the country—President James McCosh, LL.D., Dr. Joseph T. Duryea, Prof. Alexander Winchell, LL.D., Prof. Francis L. Patton, LL.D., Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, Dr. Jesse B. Thomas, Prof. J. P. Gulliver, D.D., Dr. J. M. Buckley, and Dr. C. F. Deems, LL.D. (on the general subject). They have justly attracted wide attention, and, we have reason to think, have contributed to a better understanding of the subject. We have refrained from any criticisms on the views presented, and have declined to publish the criticisms of others, inasmuch as the several phases of the Darwinian Theory of Evolution, in its bearings on Scripture interpretation and teaching, were discussed by the writers whom we invited to discuss the matter, and we prefer to let their views speak for themselves. As a fitting finale, we give in few words the views of the great German scientist, Prof. Rudolph Virchow, of Berlin, which we have had translated from a German periodical, the *Beveis des Glaubens* for July, 1884:

## PROF. VIRCHOW ON DARWINISM.

Prof. Virchow attended the Ter-Centenary Jubilee of the Edinburg University as delegate from the University of Berlin. In the course of his public

address of congratulation he expressed himself as follows: "I have never been hostile to Darwinism, and have never declared its system to be a scientific impossibility; but the development which it has assumed in Germany is both an extreme and an arbitrary one. There it is presented as including the primal beginning of life, as well as the method of its continuance. The aid of speculation has been called in. We must warn against constructing a scientific system upon speculation. For, even if we could conceive (according to Darwin) that organic matter is developed by the meeting of atoms and elements, developing life of themselves, yet facts and not hypotheses are the

determining agents in science. It is indeed conceivable—perhaps even probable—that a connecting link may be found between man and the ape, a pro-anthropos; but the existence of such a connecting link, or of its parts, cannot be proven. Prof. Haeckel has advanced so far as to demand the introduction of a new system of *religious* education based upon the Darwinian theories! Against such dangerous experiments with the fundamental principles of education, I would utter a solemn warning, and at the same time recall the memorable words of Liebig, who said: 'Science is modest'—that is, it confines itself within the limits of experimental observation."

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

1. Man and his Infinite Friend. "The Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend."—Ex. xxxiii: 11. Prof. David Swing, Chicago.
2. Unbelief Condemned, and Faith Commended. "They are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith."—Deut. xxxii: 20; Ps. xl: 4. Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, London, England.
3. The Certainty of Immortal Life. "Behold, he put no trust in his servants, and his angels he charged with folly," etc.—Job iv: 18-19. Prof. S. F. Upham, of Drew University, in Brooklyn.
4. The Romance of Crime. "The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar; and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen."—Dan. iv: 33. T. De Witt Talmage, D.D., Brooklyn.
5. How to make the Most of Self, and do the Greatest Good to Others. "Follow me."—Matt ix: 9. G. Anderson, D.D., Chicago.
6. The Religious and the Civil Sabbath. "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."—Mark ii: 27. A. E. Kittredge, D.D., Chicago.
7. Faith Struggles. "And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."—Mark ix: 24. Very Rev. Dean Vaughan, D.D., London, England.
8. The Shrewd Man of Business. "And the Lord commended the unjust [shrewd] steward because he had done wisely."—Luke xvi: 8. S. E. Herrick, D.D., Boston.
9. The Promise of the Father. "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye," etc.—Luke xxiv: 49. Bishop C. H. Fowler, in Chicago.
10. Christ the Living Fountain. "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink."—John vii: 37. Theodore L. Cuyler, D.D., Brooklyn.
11. "Mind your Own Business." "Peter . . . saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" etc.—John xxi: 21, 22. G. C. Lorimer, D.D., Chicago.
12. Christian Consciousness the Basis of Christian Argument.—Acts xxiii. Joseph Parker, D.D., London, England.
13. Conservatism in Religion. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."—1 Thess. v: 21; 2 Peter i: 5; 1 Cor. xiv: 20. President Noah Porter, D.D., New Haven, Conn.
14. Sanctity of the Body. "By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel, and gave commandment concerning his bones."—Heb. xi: 22. Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, Brooklyn.

#### SUGGESTIVE THEMES.

1. Speechless Grief. ("So they sat down with him [Job] upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him; for they saw that his grief was very great."—Job ii: 13.)
2. The Weariness of Complaint. ("How long will it be ere ye make an end of words?"—Job xviii: 2.)
3. Spiritual Control over Physical Nature. (And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried."—Isa. vi: 4.)
4. Egotism in Affliction. ("See if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow."—Lam. i: 12.)
5. Abstinence in the King's Palace. ("Daniel . . . would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank," etc.—Dan. i: 8.)
6. Politics in Religion. ("The Pharisees [that they might entangle Jesus] . . . sent their disciples with the Herodians [a political anti-Jewish sect] saying, . . . Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not?"—Matt. xxii: 15-17.)
7. The Logic of Spiritual Forces. ("How can Satan cast out Satan?"—Mark iii: 23.)
8. Thinking inducing Repentance. ("And when he [Peter] thought thereon, he wept."—Mark xiv: 72.)
9. Stumbling over the Truth. ("Many therefore of his disciples . . . said, This is an hard saying. . . . From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him."—John vi: 60, 66.)
10. A Prieceless Legacy. ("Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you," etc.—John xiv: 27.)

11. A Sublime Epitaph. ("Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."—Acts xv: 26.)
12. A Lawful Sabbath Stroll. ("And on the Sabbath we went out of the city by a riverside [church hunting], where prayer was wont to be made."—Acts xvi: 13.)
13. The Immediate Fruits of Conversion. ("He took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes. . . . and when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them."—Acts xvi: 33, 34.)
14. The Great Co-operative Union. ("All things work together for good to them that love God."—Rom. viii: 28.)

### GERMS OF ILLUSTRATION.

By EDWARD JEWETT WHEELER, A. M.

*No fountain so small but that heaven may be imaged in its bosom.*—HAWTHORNE.

**Pleasures of sin** are like the fabled apples on the brink of *Lacus Asphaltites*—the Dead Sea—which were fair without, but within, ashes.

**Reverence** has before now been taught to Christians by the heathen. "Bismillah" (in the name of God) is the opening to all but one of the chapters of the Koran.

**Pride** certainly went before the fall of Mark Antony, one of the Roman triumvirs. It is said that on the day previous to the disastrous battle of Actium, he had thirteen kings at his table.

**Honor** to the heroic dead is the surest way to keep heroism alive in the breasts of the living. The contrary also is true. The plain of Marathon, so honored when Greece was Greece indeed, was offered for sale to Lord Byron for £900.

**Teaching by example** is, of all ways, the best. Much of the valor of the ancient Scythians was due to the examples of their chiefs, who, in the beginning of a battle, insisted on marching ahead of their troops, to discharge the first arrow at the enemy.

**The Cross of Christ**, as the refuge of the sinner, was well typified by the Scots of the clan of Macduff, Earl of Fife. "Macduff's cross" stood on the boundary between Fife and Strathearn. Any homicide who possessed even remote kinship with the Earl, if he could once reach the cross, was, upon the payment of ten cows, absolved from the murder he had committed.

**Sorrow indulged** when action is called for may prove fatal, no matter how creditable it may be in itself. Gelimer, the Vandal king of Carthage in the sixth century, lost the battle that decided the fate of his kingdom, by his delay to weep over the dead body of his brother. In the meantime, Belisarius came up and routed the Vandals. ("Let the dead bury their dead." Matt. viii: 22. "A time to weep."—Ecc. iii: 4.)

**Faith** is beautifully illustrated by a simile made use of by Longfellow in his posthumous poem, "Michael Angelo." He likens the disposition of the old to forget the things of yesterday, but to live over again the events of early life, to the fact (noticed by every one) that when we are on a moving train objects afar off seem to move with us, as those near at hand sweep swiftly by. It is often the same thing true of the believer, in the midst of this world's sins

and follies, as he keeps his eye upon the heavenly landscape!

**Vanity** of earthly power was considered by the Romans as something that should be held in mind at all times. Even in a hero's triumphal procession, it was customary to place a slave behind the conqueror's chariot to remind him of the instability of fortune. The Egyptians had a similar custom. At their feasts, when guests grew hilarious, a little skeleton was brought forth and exhibited, with admonitions to reflect upon the lessons it suggested.

To bear **testimony to Christ** is one of the first impulses after the sinner's conversion. Rev. Mr. Mackenzie, of the English Presbyterian Mission in China, tells of a leper in the missionary hospital at Swatow, China, who was converted to Christianity and baptized. He soon after returned to his home, still a leper, but with a heart glowing with love to Christ, and a strong desire to preach the Gospel. His village had been distinguished for the piratical character of its inhabitants, and no missionary had ever visited it. Recently the leper had been heard from, and his labors had been blessed in the conversion of twenty or thirty men and women to Christ. The poor leper, at the time Mr. Mackenzie told the story several months since, was almost dead, but still continued to "tell the story." Two native assistants had been sent to his aid.

**Humble work** for Christ may be of vital importance. The way in which the well-known song whose chorus begins, "Let the lower lights be burning," was written, may be unknown to many. Several years ago a steamer, in the midst of a terrific gale, was trying to make the harbor at Cleveland, Ohio. Two lights ordinarily indicated the entrance to the harbor—one, the upper light, on the bluffs of the coast; the other, the lower light, that of a beacon on a bar at the other side of the entrance. The look-out strained his eyes to catch the lights. Finally he saw the upper light, but it alone could not serve as a guide. Where was the lower light? It had not been attended to. Beaten by wind and wave, the ship staggered on with its many passengers. If it missed the entrance, there was little hope of escaping the rocks. Of a sudden, the lower light was kindled, at last, but too late! They had missed the entrance, and in the attempt to tack about the ship went down with all on board.



## HELPFUL DATA IN CURRENT LITERATURE.

BY J. M. SHERWOOD, D.D.

## Periodicals.

**CHILD NURTURE IN THE CHURCH.** By Rev. James W. Cooper, *Andover Review* (July), 11 pp. It is hopeful to see so much attention given to this subject. This writer says: "There are just now blessed intimations that we are entering upon a revival, which we trust will be powerful and permanent—a revival in zeal and wisdom for the saving of the children. Some of our ministers and churches are feeling deeply on the subject, and are anxiously seeking for more effective methods." While commending the Puritan stern sense of duty to the "rising generation," he claims that a change is working "in reference to the object of Christian training." "It is generally believed at the present time that the object of our endeavors should be the child's immediate conversion; that we should expect this at a very early period in its life; that, indeed, as soon as it can know its mother the child may know Christ; and that instead of training him for a Christian life to be entered upon at some indefinite future time, he may most frequently be trained in a Christian life already entered and recognized. Of course such a change as this in our conceptions is fundamental. It puts the whole subject in a different light. We have an entirely different aim before us now, and we must of necessity proceed in a different way. The old measures cannot lead to the new results. Our different aim compels us to take a new path."

**RECONSTRUCTION IN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT.** By Rev. Francis A. Henry, *Princeton Review* (July), 17 pp. The author of this well-written and well-meaning paper assumes "that a revolution is sweeping over the religious thought of Christendom," which renders "obsolete its present doctrinal formulations," as "out of harmony with the spirit of the age;" and he hereby aims to "simplify the necessary creed, or rather to return to its original simplicity, by distinguishing between what is essential to Christian faith and what is to be left open to individual opinion." The result reminds us of the words of that sturdy original thinker and preacher, Daniel A. Clark: "If you take away all this from my old Bible you may have the rest for a penny!" A Christianity that teaches "that humanity is by nature righteous," and that Christ's "panacea" for sin was "sympathy," and "the power which drew all men unto him when lifted up," was "sympathy," is a Christianity without regenerating or soul-saving power. The historic *Princeton Review* for more than fifty years taught quite "another gospel" than this! But the closing words, taken in their historical sense, have the true ring: "Christianity is Christ himself. Its power in the world has been the power of a perfect human character to mould the sons of men into the image of the Son of God. That

power, then, is with us now. What He was, He is. As He loved and helped men once, He loves and helps them still. He is still the Revealer of the Father, the Redeemer of the sinful, the Giver of eternal life. He has not faded into a reminiscence; He is not lost to us in the dim perspective of history; for we know Him no more after the flesh. Let our Christianity be faith in Christ, and love of Christ, and allegiance to Christ, and He will lead us out of the darkness that shadows our time into the marvellous light of His kingdom—the household and Family of God, which knows no sovereign but the Father, no citizenship but brotherhood, no law but love."

**PROHIBITION AND PERSUASION.** By Neal Dow and Dio Lewis, *North American Review* (August), 20 pp. While this long article presents nothing essentially new either in the way of facts or arguments, it is timely and worthy of the attention of all friends of the Temperance cause. The times are specially favorable for action. "Prohibition" is fairly before the people as one of the great economic, social and moral issues that are pressing, and will continue to press, till there is a solution. We verily believe that it is bound to succeed. We commend this paper to our readers. The facts and statistics (some of which were taken from the columns of THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY), and the considerations presented by both of these able and veteran advocates of the cause, are worthy of the study of all patriots and lovers of humanity.

**THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD IN THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH.** From the German of Schultz, by Prof. G. H. Schodde, *The Lutheran Quarterly Review* (July), 11 pp. The contrast of heathen and Christian views of death and eternity is an interesting subject of investigation. This contrast is nowhere more strikingly shown than in the manner in which the whole system of burial and its attending circumstances was conducted in the early ages; for everywhere the rites and system of burying the dead correspond exactly to the popular ideas of death and of eternity. Hence the introduction of Christianity gave new views of death and new forms of burial, such as were entirely unknown to the nations of antiquity. Compare the picture of a heathen funeral with that of a Christian! The historical view of the matter, here briefly sketched, will be read with interest.

**THE PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH (Roman Catholic) IN THE UNITED STATES.** By John Gilmary Shea, LL.D., *American Catholic Quarterly Review* (July), 25 pp. This long article is written with masterly skill and ability by one of the leading lights of the Romish Church. It is mainly historical, tracing in detail and with a remarkable array of statistics, the growth of Romanism in the United States from "the first provincial

council to the third plenary council of Baltimore." Such a *resumé* of 'the progress of the Church in the United States' for half a century and down to the present year, is of interest to the Protestant portion of our people, as well as to the Romanist. It is interesting to read this history from the latter's point of vision. An extreme sectarian spirit, rather than the judicial, colors and vitiates much of the record. The School question is not fairly stated. The Government is denounced in no measured terms. For instance: "The United States Government has, however, persistently placed over this Catholic people [New Mexico] as governors, secretaries, and judges, Protestants, some of whom have been selected apparently from their coarse and brutal hostility to everything Catholic. It has, too, placed the Catholic Indians under Protestant control, and, degrading itself to the work of petty proselytizing, has used every means of coercion and bribery to alienate from the Catholic faith, in which they had been brought up for three hundred years, the simple-minded Pueblo Indians." This from the representative of a Church which, by sectarian zeal and political chicanery, has succeeded in drawing millions of dollars from the public treasury to support sectarian schools, protectories, and other church institutions! The writer claims that the colleges of the Romanists "will soon stand alone in recognizing Christianity, revelation, the Scriptures, as well as in the cultivation of the ancient classics, in the study of the literature of Greece and Rome, and in a sound school of philosophy and ethics." He also claims that there are "more than 8,000,000 of souls" connected with the Catholic Church in this country, and "at least 7,000 regular and secular priests," in addition to the dignitaries.

**FRENCH REPUBLICANISM THE LEGACY OF THE HUGUENOTS.** By Rev. J. O. Johnson, *Reformed Quarterly Review* (July), 23 pp. President Grevy, in an address to the delegates of the Reformed Congregations in 1879, asserted that the Huguenot Church is "the mother of modern democracy." The object of this paper is to establish as a fact of history, that the present republic owes its existence largely to the heroic efforts and noble example of the Huguenots, who established the first republican government on French soil in the sixteenth century. America, too, owes a lasting debt of gratitude to the Huguenots, whose descendants furnished our country many of her best citizens and most ardent patriots. John Jay, Henry Laurens, Elias Boudinot, and General Marion of revolutionary fame, will readily occur to the mind of the reader, as leaders in the cause of liberty in the New World. The sketch here given is full of interest and tends to inspire confidence in the permanence of the French republic.

**THE EMOTIONAL ELEMENT IN PREACHING.** By F. H. Kerfoot, D.D. *Baptist Quarterly Review*

(April, 13 pp. A carefully-written discussion of a very important theme connected with homiletics. The drift of it is to show that the emotions occupy so important a place in human nature, that no preaching can be really successful which does not properly appeal to them; and that a due regard for the emotions will go very far in determining the matter of sermons and the mode of their delivery. There are sound sense and many excellent points in the paper, which may be read to profit by all who preach. It is time to call attention anew to this matter. We are drifting into a non-emotional, philosophical, essay, merely intellectual type of preaching, in which the head plays a more important part than the heart; high culture, aesthetics, dispassionate disquisition, take the place of plainness of speech, intense earnestness of conviction, and soul-moving pleadings to flee the wrath to come.

**THE RELIGIOUS BELIEF OF SHAKESPEARE.** By J. O. Murray, D.D., *Presbyterian Review* (July), 25 pp. It is a wonderful tribute to the genius of Shakespeare, that after the lapse of three centuries, scholars in all lands are interested in whatever promises to elucidate his personal history, or throw light on the reading of any of his plays. A multitude of theories prevail as to his views in relation to religion, some claiming him as a Roman Catholic, others as a member of the Reformed Church of England; others still asserting that he was a free-thinker, and some even that he was an agnostic; and others that he designedly concealed his sentiments. Prof. Murray goes pretty fully into the subject in his highly interesting article, and presents a great mass of evidence to support his conclusion, that the greatest of English poets - the greatest, indeed, of all poets, and one who has combined so much of the Christian faith regarding God and man, in his immortal dramas - was a full believer in Christianity, was in sympathy with the Reformed Church of England, and that he was a worshipper in the church at Stratford-on-Avon, joining in the venerable forms of the Book of Common Prayer.

**COUNTER-CURRENTS IN THE THOUGHT AND SPECULATION OF THE TIME.** By J. H. Rylance, D.D. *Christian Thought* (July and Aug.), 50 pp. A fair and discriminating discussion of this theme, although his strictures on the tactics of apologists are unnecessarily severe. "The net result of the struggle at this hour is a very marked advance in liberty, both of thought and action, upon lines once prescribed by authority." The attitude to be maintained by the friends of the old faith, in the face of the hostile array of the day, is freely discussed. The conclusion of the writer is self-assuring. A reaction will come; of which there are indications already. "For the eternal questions are with us still, and the old eager longings, and can not be answered by a philosophy which resolves the secrets of the universe into protoplasm."