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REVIEW SECTION.

I.—EUGÈNE BERSIER.

BY PROFESSOR WILLIAM C. WILKINSON, D.D., TARRYTOWN, N. Y.

If a Greek critic of the Attic prime, supposed living again among us moderns, should, merely from the point of view of oratoric art, compare the achievements in pulpit eloquence of the various races of mankind, it would no doubt be to French preachers that he would award the palm of supremacy. Among those French preachers (of whatever time) such a critic, free from every prepossession, would, I feel sure, find no one superior to the subject of the present paper. Critics less severe and less severely Greek—Asiatic, let us say, rather than Attic—might pronounce a different judgment. A warping influence admitted from an admixture of romanticism in the literary taste might not unnaturally lead to a preference of something English or of something American over anything French. But to your pure Attic sense the French would infallibly seem finer. And of the French, as I said, nothing would seem more free from fault or defect than the eloquence of Eugène Bersier.

It is thus a very high, but it is also a somewhat peculiar praise that I bestow on this eminent French preacher. I prepare, as far as I may, my readers for considering the claims of a master in pulpit oratory contrasted, but rather in quality than in quantity of merit, with all of his peers in the list of illustrious names furnishing subjects for the present series of papers. It is Attic performance that is here to be judged; we must apply Attic canons of art and Attic standards of taste in judging it.

This means, of course, that nothing to strike by eccentricity, extravagance, excess, no indulgence of individual caprice, no lawlessness willing to be mistaken for independence, no sins against taste hoping to pass for audacities of genius, no violences of expression doing duty for originalities of thought—nothing whatever of this sort need be looked for in Bersier. All with him is measure, proportion, propriety, pure taste, sound judgment, undisturbed dominance of the rule of not too much, order, harmony,

power working in obedience to law. In short, Bersier's excellence is of just that rare kind, the irreproachable, the perfect, which, as it is the most difficult to achieve, is likewise the most difficult to display. It is like a sphere that you could not take in your hand to show, because it is too large to grasp, and because it offers no protuberance, no irregularity, upon which you might seize.

I must at once guard myself against being misunderstood to imply that Bersier's excellence is negative merely or mainly, that it consists in exemption from fault. This is far from being the fact. Bersier was a man of genius, or of a talent approaching to genius. He had passion enough, imagination enough, to have made him successful by sensational oratory; had he not had also taste enough, judgment enough, conscience enough, will enough, to refuse to those qualities the necessary over-indulgence. The result in him of the exquisite balance thus indicated, of qualities mental and moral, was a pulpit orator in whom everything desirable was present and everything present in desirable proportion—in fact, a pulpit orator, for completeness and symmetry of intellectual and ethical equipment, as nearly ideal as any age or any race could show.

What I have thus far said might be true of the orator Bersier as he appears in his printed sermons, and quite fail of truth in application to the living man as he appeared in the pulpit. Most felicitously, however, the correspondence between the oratory that is still to be read in Bersier's sermons, and the oratory that was silenced forever when Bersier died, is absolute and complete.

The present writer has, in the case of Bersier as well as in the case of every other pulpit orator here treated by him, with the sole exception of Canon Liddon, enjoyed the opportunity of personal observation, in hearing the preacher's living voice no less than in reading his printed sermons. He writes these words under the vivid sense of personal impression recently renewed in meeting the distinguished subject face to face after an interval of more than a quarter of a century elapsed since, during a memorable winter in Paris, he was a somewhat regular attendant at the services of the church (*L'Église Évangélique*, then so called) in which Bersier was at that time one of the several associate pastors.

How brightly I remember the Eugène Bersier that then was! His fame was still before him, but the manifest potentiality of fame, granted only the necessary years, was already his. In the bloom and promise of that manly juvenescence, he was a mirror of everything noble and beautiful to look upon in face and form; and when maturity touched him to the mellowness of a manhood in which the triumph of youth yielded to a benignant prophecy of approaching age, he became a reverend figure, to the last unbent, wearing a crown of silvering hair above a brow calm with power and a countenance heroically moulded and illumined with benevolence; a reverend figure, I say, one as to which you would on reflection be uncertain whether its chief effect was that of grace or that of majesty. Ber-

sier's voice, rich and sweet and strong, was highly penetrable to emotion, answering easily in its tones to the unction that was so marked a trait in the spirit of its owner. To sum up all again in a word, and that word the same as before, the physical oratoric equipment of this preacher was complete.

Bersier's native gifts being such, he made his choice of standards and models for pulpit achievement appropriately pure and high. He was nobly severe with himself, exacting from his genius its most arduous best. There, too, besides the spur within himself that he felt pricking him to his own finest possibilities, he had stimulation from without, in accomplished and distinguished colleagues, of whom De Pressensé, a kinsman of his, was one, and in accomplished and distinguished auditors and friends—among these was M. R. St. Hilaire, a professor in the Sorbonne—who, I believe, did not spare to the youthful preacher their loyal senior cheerings or chidings, as occasion might seem to demand from them the one or the other. More, perhaps, than these spurs, present and pressing at his side, Bersier felt the genius and the fame of his great predecessors, the French preachers of other ages, incessantly calling him upward to ever higher and higher achievement in the eloquence of the pulpit.

I have thus spoken of motive appealing to the "natural man," in the subject of this paper. Such motive, I am sure, worked in Bersier and worked with power. But the "spiritual man," after all, was dominant in him. You unmistakably feel in his sermons the pulse of a heart and a conscience beating, and controllingly beating, from the will of Christ as a personal Master, profoundly acknowledged by the preacher to be worthy of his own supreme affectionate obedience. Duty to Christ kept Bersier's ambition at the same time humble and high, at the same time high and steady. He maintained long a remarkably even tenor—for a tenor so exalted—of attempt and of accomplishment in the work of the preacher. This might have been left to be merely matter of oral tradition among those who heard Bersier's sermons living from the preacher's own lips; but fortunately there survives a monumental record of the fact in a series of printed volumes of his sermons, issued at irregular intervals during twenty years or more of the course of his ministry, which who will may read and test for himself the truth of my judgment. These sermons have qualities, of substance in thought and of form in expression, which richly entitle them to go permanently into the literature of the author's native country. They have many of them been translated into foreign tongues, and they are perhaps now fairly in a way to be even incorporated into the classic literature of the world.

"Of the author's native country," I have said; as if Eugène Bersier were a native of France. He in fact was by birth a Swiss. This circumstance does not, however, alter the essential fact in the case; for Bersier's extraction was from the Huguenots, and he was virtually a native Frenchman, who simply happened to be born out of France.

In pronouncing Bersier worthy to be a classic in French literature, I do not mean to predict the actual future fortune of his fame. He may, or he may not, in fact, take his deserved rank as an author. To produce, in the case of any given man, the result of historic literary fame, many things must conspire—many things besides the man's own intrinsic desert. What fixed Bossuet, Massillon, Bourdaloue, as secular stars in the literary firmament of France, was far from being merely the indisputable transcendent merit of the genius and achievement of those men. Quite as much it was the splendor of the auspices under which they were first launched luminous on their magnificent orbits. The "great monarch," Louis XIV., set his royal signet upon them, and authoritatively pronounced them great. Under his august and absolute sentence, they were admitted great so long that finally their past fame of itself made their future fame secure. Besides this, the Gallican Church of their time was still, for France, the omnipotent arbitress of destiny in the sphere of human opinion. She commanded and it stood fast. The Church was the world, then, in France—the world in its pride of power to declare admirable and to have admirable whatsoever it pleased. The Church, which was the world, declared admirable these great preachers; and admirable they continued in the national regard, until to question their oratoric supremacy became permanently and hopelessly a thing impossible, ridiculous. They passed into history. They were part of the indestructible intellectual glory of France.

Well, examine the surviving works of these seventeenth century Frenchmen, and you find them full worthy of their fame. They really are what they came to be reputed. But now examine in comparison the works of Eugène Bersier, supposed for the moment to be securely admitted of equal fame with the works of his predecessors of the golden age of France. Do you find these recent works, upon proof, equally worthy of their supposedly equal fame? I, for my part, do not hesitate to answer, Yes.

But Bersier lacked arena like that which was Bossuet's, Massillon's, Bourdaloue's, even Saurin's, for running his rival oratoric career. There was for him no "great monarch," sitting in state, surrounded by his court, to watch and to applaud and finally to award the prize as with the "perfect witness of all-judging Jove." More important yet, the face of the world had, by Bersier's time, been completely changed from what it was at that earlier day. The world wore no longer now the mask of the Church. Nominal religion no longer sat on the throne. The power of intellectual preferment was lodged in other than ecclesiastical hands. Science had taken the place of nominal religion. The pulpit preached now in an atmosphere in which the elemental conditions were wanting productive of the thunder and lightning that so magnificently played about the Olympus whence Bossuet, Massillon, Bourdaloue fulminated of old. There was no motion in the dumb dead air of the great world around him responsive to the living eloquence of Bersier. The eloquence was present, but the effect of the eloquence failed.

That is, of course, I mean, the brilliant immediate effect of wide intellectual impression, of sympathetic appreciation, admiration, applause, *from the world*. There was supporting and inspiring recognition from a few—comparatively few—chosen spirits; but the great world was deaf and was dumb. The reflex depressing influence on Bersier himself could not but have worked somewhat to damp in him the merely natural ardor of a fine oratoric genius and ambition. Doubtless the monuments of eloquence that he has left behind him are less—less splendid, and perhaps less numerous—than those which he would have left, had the conditions under which he worked been, in the respects indicated, more friendly. The true triumph, however, which would then have been his—the true intellectual and, much more, the true moral triumph—could not, under the supposed different conditions, have been greater than that which he actually achieved.

For Bersier never permitted any sense that may have been in him of personal disappointment, of egoistic unease, at the indifference toward his pulpit of the general world, to creep, even as an unconfessed undertone, into his sermons. Much less did he ever stoop to attempt capturing the attention of the world either by any sacrifice of the truth of the Gospel, or by any arts of popularity misbecoming to the pulpit, in his way of presenting that truth. Both as to the substance of what he taught and as to the form of his teaching it, he loyally held fast to the simplicity that is in Christ. So far, indeed, was he from stooping to the world in order to conquer the world—that is, in order to seem to conquer the world, really capitulating to it—so far was Bersier from this that he instead constantly faced the world and accused the world and condemned the world—I mean that world of arrogant, browbeating, aggressive “advanced thought,” thus self-styled, that in his time had succeeded to that world, so different, of conventional conformity to the Church, which existed in the seventeenth century of France. This new intellectual world Bersier confronted, not conciliated.

He confronted it, but not in the spirit of blind and bigoted pugnacity. He took pains to understand the world that he opposed. Indeed, nothing is more admirable than the open-eyed intelligence of Bersier's antagonism to the world that he felt bound to challenge and resist. He knew and he comprehended, for he had studied and he had meditated, what the world had to say in objection to the Gospel. He therefore did not beat the air with the blows that he delivered; he delivered his blows fairly between the very eyes of the falsehood that stood up in his presence against the truth of Christ.

This he did—and it was a signal homiletic victory—without either, on the one hand, converting his sermon into a mere polemic and invective against unbelief, or, on the other hand, letting his sermon degenerate into a philosophico-religious dissertation. His sermons are proper sermons, as being popular discourses, and they are proper sermons also as being nutritive of the spiritual life. Read them as correctives of tendency in you to

give way before the audacious claims of science advanced against religion, and you will find them so good that you will hardly wish better. Read them as food to personal piety, and you will feel them wholesome and strengthening. Still it is a fact that intelligent, vigilant, skilled antagonism and fence against modern—the most modern—infidelity is a very marked characteristic of many among Bersier's published sermons. In truth take, for instance, his sixth volume, and the proportion of the virtually apologetic or controversial element is so considerable that you would feel compelled to pronounce excessive such a proportion assumed uniformly to prevail throughout the general tenor of Bersier's pastoral preaching. An assumption, however, like that would no doubt do him injustice. It is fair to suppose that, in choosing for publication from among his ordinary discourses, the author would, by a natural and a wise instinct, be led to pitch by preference, in a disproportionate number of cases, upon such as might be conjectured to have an intellectual added to their spiritual interest.

Mr. Spurgeon is, in this respect, an almost solitary exception among ministers that publish their sermons. Somewhat in contrast with what is true in the case of the Frenchman, the Englishman's audience of the press seems to be made up of average ordinary persons endowed with an appetite that may be relied upon for commonplace spiritual nurture. That Mr. Spurgeon's audience should be predominantly such is not because that great popular preacher is not himself a thinking man, quite as capable as other thinking men, of wrestling with intellectual and spiritual doubts and fears. It is not because he cannot at need compose in a close-woven, most vital, tissue of style, tense with thought and with reason. This, in occasional, not infrequent utterances of his, he (when out of his pulpit, as sometimes, also, when in) abundantly shows that he can do. It is rather because Mr. Spurgeon, whether wisely or not, chooses to make his sermons, even his printed sermons, for the most part unconscious of the unsettlement in belief that he knows to be everywhere rife around him.

Not so, in this last respect, was it with Bersier. Bersier, in his sermons, was frankly sensitive to the intellectual life of his time. As he felt, so in his pulpit he confessed, the sympathy of his generation. He had—at least one seems compelled to believe that he had—his own intimate personal need of satisfactory reconciliation between reason and revelation. He found his solution, and his solution found, he thought it wise—as, for *him*, the present writer holds that it was truly wise—to supply to his fellows.

It is time, no doubt, that generalization now be elucidated with instance. But I pause a moment to dispose first of a thought which, with some readers, may have been started by my conjecture (it was, of course, however confident, no more than conjecture) as to the working in Bersier's mind of his natural noble ambition to achieve great things in the pulpit; and his accompanying consciousness that, for the achieving of things

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great in the judgment of the world, there was wanting to him the spacious, the conspicuous, arena which would have been desirable. Those who know of the very important change that, at the acme of his earlier fame, Bersier made in his ecclesiastical relations, may not unnaturally be tempted to ask, How much, in the making of that change, was Bersier drawn on, whether consciously or not, by the partly personal hope of bettering his opportunity to produce the strong impression, as for his message, so likewise for himself, which he could not but feel his own inherent right to produce, on the great indifferent world around him? An obvious doubt and question to raise, but one which it would obviously be improper to entertain, or, at any rate, publicly to discuss. The change to which I refer was this: From being pastor in the "Free Church," a comparatively young, poor, and obscure ecclesiastical body, whose vital principle was conscientious separation from the State, Bersier became auxiliary-pastor, so-called, in the Reformed Church of France, an ecclesiastical body comparatively rich, while also august with age and history dating from the heroic times of the great Reformation, but so far a religious establishment as to consent to receive subsidies from the State and to submit to the State supervision which that consent logically implies. It was a momentous change for Bersier to make. I need not conceal my own profound regret that he made it. True, he continued to protest his own individual adhesion in theory to the principle of complete separation between Church and State. True, also, the local Church of which he was founder and pastor never, in fact, accepted those State subsidies, which, however, as matter of right, he still insisted on its title to accept. Of course had Bersier made exactly the opposite change—that is, had he gone over from the worldly higher to the worldly lower ecclesiastical body—there would then have been no possibility of imputing to him any but the purest and noblest motives. But then, as the case actually stands, it certainly is quite conceivable that his spirit may have been not less self-sacrificing than one must assume it would necessarily have been in the case which, in point of fact, did not occur. He may—who knows?—acting from convictions the most conscientious, frankly have faced the possibility of being misunderstood by some to his harm, and *still* have done only what he thought was his duty, even at that cost, so heavy to a high and delicate spirit like his.

Bersier undoubtedly thought that the time was not yet come in *France* for the complete consistent carrying out in practice of the theory, which he believed to be true, that the Church should be wholly divorced from the State. He thought that to cut loose from the national Reformed Church of his country was virtually to abandon a noble and fruitful history of three hundred Protestant years, a history which the cause of French Protestantism needed, and to which it had an indefeasible right. The venerable traditions of the past had a peculiar, a sovereign, charm for the genius and imagination of Bersier. In truth, partly without knowing it, he was, so it seems to me, in fundamental spirit a conservative, not to

say a reactionary, and withal an ecclesiasticist, a pontiff, like Bossuet—a *pontiff* like him, while a *man* very different; very different, not only by nature, but by such habit of life as must make different the man set, through meet and happy marriage, in the midst of domestic relationships, from the man who prolongs his days an inveterate compulsory celibate. Of course, I well know how generously open to ideas Bersier was, how hospitable to truth, how liberal and friendly toward true progress of every sort. This was in part due to fortunate temperament in him; but still more, I am persuaded, it was due to education and environment. Especially, perhaps, it was the spirit of Vinet, the teacher of his youth. With Bossuet's education and Bossuet's environment, he would naturally have been a hierarch not less lofty and majestic, if far more sweet and sunny and genial, than he. He was cast in the same large mould; the port and speech of authority were as easily and instinctively his. I acknowledge, however, that even if I am right in thus divining Bersier's intimate character, still, in point of fact, some influence, perhaps that of his age and of his lot in his age, made him practically other than such as I have here for a moment ventured ideally to conceive him.

The idea, by whomsoever held, of historical succession, of formal continuity, in ecclesiastical development, this idea, with its correlate idea of Church authority additional to the authority of Scripture—additional and co-ordinate with that—is a pregnant idea, the parent of momentous doctrinal consequences. One of those consequences is the obliteration of the idea of definite personal individual conversion, as a thing even theoretically necessary in order to membership in the visible Church. In recoiling from what he calls "individualism" in religion, the ecclesiasticist, such as Bersier became, is irresistibly drawn back into a conception of the collective Church of Christ, that can *logically* be satisfied only by the stupendous concrete embodiment found in the Church of Rome. Bersier, by a happy inconsistency, continued indeed to be himself a passionate Protestant: but it was hardly more than a pushing of the father's argument to its legitimate practical conclusion, when Bersier's son, to that father's inconsolable sorrow, publicly abjured his Protestant errors and took refuge in the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church. The mature Bersier—this seems incredible, but it is true—formally renounced his earlier opinion that the visible Church of Christ should seek to consist of regenerate persons only; he expressly taught that it should be opened also to receive members that were still to be converted. It was ecclesiasticism overcoming evangelicism in him. The natural consequence followed, that his preaching aimed less, than otherwise it would certainly have done, to produce the immediate effect of conversion in individual hearers. He became predominantly what the French call a "moralist" in his preaching. Vitaly orthodox, however, as orthodoxy may be distinguished from a narrower and stricter evangelicism, Bersier to the end remained. Except so far as, in unavoidable effect, excessive ecclesiasticism in him prevented, he was a loyal confessor

and defender of the uncorrupt original faith of the Gospel. The reader of Bersier's collected sermons is not likely to be reminded at all, as the reader of Liddon's sermons is sure often to be, that the author was a thorough going ecclesiasticist in personal conviction. Indeed, Bersier's reader will now and again be refreshed with an utterance in distinct and emphatic, if logically inconsistent, repudiation of the notion that human authority, even when speaking with the voice of the "Church," is entitled to tyrannize over the individual conscience. Bersier did not like "individualism" in religion; but he was a Protestant, and "individualism" in his view had its rights, at least against the assumptions and usurpations of the Roman Catholic Church.

In accordance with the noble frankness of his character, Bersier plainly confessed his change of view—a change, as I have hinted, to me most regrettable—in a discourse preached, and published separately in pamphlet, by him in the year 1877. That discourse I have before me as I write these words. It would of course be apart from the proper object of the present paper to attempt to show the error in argument which vitiates its teaching. One thing is very noticeable in it—namely, that the preacher refers throughout more to Church than to Scripture for his authority. In fact, the vital, germinant seed of all Roman Catholicism is unconsciously hidden in Bersier's discourse on "The Church."

Let us come now to the task of illustrating by example the quality attributed in general to Bersier as preacher. I take up for this purpose the sermon in his sixth volume entitled "The Place of Man in the Universe."

But immediately, in the very mention of this sermon, with its title as thus given, there arises the suggestion of preparatory remark deserving to be made. The *subject* of the sermon now to be examined belongs to the commonplace of pulpit discussion. The *statement* of subject in the title is simple, to the verge of commonplace again. Once more, the *treatment*—thought, course of thought, diction, style, tone, spirit—is of the same intellectual order. In accordance with the character already described as everywhere belonging to Bersier, there is here nothing strained, ambitious, nothing seeking to be individual, idiosyncratic, original, nothing calculated and studied to be striking, brilliant, surprising, overwhelming. All is in the self control and measure of good taste, of high and serious, of self-effacing, moral and spiritual purpose.

But, let it be marked, the commonplace character of which I speak is just *sufficiently* that—not a shade of either more or less; no error, no excess, by either too much or too little. In a word, the commonplace of Bersier is, like the commonplace of Bossuet, of Robert Hall, of Daniel Webster, *not* platitude. It is commonplace *ennobled* by the quality of sincerity and of elevation in the author of it. Bersier has what may be emphatically called the excellence of *distinction*—that excellence which is the common invariable attribute of the classic in literature, the classic of

whatever age, of whatever country, dealing with whatever subject, under whatever form, in whatever tongue. As I have already said, let no reader expect to be startled with the novel, the doubtful, the audacious, in Bersier. Such effect Bersier is so far from seeking, that he eschews it rather. What you may count on in him is thought, so well considered, on his part, that it will repay being well considered on your part; thought, that will, in the sequel of reflection, draw after it no reaction in you of disappointment and distaste to find that you were at first moved by it to a degree beyond its true value. There is emotion, too, as well as thought, in Bersier; but the emotion has always the same character of being well grounded. It follows the thought; it belongs to the thought, and is justified by it. Your satisfaction grows deep and grows full, by experience on your part, gradually becoming clearly self-conscious, of never being trifled with, of being always treated with grave respect, and of therefore being solidly secure, in this preacher's hands.

The moral and spiritual effect of such preaching of the truth is inestimably precious. It nourishes in the hearer a thoughtful, serious, earnest, settled, unmovable temper and habit of soul. The fixed, inexpugnable points of defence and refuge for the Gospel, the unmoving centres of resistance and reaction and recovery, safely fast, when all is flux and eddy besides, will be found in just such souls, a sifted few, a remnant small in quantity but in quality great, in just such souls, I say, as spiritual teaching like Bersier's tends to build up. This kind of spiritual teaching counts, in eventual value to the world, many times more than the farther-shining, farther-sounding pulpit oratory of men like Beecher—were there indeed any *like* that unique son of genius!—granted even such pulpit oratory were in substance and spirit according to the truth of the Gospel.

(*To be concluded.*)

II.—THE MINISTRY AND POPULAR EDUCATION.

BY BISHOP JOHN H. VINCENT, D.D., BUFFALO, N. Y.

THE education of the people is necessary to the well-being of the people; therefore the individual for his own sake and for the sake of society, is bound by a true education, to put himself at his best. And society is bound by the law of self-preservation to encourage—shall I not say to require?—the individual thus to make himself a sound and helpful part of the social body.

Popular education is this education of the people, of *all* the people; of the unit, of every unit, and thus of the great social Unity. Every man, every woman, every child in the State must be educated; must at least be put in the way of education, that they may see what education is, what the true gain of it, and what the wisest way of it.

Schemes of popular education should provide every study and every proc-

ess necessary to the development of the individual, that he may be true to himself, and, as I have said, that he may be at *his* best. His individuality should have full opportunity. He should have a chance to know what he is, what he can do, and what he can do best, that his place in the social body may not be *given* to him, but *taken* by him ; that it may not be assigned by the judgment and will of others, but that he, seeing and knowing his own measure of power, and knowing the varied spheres of human thought and activity, may be able to take his own chances, make his own choices, step into his own place, and do his own work, subject always to the guidance of the great Father, who, having His own far reaching purposes, overrules human preferences and encompasses human lives by His own gracious and all-wise limitations and restraints.

It is one thing to have a life determined by Divine Providence and quite another thing to have it hedged, moulded, and perverted by human rulers who keep "the masses" in their places that the "classes" may keep in power. The education of the people may be only another way of tyranny. True popular education is, therefore, an education of all the people into intelligent independence and individuality.

If the few are to rule, the many must not know too much, or they must know only the things which foster superstition and terror, that they may bend at the bidding of their masters, kings and popes, who have the "divine right" to assign the people to their places of subordination and unreasoning obedience.

Popular education in the true sense is impossible under the oligarchy both in Church and State. The few cannot retain power if the people know all that they may easily know. They must not be too well read in History, in Science, in Philosophy, in the rights of the Individual, in the law of human Equality, or they will in due time learn how to shiver sceptres, to overturn thrones, and how to refuse to do penance and to pay Peter's pence. Popular education in the true sense is unpopular with tyrants in purple and scarlet and lambs' wool. It will put speedy end to the frauds of the priesthood and the cruelties of the court.

There is one hard problem for the oppressors in our own day, and especially under a republican government : How shall these enemies of individuality and freedom seem to favor education and yet control all education in the interest of the tyranny they represent ? This is *the* problem of our times and in our land with the leaders of the mediæval civilization. The answer is ready : The parochial school ; the division of the school funds ; the control through political influence of public school boards, and the employment of teachers in the public school who represent the hierarchy which is diligently working to overthrow the whole public-school system. The policy is bold. The projectors of it depend upon the apathy, the undue confidence, and mistaken generosity of the American people.

The real root of this fear of the public-school system is in the social power of that system. Friendly intercourse between children of the Mid-

dle Ages and the children of our own free republic of the nineteenth century will make them a unit in the love of freedom and of personal rights. Fellowship on the playground and in the recitation-room, personal friendships formed in the pursuit of learning, and especially in the atmosphere of schools where the flag of the country is unfurled and the heroisms of the national past are rehearsed, must inevitably defeat the schemes of the schemers. They do not fear the "religious" element or the "godless" element in the public schools; but their plans, political and ecclesiastical, must perish if the American popular education prevails. The national flag, with its memories, suggestions, and inspirations, our American homes, our American pulpits, our American schools are all dangerous institutions to the Church that abridges personal liberty, abolishes the right of personal judgment, denies the privilege of direct personal approach to God without priestly intermediary, and compels its victims to act and vote not as freemen, but as slaves of an absolute monarchy. Boys of the two systems, coming together as boys, in the freshness and joyousness of strong and innocent young life, cannot remain—the one class free and the other slave. This is the last analysis of the opposition to the public school. One must go under—American freedom or Roman bondage. Which shall it be? The specious philosophizings of the leaders fill the air with glittering dust, but the basis of all priestly opposition to the public-school system is the necessary opposition of the hierarchy to popular education of the true type, the education that prepares the people to dispense with rulers who are other than servants of the people; the education that tends to the abolition of all class distinctions not based on personal character; the education which exalts among all the people true culture, true living, true brotherhood, and true reverence for the mysteries and majesties of Divine holiness and mercy.

Popular education is opposed by a certain social class which arrogates to itself the right to enjoy the higher education, and which deems it out of taste for the "laboring classes" to aspire to the refinements of life and to the enjoyment of the higher things of culture. "Let the people know their place. Let servants serve. Let reformers and philanthropists have more sense than to broaden horizons of plain folks whose world is a world of manual labor and humble submission. Don't educate them above their business. You spoil servant-girls when you give them an appreciation of good literature, good pictures, and the nobler enjoyments of life. Why let plain Elihu Burritt study so many languages? He is a blacksmith. Let him blow fire and bend iron. Why encourage the plough-boy and rail-splitter of Illinois to read history and study law? Let him push plough and swing axe. Why should Samuel Drew, the shoemaker, puzzle his brain over metaphysics? Stick to your last, shoemaker! Don't put into common homes pictures, piano, and a library of art, science, and literature. What shall we better folks do for house servants and scullions if souls in plain, low-born bodies begin to look toward God's stars and claim their

rights as children of the King? Said a New York millionaire, when asked to contribute toward an educational and literary scheme in behalf of working people, "I do not sympathize with the idea. Let such people study the sciences connected with their trades if they will; but to give them a taste for art and literature will render them dissatisfied with the humbler spheres to which a wise Providence has assigned them."

Such poor, starved, millionaire souls as these, with low views of manhood and brotherhood, go about in splendid carriages and live in gorgeous palaces and sit in luxurious pews in magnificent churches. Thank God, there are churches for such miserable saints as these, and a Gospel able to save them from their selfishness and their low conceptions of God and His children and His kingdom. Let us give them the Gospel, and let us begin with the LAW, that its light and its lightnings and its terrors may awaken them to a sense of their folly and sin.

Now in the presence of these false social views, whether held by the ecclesiastical or the social oligarchy, I turn to the Christian ministry; for the hope of humanity at its best and at its basest is in the Gospel of Christ. The true ministry of the true Christ in our age believes in the rights of the people; in the universal duty to surrender every faculty to the God who gave it; in the duty of personal cultivation up to the full measure of one's ability; in the seeking of knowledge and wisdom; in the adding to faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge; in the *thinking* on "whatsoever things are true." Such a ministry can do a work at this particular juncture in the history of the race which has never been so practicable, so easy, so necessary as in this age, and especially in this land.

The ministry should everywhere take positive ground on the "public-school question," and demand the maintenance of the institution in spite of the interference of political and priestly demagogues. I wish to speak with kindness, while I use great candor in the discussion of this subject. The growth of Roman influence in American politics is alarming. The silent and stealthy influence of the Jesuits, who work while we sleep, and who themselves never sleep, is ground for alarm. Already in some of our cities the Romans control the Boards of Education. Already in some places the public-school funds are divided between the public and the parochial school. Already, under Jesuit influence, Irish politicians are filling the American public schools with Roman teachers, who get into position simply because they are Roman Catholic. Already outspoken Americans are "boycotted" by the politicians because they are courageous enough to speak words of warning. A short time ago, in Galena, Ill., at the unveiling of the Kohlsaat Grant Statue, a Methodist Episcopal minister, appointed to offer the opening prayer on the occasion, was requested to withdraw because the Romanists insisted upon it, and threatened trouble if he did not. His offence was that he had boldly warned our people against the Jesuit assaults upon the American public-school system. At the request of the committee the minister yielded, the boycott was effective, and

the Jesuits scored a victory. Knowing as I do General Grant's attitude on the Roman question, my Huguenot blood boiled within me when I heard of this Jesuit victory at Galena. But this is a mere straw. It is a proof of the persistency and boldness with which the enemies of the republic are at work. Ministers, take notice! Do not dare to speak out against Romish intolerance! If you do, the politicians will see that on Washington's Birthday and on the birthday of American independence your voices shall not be heard in the assemblies of your fellow citizens. The "Black Pope" has ordered it; and the "White Pope" is slave of the black, and the American partisan politician the tool of both. Our peril is great beyond all present thought.

It is the duty of the ministry to speak plain words to the people privately, socially, publicly; to circulate literature on the subject; to seek occasion to discuss the issue with intelligent and fair-minded Roman Catholics; to train our children in the facts of Roman Catholic history, and especially in their basal doctrine on the right of the hierarchy to destroy the rights of the individual. Speak out, not too often, never violently and passionately, but speak plain, strong, burning words that will enlighten the people and set their hearts on fire with true patriotism. Don't let Protestant politicians and timid business men prevent utter fidelity on your part.

The minister, as far as practicable, should know the school authorities of the town, district, or ward in which he lives; the composition of the board, the opinions of its several members on the public-school system, what they personally think of its defects and demands. He should put into their hands short tracts on the practical educational problems. He should seek to give tone, ideals, purpose to these representatives of the people, answering their objections, removing their difficulties, and inciting them in a judicious way and with a generous spirit to the most progressive methods and to the most patriotic policy. He should know the Superintendent, the Principal, the Teachers. An annual visit to the schools (not as a clergyman and not to conduct religious services) as an intelligent citizen, eager to increase the power of this arm of the popular government, should be regarded as one of his stated obligations. He should converse with parents and with pupils to find out what kind of work is being done in the public school. Do the "smart" boys and girls get more praise and help than the dull ones? Is there effort at individual thoroughness in recitation, or are showy and deceiving simultaneous methods in vogue? Are the reports of the teachers to the parents faithfully made? Do the poor and the plainly dressed children from the rougher and humbler homes get due attention?

The minister should use his pastoral visits to help on this good work of co operating with the public school. Do the parents know what the children are doing at school? Do they care? Are they qualified to judge? How may the uneducated parents get some idea of the school life of their

children? Is there *conscience* on the subject of school attendance and work? Do parents secure regularity, punctuality, home preparation? Do the pupils put conscience into school life? What is Christian profession worth, of what value is "Christian Endeavor" or "Epworth League," if students have no twinge of conscience over a "dodge" or "trick" in class, by which a boy "passes" when he really does not know the subject on which he has been examined, and when he knows that his teacher does not know how little he, the pupil, knows? Oh, what a dwarfing and withering of the Christian life by the little frauds of the recitation-room, and by the discourtesies and cruelties and tyrannies of the street and the playground! Here is opportunity for lessons in Christian ethics.

The minister should use his influence with parents and scholars to prolong the term of school life. Many boys leave school at eleven or twelve years of age who should remain five years longer. Parents are indifferent, children are insubordinate, home authority is lacking, and children, who for every reason need the restraints of school life, are allowed to run the streets, and too frequently they make wreck of life. If we can tide over, by parental authority, the few years between twelve and eighteen we shall secure an interest in education, and send many more of our youth to the college. Ministers can do a just work in this retention of restless boys and girls in the public schools.

There is a possible *parish class annex* to the public school which the minister might easily organize and sustain; a class for the teaching of backward and neglected children who already attend the public school, but who, from lack of home sympathy, intelligence, and assistance are unable to "catch up" or "keep up" with more highly favored children. Think of a series of lessons—twice a week, perhaps—in one of the church rooms for reviews and drills in arithmetic, in grammar, in history, in geography, where most expert and sympathetic teachers, who are not "employed" save for love's sake, meet girls and boys to give them a start, and explain details which in the rush of the class course the teacher had no time to explain, or which he assumed that the scholars understood already. What a hold the Church might get on scores of children in this way! What influence she might gain over young lives! "Not legitimate work for a church," do you say? Do you really think so? Then I advise you to leave the pastorate.

The minister may promote this great cause of popular education by getting at the people who are out of school and who are bound to stay out—the fathers and mothers, the older boys and girls who are almost or quite men and women, and who begin to see what they forfeited when they dropped out of school in early youth, the clerks, mechanics, farmers, housekeepers, the bankers and merchants who have forgotten what they did know, or who never knew very much about science and literature. The minister may organize classes in reading and study; get the right men and women to teach or to lecture; keep his church open every night

in the week for devotional and educational meetings; establish mothers' meetings and afternoon reading classes for ladies, organizing or adopting home reading circles, such as the "Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle," thus educating children by educating their parents; reforming society by refining individual homes; giving all day-school and Sunday-school teachers the sympathy and co-operation of fathers and mothers; opening to devout Christians their splendid inheritance in the learning of the ages, and thus lifting up society on every side and creating a lively interest in all good and noble things.

Of course the minister cannot do all the work himself, but he can develop workers and open new and ample fields for their varied gifts; and ministers and people revelling in the realms of sanctified secular learning will find a new meaning in the old assurance, "All things are yours."

III.—SERIAL PREACHING.

BY PROFESSOR J. O. MURRAY, D.D., PRINCETON, N. J.

It is nothing new in the way of preaching which this article proposes to discuss. In fact, it is a very ancient style. It came into vogue early in the history of the Christian Church, and has held an honored place in pulpit ministrations down to the present day. The homilies of eminent church fathers, like St. Chrysostom and St. Augustine, are illustrations of it in its most primitive form. Later in the history of the pulpit we find sermons in courses, like Dr. Charnock's celebrated discourses on the Divine Attributes, and Dr. John Owen's on the Holy Spirit. Chalmers's distinguished astronomical sermons are a different and later specimen. Not a few systems of divinity have been preached in courses of sermons. President Dwight's theology was thus put forth. So was that of Dr. Nathaniel Emmons, if his theology can be called a system of divinity. Occasionally serial preaching, when occupied with divinity, has reached portentous dimensions. We read of Dr. Samuel Willard, Vice-President of Harvard College (1601-1607), that he left a "Compleat Body of Divinity" in two hundred and fifty lectures on the Shorter Catechism. To what length his lectures might have proceeded had he attacked the Larger Catechism can only be conjectured. At any rate, these preachers of a system of divinity held that the pulpit should be made a sort of touchstone for the truth of their dogmas. Their sermons showed that they maintained a "theology that can be preached."

Serial preaching has assumed other and very useful forms. It has had reference to Christian experience. Many courses, for example, have been preached on the Lord's Prayer. So also it has been addressed to classes. "Sermons to Young Men," "Sermons to Mothers," "Sermons to Working-men" are not uncommon. We do not hear often of "Sermons to Fathers" nor of "Sermons to Rich Men," and two courses more needed it

would be difficult to point out. Sermons on biblical characters are often put in the form of a series. Dr. William M. Taylor, of New York, has worked this vein very successfully. We have by no means exhausted the scope which serial preaching has assumed. Enough has, however, been said to indicate the great variety of which it is susceptible, and also the fact that it has not lost its hold on the pews. At the same time some of our most distinguished modern preachers seem to be little inclined to preach courses of sermons. It is a fixed and regular habit with only a few. Mr. Beecher came into notice through his lectures to young men. In truth, no more noted sermons of this kind were ever preached. But after coming to Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, he does not seem to have preached any more in courses. His rule seems to have been two sermons on different topics for every Sunday of the year. Dr. Phillips Brooks does not publish, if he preaches, courses of sermons. His three noble volumes are all volumes of sermons on disconnected subjects.

There are manifest dangers connected with continuous preaching on any subject. The preacher himself may make it a chapel of ease. It is in some respects easier to prepare a course of twenty sermons on some general theme, than to write twenty on as many different topics. The trouble with most *expository* courses is just here. They are dry as the commentaries from which they have been largely taken. They can be gotten up very easily in these days of cheap and abundant "helps" to Scripture study. But easy preaching makes hard hearing. Expository preaching was never meant to be labor-saving machinery for the pulpit. When it is made such a very high style of preaching is desecrated. To take a large subject, such as the Divine Attributes, and preach a series of sermons on them, demands comparatively little *inventive* power. The plan of the sermon is not by necessity a matter of ingenious construction. Nothing saves Charnock's course of discourses on the Divine Attributes from the fate of dry-as-dust discussion but his wonderful fertility of mind, his amazing power of bright and suggestive remark. The danger of *stereotyped* methods easily besets the preacher who starts out on a course of sermons. He needs to study variety here more than anywhere else, and he is tempted to study it less.

Preachers who have "hobbies" to ride should beware of riding them in courses of sermons. Not a few persons now living remember when Dr. Cheever's Church, in New York City, was filled with one of New York's best congregations. Tiffany's splendid establishment now holds its site, and the church has long been extinct. Would this history have been written if the good doctor could only have refrained from preaching his "hobby"—anti-slavery—in those long courses of sermons to gradually thinning congregations? All honor to Dr. Cheever for his splendid courage and fidelity in a time when more than one New York pulpit was muzzled. But he could have rebuked all iniquity North and South without riding his "hobby" in courses of sermons till he rode his church to death.

The danger of wearying an audience by harping too long on one theme must not be overlooked. The itch for variety at the present time is no doubt excessive. It is an unhealthy symptom. Still it must be remembered that the pulpit is not a theological chair nor the sermon a scientific lecture. It is the office of serial preaching—one office at least—to train the people in careful hearing, in the love of thorough discussion, in desire for instruction rather than excited emotion. If the course of sermons is too long drawn out, if it becomes dry and technical, if it deals in hackneyed commonplaces, if it be ill chosen as to time, the serial preaching will be voted a bore. A course of sermons in midsummer on "Popular Amusements" would have a better hearing in midwinter. One on the "Poetry of the Bible" might be better enjoyed in June than in December. If the idea of *popular discourse* be not lost sight of, and if time and subject are wisely chosen, there can be little danger of weariness apprehended from serial preaching. In a recent conversation with President Harper, of Chicago University, he said that his experience as a teacher convinced him that interest in a given subject was vastly increased by massing study upon it instead of spreading it over an extended period. Why should this not hold good of preaching sermons in courses? For the preacher is in the noblest sense a teacher. It is readily conceivable that in a properly constructed series of sermons the interest should grow steadily to the very end.

The advantages of such preaching are not far to seek. Whatever else a habit of sermonizing on a hundred and four different subjects fifty-two Sundays of the year may do for a congregation, it cannot give thorough instruction in certain great departments of inspired truth. It needs only a small admixture of serial preaching to insure very desirable results in the way of edification. This biblical term, so often employed, means building up the structure of Christian knowledge. It is a continuous process. It implies the orderly and consecutive unfolding of Christian doctrine or precept. If we take the epistles of Paul as any model for such Christian teaching, we shall find two of his epistles—his greatest—pursue a thorough course of argumentation on one great theme—the Epistle to the Romans and that to the Galatians. Those to the Corinthians are discursive. Both kinds of teaching are therefore represented; or, if we take a concrete example, we shall find that this continuity of discourses is a necessary element in the pulpit. Suppose a pastor moved to present to his people the subject of regeneration. Few subjects need clearer and more thorough handling. Frequently you will hear laymen in the prayer-meeting talking as if regeneration and conversion were convertible, or as if the human agency preceded the Divine agency, or as if the human agency were to be minimized in order to exalt the Divine. Now can any congregation be properly taught on this solemn and vital theme by sporadic teaching, interjected here and there, a sermon on the new birth sandwiched between one on the evils of Sabbath

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deseccation, and another on political corruption? Can any single sermon half an hour long do more than discuss a phase of this great doctrine? Can you untwist the related parts of this fundamental truth and treat one this year and another next year, and hope to have any people grasp the inspired teaching on the subject? The reason why the mind of the laity have so vague notions on such subjects is that they receive so little instruction from the pulpit. The honest truth is that we are in a reactionary state just now as to such preaching; we are sacrificing thoroughness of instruction to the unhealthy craving for variety, for something new by way of a subject every time the minister goes into the pulpit. We think of President Willard's two hundred and fifty discourses on the Shorter Catechism, or of the systems of divinity which in other days were preached in a series of sermons, with a shudder; or we may recall some "hobby" which a worthy divine rode Sunday after Sunday, or some slipshod series of expositions, and we say, "Far be from us such droning over the living truth of God." As if serial preaching involved any such issue! As if the good thing might not be abused, and the best things might not be made victims of the worst abuse! Taking a different text every time a minister goes into the pulpit will not save him from being dull—if he does not *work* on his sermons. If he does, then discussing a subject connectedly from Sunday to Sunday will not beget dullness. Is it not worth our while to emphasize a little more the need of *instruction* from the pulpit of to-day? When Rev. Thomas Williams preached his noted funeral sermon on Dr. Emmons, he took for his text Eec. xii. 9, "And further, because the preacher was wise, he taught the people knowledge." If the pulpit lays aside or underrates this function of teaching the people knowledge, it will in the end lose its power. No brilliant applications of truth to life, as they are called, no entertaining, theatrical starts which fill crowded houses, can keep the pulpit on its old foundations if these be dis severed from the thorough drill of the people in scriptural knowledge. Can this peculiar office of the pulpit be remanded to any other agency? To the religious newspaper? Their make-up seems to demand the greatest possible number of topics in every issue. They can give information on a great many things. But they can be teachers in no sense that replaces the pulpit. Can this function of the pulpit be relegated to books? This is frequently said, and on the face of it seems plausible enough. The multiplication of good books in every department of biblical knowledge is a fruitful element of good. Of this there can be no doubt. It may, however, be safely concluded that in every congregation it will be only the minority that read such books to any great extent. What proportion of any congregation has read Conybeare and Howson's *St. Paul*, or Edersheim's *Life of Christ*, or even Professor Drummond's "Natural Law in the Spiritual World"? These all are specially fitted to waken popular and general interest. They have been very widely read, doubtless, taking the general public into view; but when it comes to particular congregations the percent-

age of readers will be found small, so small that it is seen at once that books cannot take the place of the pulpit in its function of teaching. Let us suppose that a pastor shall decide to employ eight, ten, or twelve of his Sunday morning or evening services for a course of sermons on some subject. This would leave a very large majority of Sundays for the preaching on separate texts and disconnected themes. Suppose the practice maintained through a series of years. Would it not tend to the elevation of the pulpit? Is there not an educating process in the hearing which would elevate the pews as well as the pulpit? What wiser economy could be suggested? The ministry is often deterred from such efforts through fear of small results. But is it not the inner consciousness of many a faithful minister that most of his words seem like water spilled upon the ground? May not the experiment be worth trying in many pulpits that have not ventured upon it in any systematic way? To such as may be disposed to test the worth of serial preaching the following suggestions are addressed. They are submitted with due modesty; all that the writer can claim in their behalf is that they are the fruit of some observation and much reflection on the excessive tendency toward sporadic preaching so much in vogue at the present time:

1. In entering on any given course of sermons, the first thing to be thought of is length; many a first-rate sermon has been spoiled by being too long, so many a course has been spoiled by being too long drawn out. Obviously no rules can be laid down determining just how many sermons in a course a given congregation will relish. If this style of preaching is something new to any people, plainly a short course is the one to begin with. When they have become interested in this method of pulpit teaching, they will welcome more. The craving for variety will not come in to thwart the effort for continuous discussion. Overdoing is bad always, everywhere, and in all things. At present it seems to the writer as if the overdoing was in the form of this scattered, disjointed, rambling preaching. It never can secure cumulative effect. But in any attempt at reform the cardinal virtue will be a wise proportion between the two methods—short courses, and these withdrawn at proper intervals, rather than one long course which, however elaborate and valuable, may become too drastic.

2. It is also of the first consequence to choose timely courses. I have wondered sometimes how far this problem of ministerial success depended on the choice of subjects for pulpit discussion. The common impression seems to be that success or failure turns on the way of handling subjects. But this at least is true, that a felicitous choice of themes would go far toward obviating difficulties rising from defect in handling them. An ill-chosen theme, ill handled, is the doom of pulpits. So in regard to courses a minister with his eyes open can see when to present a given subject. We say sometimes of things that they "are in the air." When any matter demanding pulpit treatment is "in the air," when it is engrossing

public thought and feeling, this is the time for the pulpit to discuss it thoroughly. For example, the intense interest now felt in Old Testament criticism gives any preacher a fine opportunity for treating Old Testament subjects; or the engrossing discussion on revision gave similar opportunity for bringing out the scriptural meaning of certain great doctrines.

3. It cannot be too strongly said that, if courses of sermons are attempted, they demand his very best work of the preacher. It will not answer here to be superficial or careless. Serial preaching succeeds only when it brings out the best points of study and the most conscientious preparation as to structural form. It can be made almost as much of a blessing to the preacher as to the people. This concentration of thought and study is sure to make a growing man of him. If any one wishes a good example of such work he will find it in Dr. William M. Taylor's recent volume on the "Miracles of Christ." One thing is certain, that unless such work is put on serial preaching it is foredoomed to failure.

4. The conception of the sermon as popular address must be kept fully in mind. Sermons in courses are under the same law with all sermons. They must have a "live" element in them. The danger of being too technical, or too scholastic, or too formal, or too dry, must be anxiously shunned. It is, however, quite possible to invest serial preaching with this element of living power. It will suggest always application to existing issues. It can be bent in almost any direction required. But it must be divorced from the idea of the scholastic discussion or the treatise. If the sermons are to be published, they must be sermons first, and a book afterward. They always reach a high range of pulpit power when they embody successfully the popular idea.

5. Vary the courses from year to year. This demand for variety on the part of the pews is, within limits, a legitimate one. To repeat year after year courses of sermons on theological doctrines would be fatuous. Fortunately the range for serial preaching is very wide. There need be no monotony. Not long ago I heard President Patton, in the Marquand Chapel, unfold in a single sermon the grand underlying thought in the Epistle to the Hebrews; that is, he discussed the epistle as a whole. The discourse was a model of unity, and I need hardly say of surpassing interest. Why not a series of sermons on the different books of the Bible, as books, unfolding the contents of each, and thus giving an idea of the scope of each? We make mincemeat of the Bible by the excessive use of texts, not remembering that this device of textual division is a human invention, first made by Robert Stephens during a journey from Lyons to Paris.

The religious papers have called attention to a very successful course of sermons on the history of the different books of the New Testament, by Rev. Mr. Moore, of Providence, R. I. Who has ever heard a well-digested series of sermons on the sacrificial system of the Old Testament? How rich it might be made! The materials for it are at hand in Kurtz's

look on the subject. Who ever heard a series of sermons on the history of the Jewish people between the time of Malachi and that of John the Baptist? Yet it is a most eventful, in some respects an heroic period, and must be known to understand fully the world to which Christ came.

The field for such preaching is very wide, very prolific. Has it not been unduly neglected?

IV.—HOW CAN ECONOMIC STUDIES HELP THE MINISTRY?

BY PRESIDENT E. BENJAMIN ANDREWS, D.D., LL.D., BROWN UNIVERSITY,
PROVIDENCE, R. I.

THAT economic studies, rightly prosecuted, are very important for ministers, no one any longer doubts; but the best means for rendering them so, and precisely wherein the advantage of them lies, are points touching which there may be less agreement.

One of the chief benefits which a minister is sure to derive from careful reflection in this field is discipline of mind. There is no sort of learning whatever which is superior to economics in this regard. Economics I believe surpasses all other studies in the combination which it involves of mental discipline with practical utility. Its most ordinary propositions test one's thinking power. Its deeper reasonings put this power to the proof as severely as anything in the mathematics. Many persons seem to suppose that the disciplinary value of any kind of learning is great in proportion as the branch in question approximates to the character of an exact science. This I judge to be a mistake. The best mentality is not attainable by drill in the exact sciences. Such drill is important, but may easily be carried relatively too far. Not only do action, conduct, life, all lie in the domain of inexact science, making training in this indispensable to every educated man, but even from the point of view of an exclusively liberal education, it is a higher attainment, a finer feat of mind to be expert in the inexact than in the exact sciences.

The worth of economic study as a gymnastic exercise of mind is much greater than a casual observer would suppose. Such is the zest which the nature of the subject imparts, that many overlook the really tough problems connected with it. That every pupil is sure to possess beforehand a certain familiarity with the subject is, in fact, one of the chief obstacles to thoroughness, leading to slovenly analysis and looseness of view. A kindred difficulty arises from the use in economics of many ordinary words in a technical sense. Students suppose themselves thinking the correct thought because they attach a more or less definite meaning to the word. From this cause comes also most of the economic sciolism so common among persons not students at all, who yet discuss "Rent," "Profits," "Wages," and whatever other topic is named by a familiar title, with all

the assurance of an Adam Smith. But let any man who can truly think carefully study into any of the main problems presented in political economy, "Production," "Exchange," "Money," "Credit," "Distribution," and the like, pushing every analysis to its ultimate statements, and working out the practical implications of the principles thus unearthed, he will find the result nothing short of an intellectual renaissance.

There is a peculiarity to the disciplinary effect of economics which is not to be encountered anywhere outside of sociology. It comes from a certain mutual relativity in the data, which renders them elusive of the mind's grasp. It is hard to fix the basis of agreement between different disputants, or even the point of departure for the single thinker's thought. Premises can often be rendered definite only by a piece of abstraction which the course of subsequent reasoning shows to have been incorrect. The reasoner has then to go back and amend his premises, rethinking every step of his work with scrutiny to see whether, and if so, where and how, the rectification of his premises has vitiated it. No other sort of exercise will strengthen and develop the mind like this.

Yet it is to be admitted that, for ministerial students at any rate, the practical importance of economic study is greater than its power as a discipline to the mind. This, its practical character, as part of the information which ought to be at the minister's command, cannot be exaggerated. The truths of economics touch every human life, and that too in a most important way. They come into relation with nearly everything in the domain of conduct concerning which we have to take ground. We cannot preach a full gospel without canvassing the responsibilities of wealth, the importance of true charity, the relation of individuals, classes and nations to one another, and so on. It is not too much to say that a discussion of any of these topics is nearly certain to go astray at some point if the preacher has not had more or less training in economic doctrine. How often we hear ministers impliedly, if not directly, decriing earthly wealth, as if wealth were not absolutely indispensable to civilization and culture! How many consider wars, fires, and floods as blessings because they "make work," as much as to declare work the all-important thing, instead of the goods brought into existence through work! The evil of waste is not adequately appreciated by any of us. Could we prevent the destruction of wealth which arises from uneconomical housekeeping alone, the resulting fund would more than suffice to feed all the hungry in the world. "Whoever," says Edward Atkinson, "can teach the masses of people how to get five cents' worth a day more comfort or force out of the food which each one consumes, will add to their productive power an amount which would equal a thousand million dollars a year." It is easy to gain a more or less valuable apprehension of the meaning of facts like these, but nothing save careful study in economics will bring them home to one's consciousness in the most efficient manner.

Charity is a matter about which we are continually preaching, yet there

is hardly another whereon we speak at all, concerning which so many mistakes are made. When ministers urge liberality upon their hearers it probably does not occur to them that the abstraction of any considerable sum from the community where the liberality is exercised, however much it may advantage the heathen or other distant recipients, somewhat diminishes the wages fund of the given community, and so makes the condition of the poor thereof a trifle harder. In the usual case this is, doubtless, no good reason against the contribution; still there are occasions when the consideration here presented would legitimately moderate one's insistence in asking for large and generous gifts.

The writer of these lines often queries whether a great deal of the money which churches raise for the poor at communion seasons is not wasted and worse than wasted. Undoubted cases are on record where character has been broken down by the reception of such church beneficence. If people can get money without earning it, many will elect so to do; and the custodians of charity funds in churches do not, it is safe to say, usually administer these funds with quite that needed hardness of heart which would characterize them were they the directors of banks or insurance companies. The evil in such instances is very great. Not only is the money thus given when it might have been earned abstracted from the wages fund of the community, thus robbing people who were willing to engage in honest work, but the recipients are encouraged in unthrifty habits, until at last they cease to be producers at all. That Christian churches should thus aid in impoverishing the public is a great pity. I should not venture to mention this in this place but for the fact that whenever I have tentatively suggested to officers of churches the possibility of this evil I have found them convinced that the evil actually exists.

Another problem: What is culpable luxury? That there is such a thing nearly all will admit; but it is difficult for most of us to draw the line between it and habits which we have to justify. In general, we say, and quite rightly, that needs ought not to be recklessly multiplied, but limited to those whose existence and supply are necessary to our best producing power and largest life, and that, in proportion as needs are fictitious and abnormal, the gratification of them becomes destructive instead of productive, and hence is illegitimate. But, on the other hand, the creation of a new need will often bring with it a more than proportionate productive power. This may occur directly, as when the ignorant and degraded acquire culture and the accompanying enlargement of manhood, or indirectly by the limitation of population, rendering the laboring class more productive in proportion to its total need. There are also religious, moral, and æsthetic needs, whose existence is a good, though they may not enhance productive ability at all. We see from these simple considerations the great importance of study, if one is to preach soundly upon these delicate but vital themes.

Take another case. Two practices often confounded are gambling and

speculation. There is such a thing as legitimate speculation, which tends to steady prices, and hence is productive—negatively, at any rate, like the work of judges and police. It creates no wealth, but helps conserve wealth that has been created in other ways. But gambling, whether at the faro-table or in stocks, wheat, cotton, etc., does not steady prices. It has rather precisely the reverse effect. Yet all the difference between gambling speculation and legitimate speculation is that in the former there is no genuine intention to transfer the goods, while in the latter there is such intention. A great deal of the so-called speculation upon the exchanges is nothing else in the world but betting on the prices of futures. The wheat actually brought to New York City in a day averages only between one hundred and two hundred thousand bushels, but the wheat “exchanged”—viz., nominally bought and sold in New York daily, is usually about ten million bushels, and in excited times one hundred million. It is obvious at a glance that but little of this purchase and sale can be *bonâ fide*. Far from steadying prices, it unsettles them worse than anything else that could be named.

In no economic discussion is the average preacher more completely at sea than in that concerning money. Not a few of the clergy have undertaken in recent years to admonish their hearers and the public as to what would be a just monetary standard, and almost invariably such assume that a single gold standard would be just. I remember reading one very elaborate disquisition by an honored Doctor of Divinity, taking to task as peculiarly miserable sinners all people who believed in any other than the gold standard pure and simple. So far is this from correct that it is now as good as demonstrable that since 1873 a single silver standard has been much more just than a single gold standard. In the next twenty-five or fifty years the case may be exactly the reverse, gold proving a more stable measure of values than silver. The fact is, that neither metal by itself is free from fluctuations in value. Even a bi-metallic standard would fluctuate. No system of money which any part of the world has thus far used but is a cause of continual injustice between man and man. Those who wish reform in monetary systems should therefore be praised, not scolded. It takes economic insight, that insight which comes only from considerable training, to see where right and wrong lie in so weighty a matter.

We have heard from many pulpits within the last two or three years tirades against the purchase of clothing from sweaters. Christian people have been enjoined by all means never to trade with the wicked men who thus screw down their help to starvation wages. The story of the “sweated” victims, the poor women made to work twenty hours out of the twenty-four for a wretched wage of two shillings a day or less, never breathing pure air or seeing the open sunlight, is indeed a pitiable one. But that desperate estate can never be made better by any agreement to boycott the persons who pay the too scanty wages. The economic condition thus touchingly portrayed is due to deeper causes. If I refuse to buy of sweat-

ers, how, I ask, am I certain that I am not, after all, employing them indirectly? Society can never be sure upon this point without a trustworthy standing committee to supervise the entire business of the dealers said to be guiltless of sweating. Even the dealers which have the best intentions may be employing starved working-women indirectly. But suppose we were somehow able to be quite certain that the creation of the wares purchased by us proceeded entirely from well-paid labor. What would be the meaning of this? Simply that out of an immense army of poor people ready to work for a starvation wage, a few had been arbitrarily selected to receive more. It would amount to a roundabout way on our part of bestowing charity, using our tailors, dressmakers, etc., as our agents, who would, for a commission, gladly act as such. They of course could not sell to us at the low prices charged by the firms who still continued to "sweat." Were the well-to-do to take from their luxury-expenditure the extra sums needed to clothe themselves in this benevolent way, some net good would certainly be done; but so surely as this plan of benevolence were widened so as to relieve any considerable number of "sweaters'" victims, vast amounts would be withdrawn from the wages fund of the community, to the injury of wageworkers in general. Many of these would then sink into the class that we began by trying to help, requiring larger and larger subventions to keep that class from dropping back to its old wretchedness, with larger and larger subtractions from the wages fund, and so on in ceaseless round.

The difficulty, the fundamental difficulty, lies in the fact of desperate competition among the desperately poor, and until that competition is removed or reduced, no essential good whatever is done by a refusal to purchase from sweaters. The sweaters ply their business because they can ply it, because there are so many very poor people. Were there only half as many, the sweating process would perforce disappear. Nothing can put it down but a diminution of this dreadful competition. When this problem is solved the preaching referred to will no longer be necessary. The remedies suggested by these well-meaning instructors of the people are purely superficial and vain. It is saddening to know this, but it is healthy.

The above opens the way to another insight which very many of our preachers lack. They continually speak as if the only requirement to be fulfilled in order to a blessed society were excellent and well-meaning *individuals*. Perfectly correct individual living would certainly make any society of which we have example very much better than it in fact is, yet it is easy to see that mere ignorance, mere congealed cross-purposes in social life and organization may make a society wretched, though every individual therein is doing his best. It is the glory of Christianity that it does not think of men merely as A, B, C, and D, but rather intends the establishment of a Kingdom of Righteousness where all shall be well off because the social total is complete as an organism, and not merely as a collection of perfected individuals.

V.—SOME THOUGHTS ON LITURGICS.

BY PROFESSOR F. V. N. PAINTER, SALEM, VA.

1. How are we to test a liturgy or determine its excellence? First, by the *Scriptures*. A liturgy should be scriptural. Whatever is contrary to the Scripture or is not in accord with its spirit should be rejected. Luther acted on this principle in revising the Roman mass. Secondly, by *history*. The forms of divine service are rooted in apostolic usage. The experience of the past is not without value. But on this criterion it is possible to lay too much stress. Age is no positive proof of excellence. Error has often attended the liturgical developments of the past, as in the lengthy dramatic service of the Eastern Church. Thirdly, by *adaptation*. A liturgy should be suited to the wants of the people that use it. In structure, articulateness, and musical requirements, it should be adapted to the culture of the congregation and the religious spirit of the age. And fourthly, by *edification*. A liturgy is not an end in itself, but a means to an end. That end is edification. Any service that fails to promote spirituality in worship is to be rejected as an injury. Apart from the Scriptures, the principle of edification is the great criterion by which a liturgy is to be tried.

2. Christian worship is essentially communion with God. If closely considered, two elements may be distinguished—namely, what we bring to God and what He brings to us. In worship we offer praise, thanksgiving, self-consecration. We contemplate the excellence of the Divine character, the gracious work of redemption, the blessing of providential care, and the beauty of revealed truth. On the other hand, God offers us sanctification through the truth, the consolation of forgiveness and grace, the presence of the Holy Ghost, and the blessing of personal fellowship with Himself. It follows from these facts that true worship is essentially and necessarily spiritual. While a moderate liturgy, by directing the thought and feeling, may be spiritually helpful, an elaborate liturgy, by distracting the attention, breaks up the train of devotion. Historically considered, worship will be found to have lost in spirituality as it gained in elaborateness of ceremonial. It is sufficient to recall the worship of the Pharisees in the time of our Lord, and of the Roman Catholic Church at the era of the Reformation.

3. It is to the credit of Luther that he did not reject the fine arts. If painting, sculpture, architecture, and instrumental music are not specifically authorized in the New Testament, they are not inconsistent with its spirit. Within certain limits the fine arts may be made ministers to edification and aids to spiritual worship. In this fact is found their justification. Splendid architecture, as in the case of Westminster Abbey and the Madeleine of Paris; the ocean tones of a mighty organ filling the vast spaces of a cathedral with floods of harmony; frescoes of the crucifixion or of the last judgment—all dispose the soul to worship. They impress us with

a sense of our dependence upon God. They help us to conceive of the Divine majesty and glory. The principle of Christian art is edification. It is thus different from secular art, which is governed solely by the principle of beauty.

4. The Church year is not sanctioned by apostolic practice. It has in its favor the practice of the ancient Jews; but we should be careful in adopting in the Christian Church the ceremonial usages of the old dispensation. The observance of times and seasons may be carried too far. Under the new dispensation, the Christian's whole life is to be one of consecration and divine service. There can be no reasonable objection to commemorating the leading events in our Saviour's life as they annually return—His birth, death, resurrection, gift of the Holy Spirit, and ascension. Such commemoration affords an opportunity for the devout contemplation of the leading facts of our religion. It has the sanction of Church usage as early as the second and third centuries. But to multiply these festivals, to assign a saint to every day of the year, as the Roman Church has done, shows a spirit of formalism. As in the case of the Pharisees, there is danger that the spirit of worship will be swallowed up in outward ceremonies. Luther was right, when he came to reform public worship, in rejecting all except five or seven of the leading festivals of the Church.

5. The reading of prescribed selections of Scripture, as appointed in the Pericope, has some advantages. It insures variety, and also secures adaptation to the chief festivals of the Church year. But to allow of no other selections, or always to require these passages, is hardly defensible. The Pericope, which dates from the time of Charlemagne, is not faultless. Luther objected to it on the ground that it unduly magnified works to the obscuring of faith. Other critics have discovered an absence of system in the selections. Besides, it brings before the congregation only a part of the Bible, when it is entitled to the whole. The use of the Pericope, further, often interferes with the harmony of the service. One great thought should run through each public service and bind together all its parts in unity. The passages prescribed in the Pericope are often strikingly at variance with the subject of the sermon. It may be said, to be sure, that the sermon should always be based on the Gospel or Epistle for the day. But such an arrangement seriously fetters the pulpit. The wise preacher often adapts his sermons to some special need or condition of the congregation. Always to prescribe his subject according to the Pericope is an unnecessary and unwise interference with his freedom and efficiency. Here is obviously a place demanding Christian liberty. Let the minister use the Pericope if it will make the service more edifying; if not, let him use any passages that his judgment may dictate. It is all Scripture.

6. There is not entire agreement as to the place of the sermon in public worship. If we consider only the example of Christ and His apostles,

there need be no difference of opinion. Christ was pre-eminently the great Teacher. The apostles extended Christianity by public preaching. It was through the ignorance and formalism of the Church in the Middle Ages that preaching fell into disuse. It is historically true that as liturgical forms are multiplied, preaching becomes less prominent. The idea is now advanced in some parts of the Protestant Church that the communion is the most important element in divine worship. But this is not the view of the leading reformers, to whom is due the honor of restoring the sermon to its rightful place in the public service of the Church. The triumphs of the Reformation were due in large measure to the preaching of the Word. If Christianity is to make new conquests, it must be, as in the days of the apostles and of the reformers of the sixteenth century, through the personal proclamation of the truth. All attempts to depreciate the sermon or to relegate it to a secondary position should be regarded as a sign of decaying Christianity. Luther understood the matter rightly. In his German Mass, published in 1526, he says: "The most important part of divine service is preaching and teaching God's Word." According to this view, which has the unmistakable sanction of Scripture usage, the sermon should be the centre of divine worship—the means by which the truth is brought to the heart, conscience, and will in its transforming and edifying and saving power. It should be the voice, not of a perfunctory liturgical leader, but of a living messenger of God, who, assured of the truth in the depths of his own inner experience, proclaims the truth with power.

7. The Communion of the Lord's Supper is a rite of great solemnity. It embodies in its significance the entire atoning work of our Lord. In it He comes peculiarly near to His people. In the Apostolic Church it was celebrated with great simplicity in imitation of the manner of its institution. How touching and impressive the simple record of the evangelist: "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And He took the cup and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." The simplicity of the action, freighted with infinite meaning, renders the original rite sublime. In comparison with it, how impoverished appears a complex ceremonial! But men were not satisfied with this original simplicity. Many indeed are not capable of appreciating its beauty. Taking men as they are, some additions may be justified on the principle of edification. An introduction may serve to concentrate the mind upon the important rite, and to stimulate feelings of devotion. Even an admonition may be useful in reminding us of our duty. But all the additions of men should be in accordance with Scripture. And in the distribution of the elements no form of expression—no dogmatic statements or extempore exhortations—can be so fitting as the words of our Lord Himself. And the closing part of the service should not be so

complicated as to call the intellect into active exercise while the breathings of thanksgiving and prayer are rising warm from the heart.

8. Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs were in use among Christians of the apostolic age. Singing has always occupied a place in Christian worship. Melody and rhythm are peculiarly fitted to express many thoughts and sentiments of the heart. The prevalence of music in worship is no doubt owing to this fact. In church hymnody two things are to be considered—the *words* and the *tune*. A hymn should be short and complete in itself. It should be correct in thought and sentiment. It should rise above versified prose, and yet not lose itself in the vague tunefulness of poetic frenzy. While tender, it should not be weak and sentimental; and while clear and strong, it should not be coarse and low. It should in no sense be discordant with its high use as a part of Divine worship and a means of edification. The objection sometimes urged against the reading of hymns is not altogether well founded. To be sure, the reading is often very imperfect. But inasmuch as many persons in the congregation are without hymn-books, the reading of the hymn is the only means of acquainting them with its contents, and thus of enabling them to enter into its devotional sentiment. Besides this, the effective reading of a hymn is an excellent way to impress religious truth and feeling.

As to the melody of hymns, the same general principles applying to the words hold good. The melodies should not be light and frivolous, suggestive of worldly pleasure. They should not be sensual in their nature. If Plato thought it wise to exclude from his republic all melodies that were likely to undermine the character, much more should they be excluded from the kingdom of heaven. The music should be serious and elevated. It should harmonize with the sacred moments when the soul is in communion with its Maker. Yet we should not forget the principle of adaptation. What is profitable for edification at one time and place may not be so at another. An absence of musical taste or of habits of devotion may for a time justify the use of melodies which, if judged by ordinary standards, would usually be found objectionable.

9. Prayer is direct personal communication with God. In prayer we offer praise and thanksgiving, make confession of sin, and invoke temporal and spiritual blessings. It is an active exercise of the devotional spirit—an expression of the fact of fellowship with God. In the true sense of the word, prayer is impossible to the unbeliever. At the best his prayer can only be an agonizing cry for help wrung from him by some impending danger. The modern objections to prayer are without adequate foundation. The Being that made the world can still operate in and upon it. Prayer is a duty urged repeatedly in the New Testament. We are incited to it by the example of Christ and His apostles. But without Scripture warrant, it has a foundation in our dependent and helpless condition in the world. It is the spontaneous utterance of a mind that loves and trusts the Supreme Being. The essential nature of prayer indicates

with clearness what its form should be. It should come directly from the heart. There is a holy delight in pouring out freely before God the thoughts and feelings of a soul warmed by Divine love. Such were the prayers of the apostles and the primitive Church. The use of fixed forms of prayer was a device of a later age. It formed a part of the elaborate ceremonial which a spirit of formalism, in imitation of the Jewish Church, imposed upon Christianity. Yet fixed forms of prayer are not without some justification. Considered from an artistic standpoint, they secure greater perfection of form. They are apt to be more comprehensive in scope and more condensed and beautiful in expression. The congregation is better able to unite in the prayer. To some persons who are lacking in fluency and fervor, they supply a real want. But without condemning the use of fixed forms, we find that they are exceptional in character, springing not from the essential nature of prayer, but from the needs of particular persons or from a spirit of formalism. The world will never be converted by fixed forms of prayer nor by the men that habitually use them.

SERMONIC SECTION.

THE SURVIVAL OF THE WEAK.

By D. S. SCHAFF, D.D. [PRESBYTERIAN], JACKSONVILLE, ILL.

We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.—Rom. xv. 1.

A CURT statement of one of those far-reaching and revolutionary principles of daily conduct which lean back upon the example and teaching of Christ. Under the Christian system the strong are under obligation to help the weak. Instead of being indifferent to their infirmities or making spoil of their weaknesses it behooves them by the exercise of respect and by ministries of love to do them good and edify them.

No rule of living is more familiar than that we must be ready to deny ourselves in that which is less in order that we may gain some greater good. We abandon corroding habits, though they may be pleasing, that we may win some prize more worthy of being coveted than the one we forfeit. A rule of daily prudence becomes a religious practice when we mortify the flesh and

the lusts thereof in obedience to the command of God, losing our present life that we may gain the life eternal; crucifying the flesh that we may be clothed with the power of the Spirit.

The other rule of conduct involved in the apostolic words of the text, in many quarters came upon the world as an utter novelty, and has had more to battle against to find its place as an established rule of ethics than the former rule of self-abnegation for the good of self. In some languages the very word "unselfishness" is wanting, and philanthropy in its deeper channels is an unknown thing even among the most cultivated classes who know not Christ. Here we are taught to look also on the things of others, using our own strength and superiority in their behalf and unto their edification. After the first deed of blood God called out, "Where is Abel, thy brother?" It was a recognition of the claim of man upon man. The Gospel goes a step further when it says, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." The strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please themselves.

I. This is not law in the brute creation. Beneath man all life is engaged in a fierce struggle for existence. Pity is unknown or almost unknown. Each individual seeks his own. The strong devour the weak. Each is bent on his own profit and aggrandizement. No one lays up for the other. A violent, unceasing conflict is going on for self-maintenance and superiority. The strong look out for themselves. The weak go to the wall. If the fittest do not always survive, the most cunning and the strongest do. The infirm are preyed upon or left mercilessly to perish. They flee to the hills and cover away in inaccessible rocks and caves. They are endowed with acuteness of ear and litheness of limb, so that they may discern the approach and escape from the pitiless greed of the strong.

An exception to this prevailing rule is found in the generous instinct of motherhood, which pervades the grades of animal being below man. But for this maternal pity, the most of animal races would quickly become extinct. The tigress, even, will fight for her cubs, risking and losing her life on their behalf. The mother bird pines and laments when the little ones of her nest have been disturbed.

Another exception is afforded by the domestic animals. Appointed unto man to be his companions and defenders, they have given proof of willing and affectionate self renunciation for his good. The dog pines when the master is absent who has dealt kindly with him. He will risk his own life in his service, share with him in dumb but strong friendship his want and solitude, and has been believed to die of a broken heart when he is dead. But once left to roam, these animals also seem to abandon themselves to the brute principle of utter selfishness. Strength, muscular strength, and sagacity determine the length of life and well-being among the brutes. Might is right. Force is law. The strong intimidate the weak. The mighty crush the feeble.

II. The law of the brute creation predominates largely among men where the power of the Gospel is not felt. Strength is a law unto itself. The able-bodied and the mighty seek their own self-indulgence. Without regard to the feelings of the weak and without concern for their rights they please themselves, gratifying their own lusts and heaping up to themselves riches, estates, and dignities.

Human life is also a struggle for existence. Man, too, like the brute, is forced to be continually at work to keep off hunger and beggary, disease and death. He is engaged in a never-ending conflict, and the fittest do not always survive. The bravest swimmers are often wrenched down beneath the crest of the wave by unseen whirlpools. The most clear-sighted climbers lose their footing and dash into the precipice beneath. The good and the pure are often crushed to the earth, while the depraved and the unclean thrive and are exalted.

Self-assertion is the first principle of life, and it must be pressed in order to have survival and to the attainment of the prizes of the world. A man must magnify himself and push himself onward to keep alive and to reach the high places among his fellows. The strong must insist upon their strength. Self-assertion is essential to self-preservation. True as this is, nevertheless self-preservation must not be made the excuse for preying upon the infirmities of the weak or rising upon the ruins of others. In the rush for fame, success, wealth, dignities, ease, and all else that delights or is to be coveted, the strong are apt to trample upon the feelings of the weak, and increase their own strength by preying upon their infirmities. Out of this root of self-assertion have come all despotisms, servitudes, rapacities toward the widow, debasements of womanhood, inhumanities to children, oppressions of the enslaved, tortures of the captive, and cruelties to the beast. It is the human way to enforce the *brutal* principle of surviving by the sufferings and humiliations of

the weak. The strong please themselves, and the more close man is to the barbarian and the brute, the more fully does he act out the rule of securing, if need be, his own advantage, comfort, and enrichment by the heartless spoil of the helplessness of the weak, a rule which the apostle riddles and scatters to the winds by his injunction that the "strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak."

Wars, from the earliest predatory feuds to those which resulted in the partition of Poland and the campaigns of Napoleon, have for the most part grown out of the determination to exalt one's self by the losses of another. If a nation was weak, a stronger one would pounce down upon it and do in about the same way what the fierce king of the forest does with the passing gazelle. The keeper of one baronial hall detected the weakness of the walls which encompassed another, and coveting booty, sallied forth and spoiled or crushed his neighbor. Towns and cities of the Middle Ages were surrounded with thick walls, and the inferior in strength was in constant dread of the loss of property, virtue, and even existence from the rapacity of a stronger neighbor.

All slavery, involuntary and hereditary, was for the most part in the first instance the outcome of the principle which this text tears to shreds. The Arab slaver to-day, by the sheer strength and superiority which come from the possession of weapons and the excelling skill in their use, depopulates mercilessly whole areas and involves whole tribes in most pitiless sufferings, even unto their almost utter extermination, in order that he may gratify his own lust, gain, and aggrandizement. For centuries untold the taskmaster has exacted labor, blood, and life from the bondman, with no sense of pity for the oppressed's misery, with eye only to his own ease, enrichment, and indulgence. And the taskmaster idea survives long after slavery is abolished.

In this more humane age we often

stand aghast at the methods by which the weak in other ages were taken advantage of by the strong, and their infirmities made the occasion of pleasure and amusement to the strong. The nations of culture in antiquity rudely practised the principle that the weak and unfortunate have no rights the strong are bound to respect. The Spartans placed the deformed and the cripple out on Mount Taygetus to die. The Romans acknowledged the propriety of the same practice. On an enormous scale they sometimes carried it out in the butcheries of conquered peoples for the sake of self-glorification and in the disgrace of noble foes, tied to chariot wheels and dragged along in gay triumphal processions to give the populace delight, as well as in those sanguine combats where human combatants, trained for that special purpose, reddened the arena with their life blood to afford amusement to the spectators. It is not so long ago that tortures and torments were applied to the weak on rack and in cell, which could yield no profit except to the morbid appetite of the strong. The gargoyles on Spanish spires are often Moors, whose features are distorted in agony and distress. The ages gone by seem to have taken delight in the agonizing spectacle of human pain, and to have aggravated it as the Indian did the torture of his victim at the stake. And this in periods of Church domination! For if Tamerlane marked his victorious progress by pyramids of skulls, Coligny's head was sent embalmed as a present to Gregory XIII.

The spirit is not extinct. To conduct and propensities still we apply the term *brutal*, which wrench wealth, superiority, amusement from the sufferings and debasement of the weak. The refinement of the methods by which strength makes merchandise of the weaknesses of the infirm may cover up the brutality of the instinct, but does not change it. Whether it be the cruel treatment of the brute on street or track, in truck or landau, by galling bit or fretting har-

ness, simply to gratify pride or a fashion; or whether it be the heartless treatment of children, or exactions from the dependent classes, or abuse of the person of man or woman by taking advantage of their infirmities or necessities—all is opposed to this Gospel, and is of the flesh, fleshly, and of the earth, earthy.

The Gospel has announced another law of life for man and enforced it by a conspicuous example.

Here love and not force is supreme. The good of others is co-ordinated with our own good. Here the strong do not live for their own aggrandizement alone. No man liveth unto himself. We defame ourselves by making prey of the infirmities of the weak. We dishonor Christ whom we follow. We ought not to please ourselves by making traffic of others necessities. By the Gospel the strong bear the infirmities of the weak.

The struggle for self-existence goes on. The effort to survive is pressed. "Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure," says the apostle. Again, "Work out your own salvation." And still again, "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." The obligation to help ourselves loses none of its emphasis. Every man must bear his own burden, work out his own destiny, and achieve his own crown.

We live also for others. We recognize the rights of the weak. We pity their infirmities. At the side of self-assertion is placed self-renunciation. With self-care is coupled concern for others, and these two draw the chariot of a regenerated life to the highest attainment and to the approval of God. The Christian law summons each to afford to others the utmost opportunity for the development of their faculties, to recover them that are out of the way, to call to the marriage feast of good things them that are in the highways and hedges. Self-assertion is only one half the function of life. He who practises it even unto all purity of

thought and cleanness of deportment attains but unto the vestibule of the Christian sanctuary of a life well pleasing to God. One half of the function of life is to care for ourselves, force ourselves upward, bear our own burden. But only one half. One half of the function of life is the care of others, the help of the weak, the bearing of one another's burdens.

The world utters often a motto which is good as far as it goes. It is a great advance upon brutishness—"Live and let live." So it runs, but behind this half-truth selfishness and greed may hide themselves and grow. "Live and help others to live" is the motto of the Gospel. "Look out for Number One" is a favorite maxim of the street, which pushed alone is the brutal principle in full sway. "Do good unto all men" is a maxim coming from a different atmosphere, and while not unfriendly to ambition and all high achievement, is hostile to all methods which compass the gain for self by preying upon the infirmities of others.

The struggle for life now becomes a struggle for eternal life. The well-being of the body is matched by the well-being of the soul. The pleasures and places of the world are exceeded in excellency and permanency by the approval and crown of God. Man lives not by bread alone. He lives by the commendation of God. He survives not by the debasement and loss of others. He survives in their advancement, and rejoices when they can partake of his joy. He will bear the infirmities of the weak, seeking by every means their good unto edification. He will avoid all pretension in looks or haughtiness of manner. He will suppress all ridicule and satire of the deformities and weaknesses of others as outside the dignity of a Christian. Whatever in speech or demeanor may be an occasion of offence to his brother he will avoid. He will have no guile in his heart toward men. "Love *thinketh* no evil." Stooping down, if necessary, love bears all infirmities and

covers a multitude of sins. "Be not high-minded, but condescend to men of low estate." Unnecessary offence even to a dog will be avoided, or, if committed, will be repented of. When the disciples were met and the Master had bent low to wash their feet, He said unto them, "I have given you an example, that ye do as I have done unto you."

A chief test of Christian civilization is the consideration with which the strong regard the infirmities of the weak. The homes for those who are suffering from the infirmities of age, the hospital for those who are suffering from wounds and disease, the refuge for those who are suffering for moral faults or from mental aberration, the midnight missions, the dispensaries, the industrial school, the free reading-rooms, the societies for the prevention of cruelty to man and beast—these are the glory of our civilization, as the brothels, making prey upon the shame of woman, the gambling dens, the saloons, making spoil of the health and honor of man, are its disgrace, but not its despair; for so long as the cross lifts high its spectacle of mercy, the principle that the "strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak" will go among men, like a stream of waters, pure as crystal.

Our literature bears witness to the infusion of this humane principle. The "Song of the Shirt" has a large circle of sympathetic readers. The poet who speaks so tenderly of the "wee, sleekit, cowrin', tim'rous beastie," whose fragile house in the fields has been overturned by the plough, moves readers to whom the great epics of arms and the fall and recovery of man are only names. Lowell's "Sir Launfal" and a thousand other poems have their interest from the Christly spirit of regard for the weaknesses of others which they magnify. We turn aside and read as indicative of a great heart the simple incident of Luther, who, instead of joining in the chase, caught the hunted hare and hid it under his cloak, because the

chase reminded him of the way in which Satan hunts for souls. And we step aside from his widely known deeds to the incident in Mr. Lincoln's life when, on his way with other lawyers to the court, he stopped to replace two young birds who had been blown out of their nest, saying, "I could not have slept if I had not restored those little birds to their mother."

A prince of the blood who finds pleasure in the indulgences of the flesh, while he sets a bad example to his people, only shows again how close a man may be to the summit of all earthly dignities and glories, and yet how far he may be from the life of Christ. Where there is condition to improve, misery to mitigate, misfortune to be retrieved, manners to be reformed, what a broad field under the exhortation of the text is opened up to them that are strong and powerful by reason of intellect, wealth, social position, and birth! It was a most noble thing, when Naples was suffering from the ravages of the cholera a few years ago, for King Humbert to turn aside from the races, where he had made appointment to be, and to hasten to the relief of his people. "*A Pordenone si fa festa. A Napoli si muore. Vado a Napoli. Umberto.*" ("At Pordenone they are having sport. At Naples they are dying. I will go to Naples.") Such was the telegram he sent, and hail to any prince who acts in this spirit! He will live in the hearts as in the prosperity of his people.

It is this law of the Gospel which has led men into all self-abasements and all heroisms of self-renunciation, and abashes all corporations and individuals who, in order to please themselves, amuse themselves, enrich themselves, exalt themselves, rob the poor, oppress the weak, or lock up their own treasures of strength, influence, or wealth, and withhold from bearing the infirmities of the weak and helping them on to all well-being.

For the motto, "The fittest survive," the Gospel substitutes the watchword,

"*The unfit must survive;*" "the lost must be saved," "the sinning be reclaimed," yea, "the dead be made alive again." If thine enemy hunger, feed him. In cell, in sick-chamber, in abode of wretchedness, on the dark mountains, the strong espies the infirmities of the weak and goes to their rescue. Self must stoop low to break the fetters of others. Pride must empty itself to carry a cup of cold water to a thirsty soul and to wash a bleeding foot. And if meat make my brother to offend or drink, I will neither eat meat nor drink wine, for I am here by all means to save some. "Though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. To the weak, because I was weak, that I might save the weak. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."

The principle of the apostle and the opposing principle may be contrasted. The indifference of the strong, in quest of self-gain and amusement, to the infirmities of the weak, was embodied on an imposing scale in that amphitheatre at Rome where great remains justify the appellation "colossal." Built by the Emperor Titus in the shape of an ellipse, six hundred feet by five hundred feet, its outer walls rising one hundred and forty feet, and coated with marble, it was within fitted with sixty or eighty rows of benches rising one above the other. Eighty thousand spectators looked down from these seats upon the spectacles taking place on the arena beneath. There wild beasts, maddened by previous starvation, were let loose to delight the audiences, and gladiators contended in mortal combat to afford them a holiday. Trajan, at his accession, exposed ten thousand unhappy captives to death by each other's hands, and the bloody sport prolonged itself one hundred and twenty-three days. To-day the tourist walks through the deserted spaces, looks with wonder upon the foundations of the benches and at the gaping dens beneath where the wild beasts were caught, and at the

avenues through which they were let forth into the arena.

The other scene is recent. I am standing in front of a village school. The shadows of the Lebanon rest upon the valley. In a humble room a group of children are gathered and sitting on the mud floor, with tin slates and primers in their hands. On a plain table lies a large volume, the Arabic Bible. A native school-teacher, who has received his training in Beirut, conducts the school, as one after the other the classes show their slates, repeat Psalms and other exercises, and sing songs. Here is the mission of Christianity, and as I turn away with my missionary friend, I say, Here is the Gospel, with its ministry. In the one case we have on a huge scale an embodiment of the selfish and brutal principle by which the strong prey upon the infirmities of the weak. In the other we have the realization of the apostolic injunction, whereby "the strong bear the infirmities of the weak."

III. But is it possible to realize in this selfish and passionate world a principle so beautiful in theory? Is this not all a dream of the enthusiast? Yes, it is possible to realize it. In Christ we have the full embodiment of the lofty rule that the "strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please themselves." Who had better right to please himself than He, the Son of God, by self-indulgence and exactions from the weak? But of Him it is said, "Even Christ pleased not Himself." He made Himself of no reputation. He became poor that others might be made rich. He humbled Himself unto death, even the death of the cross, that He might bear our griefs and carry our sorrows. To the woman who had been bent with her afflictions eighteen years He said, "O woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmities." He condescended to men of low estate. Instead of seeking to exalt Himself by pretentious looks and haughty manners, He made Himself lowly. "The reproaches of men fell upon Me." His

generation would have had Him make vain show of His power and glory from pinnacle of the temple and on the cross. He knew better. He saw further. The ages to come had lessons to learn from Him of self-renunciation and abasement for the good of others. "I lay down My life for the world." The Good Samaritan of the parable teaches what Christ was, and what we ought to be.

By doing good Christ has taught us to do good unto all men. In expecting mercy He has taught us to show mercy. I do not pretend to say in what way corporations must act to observe this principle. That must be left to the conscience of each individual. But here is the principle. In going too far in extorting pleasure and profit from blind Samson we perish with him in his fall. The high do God's will, who keep themselves pure and are tender toward the infirmities of others, seek to edify them, to do them good, by fair treatment, by sharing their abundance, by visiting the sick, by weeping with them that weep, by handing a cup of the cool water of eternal life and hope. Not by selfish self-indulgence, not by hoarding our strength and riches, but by doing good to men, caring for those in distress, encouraging the fallen and comforting the broken-hearted, do the strong survive in this kingdom of God and win in this race for eternal life. For even Christ pleased not Himself. "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."

THE FOLLIES OF THE WISE.

BY ALEXANDER MACLAREN, D.D.
[BAPTIST], MANCHESTER, ENG.

The children of this world are, in their generation, wiser than the children of light.—Luke xvi. 8.

THE parable of which these words are the close is remarkable in that it proposes a piece of deliberate roguery

as, in some sort, a pattern for Christian people. The steward's conduct was neither more nor less than rascality. And yet, says Christ, "Do like that!"

The explanation is to be found mainly in the consideration that what was faithless sacrifice of his master's interests, on the part of the steward, is, in regard to the Christian man's use of earthly gifts, the right employment of the possessions which have been entrusted to him. But there is another vindication of the singular selection of such conduct as an example, in the consideration that what is praised is not the dishonesty, but the foresight, realization of the facts of the case, promptitude, wisdom of various kinds exhibited by the steward. And so says our Lord—shutting out the consideration of ends, and looking only for a moment at means—the world can teach the Church a great many lessons; and it would be well for the Church if its members lived in the fashion in which the men of the world do. There is eulogium here, a recognition of splendid qualities, prostituted to low purposes; a recognition of wisdom in the adaptation of means to an end; and a limitation of the recognition because it is only "*in their generation*" that "the children of this world are wiser than the children of light."

I. So we may look, first, at these two classes, which our Lord opposes here to one another.

"The children of the world" would have, for their natural antithesis, the children of another world. The "children of light" would have, for their natural antithesis, "the children of darkness." But our Lord so orders His words as to suggest a double antithesis, one member of which has to be supplied in each case. And He would teach us that whoever the children of this world may be, they are "children of darkness;" and that the "children of light" are so, just because they are the children of another world than this. Thus He limits His praise, because it is the sons of *darkness* that, in

a certain sense, are wiser than the enlightened ones. And that is what makes the wonder and the inconsistency to which our Lord is pointing. We can understand a man being a consistent, thorough-paced fool all through. But men whose folly is so dashed and streaked with wisdom, and others whose wisdom is so spotted and blurred with folly, are the extraordinary paradoxes which experience of life presents to us.

The children of this world are of darkness; the children of light are the children of another. Now I need not spend more than a sentence or two in further explaining these two antitheses. I do not intend to vindicate them, or to vindicate our Lord's distinct classification of men into these two halves. What does He mean by the children of this world? The old Hebrew idiom, the children of so-and-so, simply suggests persons who are so fully possessed and saturated with a given quality, or who belong so entirely to a given person as that they are spoken of as if they stood to it, or to him, in the relation of children to their parents. And a child of this world is a man whose whole thoughts, aims, and objects of life are limited and conditioned by this material present. But the word which is employed here, translated rightly enough "world," is not the same as that which is often used, especially in John's writings, for the same idea. Although it conveys a similar idea, still it is different. The characteristic quality of the visible and material world which is set forth by the expression here employed is its transiency. "The children of this epoch" rather than "of this world" is the meaning of the phrase. And it suggests, not so much the inadequacy of the material to satisfy the spiritual, as the absurdity of a man fixing his hopes and limiting his aims and life-purpose within the bounds of what is destined to fade and perish. Fleeting wealth, fleeting honors, mortal loves, wisdom, and studies that pass away with the passing away of the ma-

terial, these, however elevating some of them may be, however sweet some of them may be, however needful all of them are in their places—these are not the things to which a man can safely lash his being, or entrust his happiness, or wisely devote his life. And therefore the men who, ignoring the fact that they live, and the world passes, make themselves its slaves, and itself their object, are convicted by the very fact of the disproportion between the duration of themselves and of that which is their aim, of being children of the darkness.

And then we come to the other antithesis. The children of light are so in the measure in which their lives are not dependent exclusively upon, nor directed solely toward, the present order and condition of things. If there be a *this*, then there is a *that*. If there be an age which is qualified as being present, then that implies that there is an age or epoch which is yet to come. And that coming "age" should regulate the whole of our relations to that age which at present is. For life is continuous, and the coming epoch is the outcome of the present. As truly as the child is the father of the man, so truly is Eternity the offspring of Time, and that which we are to-day determines that which we shall be through the ages. He that recognizes the relations of the present and the future, who sees the small, limited things of the moment running out into the dim eternity beyond, and the track unbroken across the gulfs of death, and the broad expanse of countless years, and who therefore orders the little things here so as to secure the great things yonder, he, and only he, who has made time the lackey to eternity, and, in his pursuit of the things seen and temporal, regards them always in the light of things unseen and eternal, is the child of light.

II. The second consideration suggested here is, the limited and relative wisdom of the fools.

The children of this world, who are the children of darkness, and who at

bottom are thoroughly unwise, considered relatively, "are wiser than the children of light." The steward is the example. "A rogue is always"—as one of our thinkers puts it—"a round-about fool." He would have been a much wiser man if he had been an honest one; and, instead of tampering with his lord's goods, had faithfully administered them.

But, shutting out the consideration of the moral quality of his action, look how much there was in it that was wise, prudent, and worthy of praise. There were courage, fertility of resource, a clear insight into what was the right thing to do. There was a wise adaptation of means to an end. There was promptitude in carrying out the wise means that suggested themselves to him. The design was bad. Granted. We are not talking about goodness, but about cleverness. So, very significantly, in the parable the person cheated cannot help saying that the cheat was a clever one. The "lord," although he had suffered by it, "commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely."

Did you never know in Manchester some piece of sharp practice, about which people said, "Ah, well, he is a clever fellow;" and all but condoned the immorality for the sake of the smartness? The lord and the steward belong to the same level of character; and vulpine sagacity, astuteness, and qualities which insure success in material things seem to both of them to be of the highest value. "The children of this world, *in their generation*"—but only in it—"are wiser than the children of light."

Now I draw a very simple, practical lesson, and it is just this, that if Christian men, in their Christian lives, would practise the virtues that the world practises, in pursuit of its shabby aims and ends, their whole Christian character would be revolutionized. Why a boy will spend more pains in learning to whistle than half of you do in trying to cultivate your Christian character. The

secret of success religiously is precisely the same as the secret of success in ordinary things. Look at the splendid qualities that go to the making of a successful housebreaker. Audacity, resource, secrecy, promptitude, persistence, skill of hand, and a hundred others, before a man can break into your back kitchen and steal your goods.

Look at the qualities that go to the making of a successful amuser of people. Men will spend endless time and pains, and devote concentration, persistence, self-denial, diligence, to learning how to play upon some instrument, how to swing upon a trapeze, how to twist themselves into abnormal contortions. Jugglers and fiddlers, and circus-riders and dancers, and people of that sort, spend far more time upon efforts to perfect themselves in their profession than ninety-nine out of every hundred professing Christians do to make themselves true followers of Jesus Christ. They know that nothing is to be got without working for it, and there is nothing to be got in the Christian life without working for it any more than in any other.

Shut out the end for a moment, and look at the means. From the ranks of criminals, of amusers, and of the purely worldly men of business that you come in contact with every day, we may get lessons that ought to bring a blush to all our cheeks, when we think to ourselves how a wealth of intellectual and moral qualities and virtues, such as we do not bring to bear on our Christian lives, are by these men employed in regard of their infinitely smaller pursuits.

Oh! brethren, we ought to be our own rebukes, for it is not only other people who show forth in other fields of life the virtues that would make so far better Christians of us, if we used them in ours, but that we ourselves carry within ourselves the condemning contrast. Look at your daily life! Do you give anything like the effort to grow in the knowledge of your Lord

and Saviour, Jesus Christ, that you do to make or maintain your position in the world? When you are working side by side with the children of this world for the same objects, you keep step with them, and are known to be diligent in business as they are. When you pass into the church, what do you do there? Are we not ice in one half of our lives, and fire in the other? We may well lay to heart these solemn words of our Lord, and take shame when we think that not only do the unwise, who choose the world as their portion, put us to shame in their self-denial, their earnestness, their absorption, their clear insight into facts, their swiftness in availing themselves of every opportunity, their persistence and their perseverance, but that we rebuke ourselves because of the difference between the earnestness with which we follow the things that are of this world, and the languor of our pursuit after the things that are unseen and eternal.

Of course the reasons for the contrast are easy enough to apprehend, and I do not need to spend time upon them. The objects that so have power to stimulate and to lash men into energy, continuously through their lives, lie at hand, and a candle near will dim the sunshine beyond. These objects appeal to sense, and such make a deeper impression than things that are shown to the mind, as every picture-book may prove to us. And we, in regard of the aims of our Christian life, have to make a continual effort to bring and keep them before us, or they are crowded out by the intrusive vulgarities and dazzling brilliances of the present. And so it comes to pass that the men who hunt after trifles that are to perish set examples to the men who say that they are pursuing eternal realities. "Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise." Go to the men of the world, thou Christian, and do not let it be said that the devil's scholars are more studious and earnest than Christ's disciples.

III. Lastly, note the conclusive folly of the partially wise.

"In their generation," says Christ. And that is all that can be said. The circle runs round its three hundred and sixty degrees, and these people take a segment of it, say forty-five degrees, and all the rest is as non-existent. If I am to call a man a wise man out and out, there are two things that I shall have to be satisfied about concerning him. The one is, what is he aiming at; and the other, how does he aim at it? In regard of the means, the men of the world bear the bell, and carry away the supremacy. Let in the thought of the end, and things change. Two questions reduce all the world's wisdom to stark, staring insanity. The first question is, What are you doing it for? And the second question is, And suppose you get it, what then? Nothing that cannot pass the barrier of these two questions satisfactorily is other than madness, if taken to be the aim of a man's life. You have to look at the end, and the whole circumference of the circle of the human being, before you serve out the epithets of "wise" and "foolish."

I need not dwell on the manifest folly of men who give their lives to aims and ends of which I have already said that they are disproportioned to the capacity of the pursuer. Look at yourselves, brothers; these hearts of ours that need an infinite love for their satisfaction, these active spirits of ours that can never be at rest in creatural perfection; these troubled consciences of ours that stir and moan inarticulately over unperceived wounds until they are healed by Christ. How can any man with a heart and a will, and a progressive spirit and intellect find what he needs in anything beneath the stars? Whose image and superscription hath it? They say unto Him, "Cæsar's;" we say, "God's." "Render unto God the things that are God's." The man who makes anything but God his end and aim is relatively wise and absolutely foolish.

Let me remind you, too, that the same sentence of folly passes, if we consider the disproportion between the duration of the objects and of Him who makes them His aim. You live, and if you are a wise man, your treasures will be of the kind that last as long as you. "They call their lands after their own name; they think that their houses shall continue forever. They go down into the dust. Their glory shall not descend after them," and, therefore, "this, their way, is their folly."

Brethren, all that I would say may be gathered into two words. Let there be a proportion between your aims and your capacity. That signifies, let God be your end. And let there be a correspondence between your end and your means. That signifies, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind." Or else, when everything comes to be squared up and settled, the epitaph on your gravestone will deservedly be: "Thou fool!"

SPIRITUAL INSIGHT IMPOSSIBLE TO UNSPIRITUAL MEN.

BY EDMUND B. FAIRFIELD, D.D.,
LL.D. [CONGREGATIONALIST], MAN-
ISTEE, MICH.

The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.—1 Cor. ii. 14.

No painter was ever yet so unwise as to submit his work to the criticism of a committee of blind men, however learned such men might have been in history, logic, or law. Nor has it ever come to my knowledge that any company of blind men have assumed to sit in judgment upon the marvellous pictures of Murillo, Raphael, or Titian; still less that they have fallen to raving insanely because their censorship in

works of art had not been accepted as final.

Yet the world abounds in just such absurdities as this in respect to the moral, religious, and spiritual judgments which unspiritual men have essayed to pronounce upon matters utterly beyond their capacity or their conception.

The blindest man that ever groped his way through our streets would be no more unfit to pronounce upon the merits of Munkacsy's "Christ before Pilate" than Voltaire, and Paine, and Ingersoll to pass judgment upon the matters upon which they have assumed to be the teachers of the world. And sometimes it has happened that Christian people have been quite perturbed over the utterances of such men as these on subjects of which they are as incompetent to speak at all as a man born deaf would be to pass sentence upon the masterpieces of Handel or Haydn, Mozart or Beethoven.

So far as I know, men never so stultify themselves upon any other subject except religion. The men in the Patent Office in Washington, who examine the thousand models that yearly come to them, are men who have an eye for machinery. Men who didn't know a wheelbarrow from a spinning-wheel or a sewing-machine from a fanning-mill could scarcely get an appointment to such a place under any spoils system ever known to the corruptest politics.

In general it matters not how much a man may know nor how keen his power of discernment in some other line of human thought or knowledge, men give little heed to his talk unless he has capacity and culture in the very things of which he assumes to be a critic and a judge. And, of course, men of common modesty are not expected to claim any deference for themselves or their opinions outside of their special lines of study, and acquisition, and experience. But if they do, they are only met with a smile of derision. Their ignorance at once betrays them. A man of no mechanical skill seldom ventures to criti-

cise the construction of a piece of complicated machinery; but if he should, it would not very much perturb the inventor. Wisdom is justified of her children always, and un wisdom stands exposed, notwithstanding its assumptions; indeed, by the very means of its assumptions only the more exposed.

The elements of our complex nature are many; and a man may be strong in some things and weak in others. "Blind Tom," as great a musical genius as history knows, was scarcely more than an imbecile in everything else. Lord Macaulay, whose memory, whose perfection of style, whose richness of imagery, and whose honorable Parliamentary history, have given him an immortal fame and a monument in Westminster, was almost a blockhead in mathematics. Sir Isaac Newton, one of the greatest in mathematics and philosophy, had hardly patience enough to read the "Paradise Lost" of Milton, and only asked contemptuously, "What does it prove?" Milton, with all his poetical genius, might very likely have said of the "Principia," had he lived to study it, "What does *that* prove; I'm sure it is unfathomable nonsense to me!" And yet the glory of the sunset which "Blind Tom" never saw, the sublimity of "Paradise Lost," which meant nothing to Newton, the marvelous demonstrations of the "Principia," which the genius of Milton might never have comprehended, the six books of Euclid, which were such a rock of offence to Macaulay, the immortal oratorios of Wagner, which to many a college professor have been a mere jargon of senseless sounds, are all true and real and soul-feasting things to those who are competent to take them in!

But of all things in heaven and upon the earth the most true, and real, and soul-satisfying are the things spiritual and eternal that are found in the book of God and in the Gospel of Christ. Yet—"he that hath ears to hear, let him hear;" they are nothing to those that have none. He that hath eyes to

see, let him see; they are nothing to those who are stone-blind.

They are all plain to him that understandeth, but they are foolishness to him that hath no spiritual discernment.

Did they banish mathematics from Cambridge because Macaulay couldn't take it in, or from Harvard, because it was to Charles Sumner something he could not away with?

Many a great scientist has never been able to distinguish between the highest strains of music and any mere jargon of discordant sounds.

Eminent lawyers and judges have been utterly blind to the beauties of the most perfect machinery, and many an inventive genius would have been utterly swamped in the commentaries of Blackstone.

It is not strange, therefore, nor aside from the best-known laws of the human soul, the truth that the apostle announces in the text: "The unspiritual man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: to him they are foolishness: neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned."

Logic is foolishness to him who has no logical faculty. Poetry is nonsense to him who has no poetry in him. Painting is nothing to the man who cannot see, and not very much to many a seeing man who has yet no genius for that beautiful art; though to him whose soul was made for it, it may come, as to Correggio, when he saw a masterpiece of another, "I also am a painter." Music is simply a noise, greater or less, to him with no melody in his soul.

Why, then, should it be thought any argument against the reality of spiritual things that here and there a man—with large genius for invention; for oratory; for science; for philosophy, even, within a certain range; for music; for art—has no appreciation of things unseen and eternal?

It weighs less than a feather to him who revels in the demonstrations of geometry and conic sections, to know that hundreds of college students have

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never fully comprehended a single demonstration in their whole course! "Poor fellows!" is all he can say, "I pity their obtuseness!"

In like manner it weighs less than a milligramme to any Christian believer, whose soul has been illuminated from on high, that DARWIN lived and died blind as a bat to all the glories of the spiritual universe. But unlike many another blind man, Darwin did, in a measure, realize his condition. He recognized the fact that his spiritual nature had died out! He calls it "atrophy" ("a wasting away from defect of nourishment," as Webster defines it). In his boyhood he had a consciously religious nature; in later years it was starved to death! He tells us, also, that in early life he had a poetical nature. That, too, had been famished. "Atrophy!" a wasting away from defect of nourishment! He no longer saw any beauty in the most transcendent poetry, nor in music, nor in religion! God was a myth. His soul had died—"at the top!"

Alas! how many another soul has died in the same way! Great men—intellectually—some of them. But, although they still appear in the haunts of men, they are dead "at the top."

Like the vision of Nebuchadnezzar! The tree was strong, its height reached to the sky, its leaves were fair, its fruit was much. But it died, *until only the stump of the roots in the earth was left!*

Shall the Christian believer find his faith disturbed because of these great men whose souls have been lopped off—and lopped off—until nothing but the earthly was left of them? No! No! He still knows in whom he has believed.

A blind man may tell me that he sees nothing in the glory of the aurora, or of the evening sunset when over the lake the sky is all ablaze, or in Raphael's painting of the Transfiguration. "Poor man!" I say with deepest pity; that's all. I do not forthwith put out my own eyes, because he has put his out; or, peradventure, may have been

born blind. God forbid! I only cherish my eyesight with the more thankfulness and care.

When even Humboldt, and Darwin, and Ingersoll, and Renan tell me that they see nothing of the spiritual and Divine in this revelation of the Divine life and glory of the Christ of God among the sons of men—Abraham, and Moses, and Isajah, and Daniel, and Paul, and John, and Luther, and Knox, and Wesley, and Bunyan, and Edwards, and Finney, and the unnumbered hosts of the Lord Almighty, will still continue to enjoy the seraphic vision and know whom they have believed.

There are probably some people in every community of ten thousand who are ready to smile almost derisively and contemptuously when the Christian believer talks of his assurance, and unwavering hope, and unquestioning knowledge, but—poor men! let me say to them to-day that those who have knowledge will never surrender it because others have not. People who see will not make themselves blind because of the mockery of those who have no eyes.

"What is the Bible?" is the title of a book that stands in my library. And the author attempts to answer the question. A treatise on painting by one who never saw day from night would be just as fitting, and not one whit more absurd.

A legislator may wisely study the Bible to help him in making laws. The historian may ponder its incomparable histories. The sociologist may turn over its leaves to find the profoundest teachings known to the world in his department. The lover of sublime and beautiful poetry may discover here some of the rarest gems that can be gathered from all the seas and from all the lands. But only the spiritual man can discern within these lids their choicest treasures of spiritual truth, and it would be passing strange if it were otherwise.

What would your five-year-old boy think of conic sections, or your ten-

months-old baby of a treatise on optics ?

"I wonder what grandfather can find in that old book !—it's a very dull book to me." So said a young man just entering college many years ago. But when the Spirit of God had opened his eyes, the young man marvelled no more at the absorption of his grandsire in the study of the old book, and himself lived to revel in its pages more than in all things else.

Many a man has wondered that any one should ever have written of the teachings of the Bible: "More to be desired are they than gold; yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb." But when he has come to pray, "Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law," and the prayer has been answered, all is plain. And this is the way light comes. "*To have prayed well is to have studied well*" is the experience of many another beside Luther.

Had sin never come, our vision had been clear. In the beginning God made man with eyes, as He did the fish whose vision has grown dark in the Mammoth Cave. But now we are blind, and our help is in Him who waits to give us sight. Oh, that every soul might cry out as Bartimeus, "Lord, that I may receive my sight!"

"What is the Bible?" Only Christian experience can fit any person to answer that question.

I see a cherub of three short years over the way, and I ask, "What is that child?" The analytic chemist will tell me how much oxygen, and hydrogen, and nitrogen, and phosphorus enter into the forty pounds of avoirdupois of that beautiful form. The anatomist will tell me the number of bones and muscles and the names of them all that enter into her perfect body. But you are that child's mother. And I ask you to tell me what she is. While I speak the angel of death has come, and she lies by your side a corpse. Her sweet face has a heavenly smile

upon it, for she has had a vision of the Son of God, who has taken her into His arms.

"What is that child?" You need the gift of tongues to tell me. The lips cannot utter it; your tears even can scarcely suggest it. The love of father and mother alone can conceive the answer.

"What is the Bible?" Only he who has learned to love the Christ that shines through it can answer that question. And then his answer will grow as he grows, through all his years. He will find more in it as his experience deepens. This is so much more of a book to me than it was thirty years ago! Twenty years ago! Ten years ago!

I think one of the most conclusive tests of spiritual life is just this: the spiritual discernment and enjoyment of the spiritual portions of the Bible. I have seen a blind man enthused by oratory and by music, never by walking through a picture gallery. The book of God is one of wondrous fascination to him who has fellowship with the Spirit that indited it, but it has comparatively little attraction to anybody else.

And now we can see who are the best judges of Christian truth. Not always men of science nor men of literature; not always those who write history or make laws. Such men may have starved to death their better nature; they may have put out their spiritual eyes, and have no power left of spiritual discernment. Such a man may live as unconcerned about things eternal as the very beast that carries him. And he may die as stupidly as the ox.

Never is such a death-bed *triumphant*. Never is there in it any dawn of glory—never! "There are no bands in their death," but neither is there any opening of the heavenly gates. "Like brutes they live; like brutes they die!" The better part of them may have died out long ago. Their souls are lost unless, like blind Bartimeus, they cry out, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy

upon me!" Thank God, there is possible salvation even for them; for He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through Him.

My friends, let the preacher offer to you once again, in the name of Him who holds the keys of death and hell, this eternal life. He who opened the eyes of him that was born blind will give you vision if you cry to Him for it. I pray you let not blindness and death eternal be your destiny. It is so often true that these glorious things are hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes, because in men's pride they will not seek after God.

One word more. It is this: the only proper test of the Gospel of Christ is the trial of it.

And now I appeal to you as dying men. There is no harm in this Gospel of Jesus. No soul was ever yet made worse by believing it. No Christian ever yet, as he came near to death, regretted his faith or recanted his trust in Christ. Many have put it to the test through long years of trial. As reasonable men I submit to you that you are bound, before you reject it, to try it. Suppose when Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, and invited all who were bitten to look and live, that you had been there. You might have said, "I don't understand it. I can't possibly see how looking upon that brazen serpent can save my life." The sufficient answer would have been, "Try it. Many who were bitten three days ago have looked, and they are healed. Your mother is one of them. Your wife is one of them. Your sister was dying yesterday, and behold she lives. Your neighbors have tried it and they are cured. Not one has looked and died—not one. Try it."

My friend, you must come just as you are—blind, and deaf, and dead, and He will give you sight and hearing and life eternal. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, be-

cause they are spiritually discerned." But in Christ Jesus the blind receive their sight, the deaf are made to hear, and the dead are raised to life. To-day may this Scripture be fulfilled to you who hear me.

THE STREETS OF THE CITY.

By A. C. DIXON, D.D. [BAPTIST],
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

Seest thou not what they do in the streets?

—Jer. vii. 17.

THE word city is mentioned in the Bible about two hundred and seventy-five times. Much of history, sacred and profane, has to do with cities. Take from the Scriptures all that is said about Jerusalem, Tyre and Sidon, Babylon and Nineveh, Sodom and Gomorrah, and you have greatly reduced its size. Rome, not Italy, once ruled the world. As in the past, so in the present, cities are the "nerve centres and the storm centres" of civilization. And these centres are increasing in size and intensity. To save the cities is to save the country.

The word street occurs about one hundred times in the Bible, which at least suggests that the streets are an important factor in city life. We propose now to look at the streets from three points of view.

I. *As an Index to Character.*

The streets are the pulse of commercial prosperity. The man who goes from a dull, sluggish place to a city of great business activity must quicken his pace, or get run over. Loafers on the street are a sure sign of approaching death. Happy the place afflicted with them if the rush of life along the streets becomes strong enough to sweep them into the cellars.

The street on which a man lives is no index to his character. It does not even indicate the amount of money he has. Not a few proud families stint their table to pay their rent on a costly

street, in order to make or keep up appearances. Their fine street, to those who know the facts, is an index of their pretensions. Another man who has plenty of money lives on a cheap street, because he is too niggardly to pay rent for more comfortable quarters. To those who know him the street is an index of his meanness. A Christian man may choose to live on a cheap street, because he prefers to save money with which to do good. His street indicates self-denying liberality. On fine streets sin and littleness live side by side with virtue and magnanimity. And on the cheap streets the good and the bad live close together. Your daughter may marry a brown-stone front and get what she married, while the man she pretended to be marrying may be as vile a creature as walks the earth. Your daughter, on the other hand, may marry a man who enters his house over wooden steps, and find in him worth that money cannot purchase.

What can be seen on the streets of a city, however, is to a great extent an index of the character of its people. Dirty streets suggest dirty morals. If indecent hand-bills pollute the streets of a city, it indicates either sinful apathy, or a very low moral tone.

II. *The Streets of a City are not Only an Index, but a Test of Character.*

To walk down one of our streets is to some men like going into a furnace. Their moral courage is tested at nearly every step. There is within them a demon of drink that can be waked from his sleep by the smell of a beer barrel. I know a Christian minister who says that he sometimes walks a square or two out of his way, to keep from passing a pile of barrels on the street. He was once a drunkard. The appetite still remains. Sights and smells, repulsive to others, only stir the demon in his flesh. His children are growing up with an inherited appetite, to be tempted to ruin every time they walk down the streets. A prominent lawyer

in the South, who had been a drunkard twenty years, professed conversion and reformed. For more than a year he lived a consistent life. But he fell into the gutter again, and died there. I shall never forget the earnestness with which he one day said to me, "Oh, sir, I should not have fallen, if it had not been for the miserable grogshop I had to pass every day on the way to my office." Jeremiah said of Damascus, and it is true of the cities of today: "Her young men are fallen in the streets" (Jer. xlix. 26). The traps of our streets are so thickly and adroitly set that it is well-nigh impossible for the unprotected young man to escape. Isaiah said, "There is a crying for wine in the streets" (Isa. xxiv. 11). To-day the wine cries for drinkers, and men are organized with government at their backs to make the cry as loud and effective as possible. Jeremiah said of Jerusalem: "According to the number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set up altars to that shameful thing, even altars to burn incense unto Baal" (Isa. xi. 13). But the altars of this fiery Moloch of Rum must have human blood, if the priests who stand behind the counter must break hearts to get it. A deep-sea diver laid his hand on something soft, and curious to know what it was, he took hold of it to examine it. Fatal curiosity! The long tentacles of an octopus reached out and grasped him in its deadly embrace. The friends above, feeling the struggle, drew him to the surface, to find only a corpse still in the clutches of the monster. Many a young man has come from his pure country home to the great city, and, prompted by a curiosity excited by the signs on the streets, has entered one of these homes of the devil-fish. Soon its slimy tentacles are wrapped around him, soul and body.

There is a class of men in the community for whom we have the highest respect, so long as they keep to their legitimate business. They are the middle-men between us and the physicians. They have in their hands the issues of

life and death. Ignorance or malice on their part may destroy whole families. We take medicine from their hands without knowing its ingredients. Such men ought to be above reproach. To intimate against their moral character is a foul wrong, unless facts compel us to do it. Some of them we know to be true and tried. But truth demands that we say there are others of the craft who deserve the scorn of all good people. We refer to the druggists who sell on the counter with their soda water the accursed stuff which they, as well-informed men, know causes more diseases than it cures. They do not sell it as a medicine, though we have recently heard of one selling five gallons to an old toper on the prescription of a physician. They sell it to make money. Men and women—yes, women who live on good streets—who would not be caught entering a saloon go to these respectable drug-stores and drink themselves drunk. Let not Christian people patronize such men. Go clear across the city to have your prescriptions filled rather than enter their gilded dens.

III. *As a Field for the Display of Character.*

Jeremiah lamented that the Nazarites were not known in the street (Lam. iv. 8). The Nazarites were supposed to be among the most consecrated people in the land. If they were not known in the streets, it was good proof that their influence was not felt as far as it ought to have been. To be known in the church, but not on the street as Christians is a bad sign. The men who meet us on the street and know us in business relations ought to have no doubt that we are Christians. Religion is not like some clothes, simply kept for Sunday wear. If it does not wear well on the street, it is made of bad material. It will pay us in the long run to lay it aside, and get a better.

The streets are a good place for active Christian work. After the lord of the feast had invited the well-to-do to

the supper, and had been refused on some silly plea, he said to his servants, "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in hither the poor and the maimed and the halt and the blind" (Luke xiv. 21). There are many on our streets who are not rich enough to trade in lands or oxen, and they are so low down that no one will think of marrying them. Their souls are as valuable as if they had millions of money. They need sympathy and love. It may be some of us have grown weary listening to the excuses offered by those who have plenty of what this world can give. Let us go then to the streets and tell the poor homeless ones of a home in the skies, and of Him who will give it to them for the asking.

And there are many on the street not so poor, who will gladly listen to you. A word to John B. Gough on the street changed his whole course, and made him the power for temperance that he was. A word to Jerry McAuley on the street brought him to repentance and gave to New York one of its most useful men. Ezra led in his day a great street revival. "And all the people gathered together as one man in the street" (Neh. viii. 1), where Ezra preached and the power of God moved upon them. Jesus was an open-air preacher. So were the apostles. Do not despise the man who gathers about him a few on the street corner and offers to them the water of life. He is imitating Him whose voice was not heard on the streets for praise, but whose voice was often heard on the streets for instruction and salvation. "Wisdom uttereth her voice on the streets" (Prov. i. 20). The great modern evangelistic movement began in the fields and on the streets, where Whitefield and Wesley preached to the thousands who were not allowed to hear them in their churches. There would be a revolution in our church life, if one half of our members would go to the streets and work for the salvation of men as Jesus and many of His followers have done. They would, of

course, sometimes make themselves disagreeable; but are we not too agreeable to the world in our conformity to its fashions and unbelief? We need not go with drums and banners. The kingdom of heaven is not taken by such violence. And yet the Lord does bless the humble men who work on the streets even in such objectionable ways. He honors disorderly life more than orderly death. Dignity is not numbered among the Christian graces. The word is used but four times in Scripture, and only once applied to a good man, if Mordecai can be considered such. Reuben was the excellency of dignity, while he was unstable, as water, running toward sin. Solomon said, "Folly is set in great dignity" (Ecl. x. 6). Oh, for a wave of divine power that will make us forget our dignity, and go to work that "by all means we may save some."

Heaven is a city with golden streets. Hell has no streets. It is a place of disorder and confusion. To which will we go? To the place of sin and confusion, or the place of purity and order?

THE GENESIS OF GREATNESS.

BY PRESIDENT GEORGE E. REED, D.D.
[METHODIST EPISCOPAL], DICKINSON
COLLEGE, CARLISLE, PA.

Thy gentleness hath made me great.—
Psalm xviii. 35.

CRITICS are not agreed as to the period when David wrote this psalm, some placing it at an early period, and others at the close of his long and illustrious reign. Still others—and their view seems to me most satisfactory—believe that this triumphant song was frequently used by the royal singer at different periods of his eventful career. But all are agreed that it has no superior in grandeur of thought and expression. Hengstenberg calls it the great hallelujah of David's life, and one with which he retires from the theatre of ac-

tion. He tells the story of his deliverance in words of glowing feeling and a rhythmic flow more than Ossian-like. He ascribes his gladness and greatness to God, his great deliverer. David was at his best when he wrote these words. His heart was then like a watered garden, when showers cause the fragrance of plants and flowers to exhale. He was lifted to his highest level. There were times when he was not fitted to pen such an ode. There had been times when mephitic vapors from sensuality and passion rose up and made the air so murky that God had to explode His thunderbolts of wrath and burn the fetid air with lightnings. Still, he who could write that tender and penitential fifty-first psalm proved himself to be a man after God's own heart. Let us look at two central thoughts suggested by the text:

1. The character of true greatness.

2. The genesis, or source, of its achievement.

The world has admired and even deified the human, earthward side of greatness and overlooked the spiritual, Godward side. Men have exalted power, wealth, intellectual superiority above character or moral greatness, founded in faith, purity, and trust in God. The epithet "Great" was put to the name of Alexander, to Frederick of Prussia, and to others whom the world calls heroes. Well, they were greater than their fellows. They towered above their associates. But a truer standard is now used by which human achievements are gauged. Since the religion of Jesus Christ has prevailed, men are beginning to put character in the light of His matchless excellence. How far like Him is any admired character? This done, there are crowns that are taken off. This done, the illusion fades from many a brilliant career. We admire the genius of Alexander, but when we read of his gluttony and drunkenness, and judge of his life by a Gospel standard, the glamour is gone. We appreciate the herculean efforts of Frederick in his political ambition to enlarge

and strengthen his domain, but the littlenesses and meannesses of his private life show us that though he was great, he was not good. We are dazzled by the meteor-like career of Bonaparte, from Corsica, till he held in his grasp, apparently, the destinies of nearly all Europe; but when we reflect on his treatment of Josephine and other cruelties and crimes of his life, we refuse to call him truly great. There was no true moral symmetry of life. So of "the greatest, wisest, meanest of mankind," Lord Bacon. Measured by a scriptural standard they shrivel and are dwarfed.

It is a cheering sign that Christian communities demand some degree of moral greatness in those called to posts of power. An atheist or open infidel could not be chosen President of these States, or a governor. It would not be likely that he could be chosen chief magistrate of any large municipality. Society demands moral goodness as well as intellectual power. No man is regarded great who spells God with a little "g," or "myself" with a big M. The greatest nations of the globe are Christian. The most influential statesmen are reverent in their attitude, if not professedly converted men. Gladstone has made public reference to this significant fact of the present political history of the world. He himself, untitled and out of office, is a conspicuous example of the power of moral greatness. Scholar he is, with a vast mind, absorbing truth and holding facts with an encyclopædic grasp. Financier he is, statesman and diplomat, but he is great, not so much in the breadth, wealth, and power of his mental life and acquisitions, as he is in this, he represents the conscience of England! The old man eloquent has strong faith in God. Every morning he gives a half hour at the altar of his God to the nursing of that faith and to seeking of God the guidance he needs. He is worthy the prefix which we cannot give to Alexander, "Great." Bismarck is another man of rugged faith in the

God of his fathers. In an eloquent speech not long ago, he said to his countrymen that a million men guarded them from French and a million more from Russian aggression, and yet a million more stood by their altars and hearthstones, but above all these and more than the power of patriotism throughout fatherland, "We Germans fear God! Fearing Him, we have nothing else to fear!"

Young men, remember that true greatness is moral goodness. I say to you as the great novelist Scott, when his eyes were closing in death, said to his friend Lockhart, "Lockhart, be a good man!" This is a greatness in comparison with which pecuniary treasures are contemptible, and political ambitions and preferments are not to be mentioned.

2. What is the source of this true greatness?

David is here reviewing his life. He thinks of his shepherd days at Bethlehem, of the hour when he wore the royal purple, of war, rebellion, defeat, and victory. He is getting at the force that wrought in all these years and led him safely on and up, that has developed an inward life as well as an outward opulence and power. It is God. "Thy gentleness hath made me great." This word is translated condescension or benignity. It is gracious kindness to one's inferior. The sun pours its fervid rays on the earth, kissing its flowers and fruits into beauty, and ripening its bounty, year by year. So the face of God, like Divine sunshine, calls out of you and me all that is good and really great. We realize this fact as we muse on the Divine love, so unwearied and continuous through our lives. Here is a son grown to man's estate. He comes home to his aged mother and, as of old, sits down at her feet and looks up into the thin, wrinkled face and says, "Mother, I want to tell you that all I now have of goodness, purity, and largeness of life I owe, under God, to you. I have come to lay the crown, mother, at your feet, God

bles you!" I hope you all have done so, or will do so, young men, who have mothers still, who love and pray for you.

David was sorely chastened. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "The way of transgressors is hard." The law taught him these things, but the law did not save him. The law defines sin. It limits life and isolates the offender, but there is no saving power in it. I have heard men preach hell with terrific power, and paint its torments in lurid colors, but souls were not saved by such preaching. Not that we are to ignore future retribution. Christ spoke of it as something fearful beyond description. He kept it, however, in the background, and put Himself evermore in the foreground. "He who hath seen Me, hath seen the Father," who so loved the world as to provide salvation and so be just while He justified the believer. The law is but a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world.

Remember our Lord's dealing with the woman caught in sin and brought before Him as though He were to judge and condemn. He was silent. Had He chosen then to open His lips, what blistering words of condemnation might have been hurled at her accusers; but He was silent. Being pressed, He spoke at length, "He who is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone!" Convicted in their own consciences by the startling words and the solemn manner of the Master, one by one they slunk away as ghostly shadows fade from view. The culprit is alone with Christ. Sin faces spotless purity. Now Christ can probe the wound and show the sinner the hideousness of her sin. But He does no such thing. She feels her guilt. She feels what hell is. As her eye meets His she hears the forgiving words of the Lord, a new hope spring up and a new life begins. His condescension has made her great. His infinite clemency and grace lift her to a new level.

Let us all strive to realize that God's eye of love rests on us. He sees our joy and grief, our loss and gain, our sin and our sorrow. Let us ever keep the windows of our life open to Him, so that we may individually verify the precious experience of David that God's benignant grace has made us truly great.

WORKING TOGETHER WITH GOD.

BY REV. R. MOFFETT [DISCIPLE],
CLEVELAND, O.

We are laborers together with God.—1
Cor. iii. 9.

WE are delighted with the sweet invitation of Jesus, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The thought of home and rest and peace enters very largely into our song and exhortation. We sometimes forget that the same Saviour who invites us to rest invites us also to labor. "Go, work in my vineyard."

The past Church has given a large share of attention to settling questions of orthodoxy, but the present Church is growing more and more into the working Church. In fact, we are living in a time of intense activity. The world's business runs by steam and electricity, and gets its orders by lightning. It is a hurrying, hustling, rustling world; and if the Church does not come somewhat abreast of this activity, it will not have, and ought not to have, the respect of business people.

I. WORK.—1. *Strengthens faith.*— "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God" (John vii. 17). Christian experience fortifies against infidelity. The man of scientific ability cannot convince me, against my years of experience, that water is unwholesome, or that its Creator is a blunderer.

2. *Strengthens spiritual life.*—The little child craves activity quite as much as food. Such a child may be never so

well fed, and clothed, and sheltered, yet if it have not opportunity to exercise, it will be a dwarf. So work is a means of spiritual development and growth to every child of God.

3. *Purifies the life.*—Society is kept pure by activity, just as the ocean and atmosphere are kept pure by the winds and waves. Satan always finds some mischief for idle hands to do. The Church in which all minds and hands are busy planning and executing works of benevolence and missions will be a pure Church. It will not have time to criticise, complain, or gossip.

4. *Employment and enjoyment go hand in hand.*—The working Church is the happy Church, and the happy Church helps to keep members from backsliding.

So it is that work becomes a means of grace, and therefore is never in vain, because it is always more "blessed to give than to receive." The working-meeting, the giving-meeting, these are just as valuable to the soul itself as the prayer meeting.

II. TOGETHER.—We may say this is the difficult problem. There are so many wills and tastes—so great difference in culture and habit—that "working together" is almost impracticable.

(a) And yet when we look at the Christian at the time of surrender, it will not seem so difficult. Every true convert begins the service of the Lord, as did Saul of Tarsus, with the question, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" and this becomes the first, middle, and ending question of the converted man's life. He becomes a member of the body of which Jesus Christ is head. As the members of a human body are controlled by the will—the head—so must be also the members of Christ's body. No jealousies between such members. No complaining one of another, but each bearing the burden assigned, however great or however humble, as if no other member could do the work so well.

(b) And then nothing will help to unite workers so much as a high appre-

ciation of the work to be done. One soul is worth more than all the world beside; and millions perish daily for lack of the bread of life.

(c) In view of the fact that Jesus prayed that His disciples might be one, and His apostles have exhorted to the same end, may we not rejoice in the growing tendency to the union of all the lovers of Jesus Christ, and may we not hope to see the time when they "all shall be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me"?

III. WITH GOD.—Workers together with God. No man has a right to engage in a work in which he cannot ask God's presence and blessing. For this reason no Christian can manufacture or sell intoxicating liquors as a beverage. Much more must we realize God's presence and blessing in the advancement of His kingdom. He has taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come." He has promised to be with us "always, to the end of the world." We may be sure that God will not allow the Son's mission to fail. He can convert calamities into blessing, defeats into victories, crosses into crowns. All the great men of God have been men of prayer. They realized that one may plant, another water, but God giveth the increase. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." John Knox cried, "Give me Scotland or I die," and the Lord gave him Scotland before he died. Christ's pledge of presence and help is a pledge of success; for Almightyness supplements the weakness of His saints. John, a prisoner on Patmos, realized his own weakness, but saw Jesus panoplied in light and power and glory moving among the churches; and again he saw how mighty his conquest—the redeemed coming out of "all nations, and people, and kindreds, and tongues, a host that no man could number."

THE value of orthodoxy depends on the standard of orthodoxy. To the Pharisees Jesus was heterodox.—*Stuckenberg.*

THE SLAIN LAMB.

BY REV. PROFESSOR D. STEELE, D.D.
[REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN], PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.—
Rev. v. 12.

JOHN was the bosom friend of Christ. To his affectionate, confiding nature may be traced the intimacy formed with his Lord. Through him, the beloved disciple, we have disclosed the inner life of the Lord Jesus. In Gospel and epistle John makes Christ the central figure. When isolated from men, exiled at Patmos, he was not cut off from Christ, but made to witness the sublime revelations of his enthroned Redeemer, as well as the events of coming history exhibited as an opening panorama, even down to the end of time. He sees the vials poured, the trumpets blown, and Satan bound. He beholds the bewildering glory of the eternal world and hears the song, "Worthy the Lamb." Let us consider

1. The Lamb slain.

2. The Lamb worshipped as worthy.

There is nothing dubious or defective in this matter. The statement is clear. John the Baptist pointed to Jesus, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God." The lamb is an emblem of purity and innocence. Christ is holy, harmless, and undefiled. We eat the flesh of a lamb and wear its fleece. Christ's flesh is meat indeed, and His blood our drink, spiritually. So, too, we are to put on the Lord Jesus. The sacrifice of Jesus delivers us from wrath, for His death cancels the debt due to justice. The demands of the law are met in our surety, and we are delivered from wrath. How was He slain?

First. He was slain in the counsel of God. His purpose who can annul? It was "before the foundation of the world." He saw man ruined through their federal head. He determined to save. That was a marvellous consultation had between the three persons of the blessed Trinity. God gave up His

Son, by eternal, inevitable, and necessary generation. Amazing act of generosity! Where can its equal be found? He doomed His Son to ignominious death. He furnished the sword of justice.

Secondly. He was slain in promise and in type. The seed of the woman is to bruise the serpent's head. This is the germ of all succeeding promises, all of which are exceedingly precious. The serpent bruises His heel; that is, the humanity of Christ. In David's psalms, in Zechariah, Isaiah, and Daniel we learn more of Him who was to be slain for our offences and cut off "not for Himself." He is the Paschal Lamb. The true day of Atonement was hastening, when the promise and type were to be fulfilled on Calvary.

Thirdly. He was actually slain. Infidelity has denied this, but the fact stands. He climbed the fatal hill, being straitened until the sacrifice was accomplished. The cross was erected. The nails, forged in hell, were driven as the murderous hammer fell. Blood streams from His hands and feet. The cross becomes as a rock against which the waves of the curse dash in vain; the lightning-rod that turns away the wrath of God from us, which otherwise would have slain us. The Lord of glory dies. The graves open. There is a preternatural chill in the air. Legions of hell rejoice as He cries, "My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Thus was the Lamb slain.

2. The Lamb who was slain is worthy of praise.

First, because of His essential dignity. This meek and lowly Jesus was also kingly. This root out of a dry ground was also the fairest among the children of men. He who to some had no form or comeliness was really "altogether lovely."

By Him all things were made and by Him all things consist, stand together. The universe reflects the glory of Christ. Great is the dignity and mystery. He, too, is Prophet, Priest, and King. His name shall endure forever. When

Cæsars are forgotten and Alexanders pass into obscurity, the Lamb that was slain shall still reign in undying renown. The orchestra of heaven and the shouts of the redeemed proclaim Him King of kings and Lord of lords.

Secondly. His interposition on our behalf makes Him worthy of praise. When restitution was demanded, Christ met the claim. How could God be just and yet justify the sinner? When the Father asked, "Who shall go for us?" the Son replied, "Here am I, send Me; I delight to do Thy will." We admire the self-forgetfulness of men in philanthropic endeavor, but it is not worthy to be compared with the self abnegation of the Redeemer of the world.

Thirdly. His exaltation makes Jesus worthy of praise. He hath been "highly exalted" to the right hand of the Father. In the name of Jesus every knee shall bow to pray, for Him hath God made Lord of all. He drank of the brook by the way, and therefore hath He lifted up the head. To Him are given dominion and glory and power and blessing. All in heaven worship the Lamb who was slain. Shall not we join them in this adoration? Yes, let us kiss the Son, lest He be angry.

Finally. Christ is represented as receiving the homage of the whole creation. All in heaven and in earth and under the earth join in this recognition of the Lamb that was slain. This is with the approval of God the Father. Then we should not delay to bring our worship and service to Christ.

In conclusion, I remark, first. Here is revealed the love of God the Father. He so loved the world He gave Christ to die. The apostle also says, "He gave Himself for us." Here is love which is measureless. Paul prays that we may be able to comprehend its length, breadth, height and depth, yet adds that it passes knowledge.

Secondly. We infer the value of the atonement. "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift." We cannot compute the worth of this infinite sacrifice. We walk on the brink of an ocean

of fathomless depth, as Newton said he stood by the sea-shore picking up, as it were, mere pebbles of truth, knowing little of treasures hid.

Thirdly. This memorial supper is an appropriate recognition of the work of Christ's atoning grace. Men keep the deeds of heroes in mind by memorial observances. They build shrines and rear pillars, but here is a sublimer event that calls us to more solemn and reverent recognition of the Lamb that was slain for our salvation.

Lastly. I offer you this Saviour as your only hope. Do not pass by with indifference, but seek His favor, which is life, and His lovingkindness, which is better than life. In the love and favor of Jesus Christ, the Lamb that was slain, you are safe for time and safe for eternity.

THE SILENCE OF CHRIST.

BY JAMES BRAND, D.D. [CONGREGATIONALIST], OBERLIN, O.

Matt. xxvii. 11-14.

It is sometimes the case that silence is a characteristic of greatness. It is the speech of men that usually betrays their weakness; their silence suggests their strength. To speak when falsely accused is easy and human; to keep silence is God-like. The same principle is perceived in the person and government of God Himself. God is not great because He is silent, but silent because He is great.

I. The silence of Christ before Pilate was a *natural expression of His own self-respect.*

II. The silence of Christ reveals His abiding *faith in truth.* Faith in truth is not superficial, but fundamental in all great souls. The sceptical mind may cry out under the knife of adversity, but the soul that trusts in truth can afford to be quiet. Silence in this case was specially significant. Christ could have had no reason to trust in force, or in legislation, or in philosophy, but when He laid the foundations

of His kingdom on truth, *as truth*, the gates of hell could not prevail against it. A soul planted on truth is planted on God. A fact is a fact, though the universe should deny it. Results might be slow—what of that, it was truth. Tribunals might condemn; it was truth. Soldiers might crucify; nations might deny; individuals might reject; but it was truth, and truth is God.

III. Christ's silence before Pilate reveals His *faith in humanity*. He saw that man had placed himself by the act of sin in an abnormal position, and hence was patient with him. He knew that humanity could not always deny itself. Human passions are like the breakers on the beach. They roar up fiercely against the shore, but ultimately glide back again to the level of the deep. A soul may, in its proud delirium of sin, thrust away the cross and decide against Jesus Christ, but God is in the very make of the soul, and it must some time, somewhere, revoke that decision. The children of the prophets were laughing at his claims, and were certain that He had failed, that He could not lift men by dying for them, but He by His silence said, No, I know men better than they know themselves, so He "answered him to never a word."

IV. The Saviour's silence points backward to His inner life and reveals a spirit prepared for the trial hour by years of discipline.

V. Christ's silence suggests comprehensively His own conception of the meaning of His mission. Some claim that Christ's central idea in coming into the world was to teach. Others, that it was simply to give an example of perfect living. Others, that it was to make a great appeal to the moral sense of the race. Others still appear to think they have found the whole of it in Christ's sacrificial death. What is suggested by the silence before Pilate? Christ's earthly life was now to close. He had spoken of heaven and of hell, of sin, of God, of immortality. There was nothing more to say. His life was before the world forever, and He had

no alterations to make. His own conception of His mission, then, was just what His life and death declares it to be. He *was* a teacher. He was an example. He did make a moral appeal. He was an atoning sacrifice in His death to meet the demands of the moral law, but no single one of these expresses the whole of it. They are all true; all read out of that miracle of history, His life and death; all arcs of the one perfect circle. That circle is the salvation of humanity.

THE GLORY OF YOUNG MEN.

By J. C. JACKSON, D.D. [METHODIST
EPISCOPAL], COLUMBUS, O.

The glory of young men is their strength.
—PROV. XX. 29.

IDEALS of manhood have differed with every age. Physical strength was the primary glory of the race. Samson among the Hebrews, Hector among the Trojans, Achilles among the Greeks, and Richard the Lion-hearted among the Crusaders, were as valuable as batteries or battalions now are. Until Christian civilization changed it, the measure of the man was his muscle, and his passport to respect was his fighting weight.

But we live in a different era. Gunpowder and dynamite have abolished physical differences and put all men on a common level. It is not brawn but brain which tells in this age. Christianity has subordinated the material to the mental. We measure men around the hat-band instead of the waist-band. The spirit which makes the leader among savages, makes the bully and the desperado among civilized people. The prize-fighter, whose glory is in his solid flesh, the amount of tough meat which he has grown upon his skeleton, is in our day an outlaw. "There is nothing great in the world but man; there is nothing great in man but mind."

2. But there are two kinds of mental

strength—a lower and a higher order, the intellectual and the spiritual. There is something better than a clear, cold intellectuality. Man has a heart as well as a head, emotions as well as thoughts. Some of the most atrocious characters in history were men of giant intellect. The Duke of Alva was accomplished and scholarly. As mental strength is higher in rank than the physical, so moral strength is higher than the merely mental. The true teaching of this text for us, then, is that "the glory of young men is their *moral* strength." The most valuable possession in this world for a young man is strength of character. With it poverty, obscurity and ill-health are not misfortunes. Without it wealth, fame, and physical endurance are not blessings. But how little this is appreciated by youth.

3. Every boy longs to be a man. It is a legitimate ambition. But does he know manhood's perils? The fiercest passions and appetites attack the inexperienced soul in the transition from youth to manhood. Forcibly the inquiry arises, "Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way," or keep it clean? Physical force is of no avail here; it intensifies rather than subdues his inner foes. Mental strength counts for nothing; genius and corruption were twin tenants of Byron's heart. There is but one answer—"By taking heed thereto, according to thy word." Nothing but the grace of God assisting the human will can prevail to save a young man against the siren voices of sin. It is an incalculable gain for all after years to escape moral pollution in youth. The greatest strength is secured, not by repairing that which has been broken, but by preserving the original structure unfractured and uninjured. The moral innocence of childhood grown into manhood is a thousandfold stronger than reformed manhood, built out of the fragments which were gathered up from the wreck and ruin of the former self. This is true even after regeneration. The greatest spiritual strength

is born out of that moral strength which never has been broken by vice. The converted drunkard or libertine may stand, but it is at a constant hazard. Reformed men never have the moral strength that those possess who from childhood have been sober and chaste. Young men, preserve your moral strength of undefiled youth.

4. The great arena for the development of moral strength is in conquering one's self. In the Bible's trinity of evil—"the world, the flesh, and the devil"—the body with its appetites and passions is placed as the central foe because it is the medium through which the others must reach us. Paul says of his self-subjugation, "I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage." That was the key to all his victories. How sad for Ireland, and how humiliating to humanity, was the awful downfall of her patriot leader! Mr. Parnell had the mental strength to carry the project of his country's disenfranchisement further than ever had been done before, but his lack of moral strength ruined him and his cause in the very hour of victory. Delilah has again shorn Samson of his locks, and his strength has departed from him.

5. But how shall this hardest of victories be won—the victory over self? Remember Constantine's vision. So with you. By the cross of Christ thou shalt conquer. Crucify yourself, and you shall rise triumphant over your slain foes of sin, and ascend the throne of moral sovereignty. Bring your body under by the power of the master *will*, and keep it in subjection through the guards of watchfulness and prayer.

It is easy to go with the multitude, following the devil's scripture, "When you are in Rome, do as the Romans do." It is the man who dares to stand alone in the right, and to be singular, who is worthy of that distinction which is sure in the end to elevate him above his fellows—Daniel among the Persian satraps. Even the ungodly admire moral strength in others. There is no serious sensible father or mother, though them-

selves irreligious, but would rather their son were a constant attendant of the prayer-meeting than of the theatre, or an interested reader of the Bible than of Ingersoll. The testimony of the unrighteous to the worth of religion as a moral armor is an exceedingly valuable testimony.

Let all, then, covet and cultivate moral strength. Oh, for a holy pride on this point! that we can say *No!* to evil solicitation and maintain it. We cannot all be athletes, and if we could, "bodily exercise profiteth little." We cannot all have genius, and if we could, there is something better. We can all have moral strength, and "he that subdueth his own spirit is better than he that taketh the city." In the midst of venality and corruption, when jobs and bribes are rife, when tricks of trade are increasing till it almost seems that every man has his price, we can stand firm. "Let no man take thy crown." "Be not thou a partaker of other men's sins." "Keep thyself pure." "I have written unto you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the world."

THE PENITENT THIEF.

BY R. P. KERR, D. D. [PRESBYTERIAN],
RICHMOND, VA.

*Remember me when Thou comest into
Thy kingdom.*—Luke xxiii. 42.

THIS sacred scene brings us to the central heart of Christianity, to the great sacrament of the world's history, the cross of Jesus Christ. It has its vital relations to us personally, and deserves our serious thought. It is a strange spectacle. Earth was moved and heaven was still more intent. Here is the glorious Son of God placed between two thieves, a strange setting for a priceless jewel. He is numbered with transgressors. Such are we, all of us. He takes His place with us, transgres-

sors, that we may be numbered with His saints in life everlasting, written in the Lamb's book of life. These malefactors differentiate mankind. All are transgressors, but some accept the Lord Jesus and some turn their backs upon Him. Studying the attitude of this penitent thief, we may ask three questions:

1. What did he think of himself?
2. What did he think of Christ?
3. What did Christ think of him?

We are apt to be more lenient in judging ourselves than in weighing the actions of others. We are ingenious in self-exculpation and severe on our fellows, instead of being exact with ourselves, whom we know, and charitable with others, whose motives we do not know. We, if we have the spirit of Christ, the spirit of gentleness, will improve with meekness, and remember our own exposure to temptation. This repentant thief said that he deserved to die. He realized his guilt. He extenuated, palliated nothing. I once ministered to a man in this city condemned to die, who showed his sincere penitence not only by withdrawing his denial of guilt, but in demanding his penalty and discouraging an appeal for pardon. He said that the cause of morality required his execution. He died, I believe, a true penitent. The felon on the cross asked not a great thing, a throne in heaven, a seat beside the King; he asked not that his pardon be heralded in heaven; he asked not even a glance of Christ's imperial eye, but only a thought, "Remember me." There had been a great revolution in his heart, and this is seen when we ask.

2. What he thought of Christ. He accepted the Redeemer as his all and addressed him as his Lord, then and there. He believed in the assumptions of Christ, that He was a King and had a kingdom. He looked beyond the cross and shame. His faith conquered every doubt and fear. He believed with all his heart. He may have heard Jesus preach and heard the gracious call, "Come unto Me all ye that labor

and are heavy laden." He may have even then had in hand his ill-gotten gains, but weary of sin, accepted of the grace of God. The other thief, too, may have heard, but why God softens one heart and not another we know not; we know that one received and one rejected Christ.

"Remember me," as if he had said, "No word is needed, for Thou art able to *think* me into heaven." Faith is the gift of God. Its origin is heavenly. It seeks its source. A kite carried the thread across the chasm where now the Suspension Bridge at Niagara is built. Stronger and stronger cords and wires followed. Had a bird been taken from its nest on either side, and allowed to fly from the opposite side back to its home, bearing a silken thread, the act would have pictured the movement of faith flying from the soul back to God. Thus heaven and earth are linked. Prayer and praise mount up the shining pathway, and finally at death the soul goes joyfully up. Though in the valley of the shadow of death, there is no fear where faith triumphs.

3. What did Christ think of him?

He welcomed the penitent with the hearty assurance, "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." The word recalls a garden, an Edenic abode of purity and beauty. Where is it and what is it? It is enough to say that it is to be with Christ. "Where I am, there ye shall be." There is no delay, "to-day—with Me!" In this hour of shame and pain, this public confession of the penitent thief must have been a sweet solace to Jesus. He felt the need of human sympathy. When on the Mount of Transfiguration, He had converse with those two monumental men of the Old Testament, Moses and Elijah, and the theme of remark was "His decease." So in the garden He said, "Can ye not watch with Me one hour?" Now He was treading the wine-press alone. All His disciples forsook Him and fled, but here was one poor, believing sinner on the cross. He could not fly. His dying testimony

of love and loyalty to his Lord was sweet. A king has sometimes knighted a brave soldier on the battle-field for heroism, perhaps dying to save his king. But grander than "Rise, Sir Knight!" is the word of Jesus to the pardoned malefactor, bidding him to rise that very hour to his crown of glory, worn with his Lord above.

Fame, wealth, glory are empty possessions, but love, holiness, eternal life, the gift of God, these are substantial and incalculable. Then make this Master your Master, this Saviour yours to-day! You will then enter with Him into glory eternal. The sun goes not down alone. There is an evening star that with it sets. Jesus chose not an imperial Cæsar for the companion of His setting hour. He, the Sun of Righteousness, took not the high-priest, not Mary, His mother, or some cherished disciple, but this outcast, this criminal, lonely and despised. As the diver brings up a pearl from ocean's depths, He took this soul from a miry pit. As the setting sun transforms and transfigures the misty clouds to golden gates and pavements, as it were leading into heaven, so the Sun of Righteousness here glorifies sunken and debased humanity.

Called once in great haste to see a dying woman on the upper floor of a poor, tenement-house, I answered her anxious query as how she might be saved by saying, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ;" and the quick following query as to how she might believe, by telling her of the penitent thief. "What did he say?" came back to me, for she never had heard of him before. When I told it to her, she solemnly repeated it over, and then again, with her last gasping breath, "Lord—remember—ME!" and died. As I folded her pulseless hands across her breast, I felt that a new trophy of redeeming grace had been secured. Will you not, dear friend, and you, this hour accept this great salvation, and so make sure that you at last shall be where He is, forever with the Lord?

FOR THE PRIZE.

The Iron Gate.

They came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord.—Acts xii. 10.

"THE iron gate" marked the limits of the prison. About this gloomy gate cluster bright Gospel truths.

I. WITHOUT THE IRON GATE: a praying church. "Peter was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him."

1. *Where?* At the house of Mary, sister of Barnabas, and mother of John Mark. Barnabas gave his wealth to the church. Mary gave her house for a church. John Mark gave himself to the church. Consecrated circle: attractive meeting place for prayer.

2. *When?* At night. The silence of repose pervaded the city, but the voice of prayer was heard in the house of Mary.

3. *Who?* The Church. "Prayer was made of the church;" "many were gathered together praying." The ideal church prayer-meeting: united, unanimous.

4. *Why?* To pray for Peter. "Prayer was made without ceasing for him." *Specific* prayer: in Peter's interest, for Peter's release. *Persevering* prayer: "without ceasing." They were undeterred by the iron gate, though it moved not on its hinges at their earnest cries. Heroic faith that undertakes without the use of key or touch of hand to open the iron gate beyond whose threshold an imprisoned treasure lies. A conflict often reproduced: faith against iron gates. Will faith succeed?

II. WITHIN THE IRON GATE: a sleeping saint. "Peter was kept in prison."

1. *Peter the prisoner.* He was made most secure against release. Difficulties many and great stood between him and liberty. The Church undertook a gigantic work to break by prayer so many bonds. Mark the barriers to his release. The iron gate ushers him into prison. The doors of the first and sec-

ond wards close behind him. Two chains bind him. Sixteen soldiers guard him. The keepers before the door kept the prison. Nothing more could be done to prevent release.

2. *Peter the saint.* To-morrow the chains will be unlocked, the soldiers dismissed, the gates thrown open, and Peter led forth to die. Is he afraid? "When Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers." One of the grandest pictures in the Bible: the eve of execution, the sleeping saint resting in the care of God. "He giveth His beloved sleep." Peter trusts against great odds. Will trust triumph?

III. THROUGH THE IRON GATE: a Divine deliverance.

1. *Prayer prevailed.* Its high aim was reached. The cry which waked not the sleeping city was heard on high.

2. *The angel came.* Quicker than light, and noiseless as the roll of worlds, the messenger of God came to Peter's prison cell: "Arise up quickly." The prison chains fell off. "Gird thyself and follow me."

3. *Deliverance wrought.* They passed the sleeping guard; drew near the inner gate. It opened not at their approach, but at their presence. When they came unto the iron gate, by unseen power, as if of its own accord, it opened to them, and Peter passed through into liberty.

With prayer and faith go forward in obedience to God's call. The iron gate will open by Divine command.

Rock.

Qualifications for the Communion.

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.—1 Cor. xi. 28.

QUALIFICATIONS for the communion suggested by its nature. It is

I. A *Sign*: qualification, *knowledge*.

A knowledge not of literature, philosophy, science, art, nor of any branches of learning pursued in the schools of the world. Not of theology in all its varied departments. Not even of orthodoxy, the acceptance of the standards, and opinions of a particular church. The knowledge requisite is a discernment of the significance of the ordinance, "discerning the Lord's body." The sacrament is a sign. He has ample knowledge who can read the sign. The Corinthians erred in losing sight of the spiritual meaning of the ordinance. It ceased to be to them a symbol. They failed to discern in it a sign of Jesus crucified.

II. *A Seal*: qualification, *faith*. It not only represents Gospel blessings as a picture, but, rightly received, secures blessings as a seal. Its blessings depend not on the administrator. He has no power to confer nor to intercept the blessing. Not on other communicants. They can neither direct nor divert the blessings. They depend simply on the faith of the communicant himself. Faith is the hand that takes the proffered gifts of grace. Without faith it is no sacrament. With faith it becomes a sacramental seal. Worthiness is therefore not sinlessness; but the lowly sinner's humble trust, weakness leaning on almighty strength, unworthiness reaching forth the hand of faith to take the gracious gift of God.

III. *A Feast*: qualification, *hunger*. "Let us keep the feast." The best qualification for a feast undoubtedly is hunger. The Lord's Supper is a spiritual feast. Its requisite is spiritual hunger. The Corinthians sinned in regarding it a carnal feast. Hence many of them were chastened by sickness and death. Their temporal judgment was for their spiritual and everlasting good.

This feast is prepared by God's gracious bounty. He welcomes to it all who hunger for His blessings. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." "He filleth the hungry with good things." They that yearn after God's

blessing, that desire His grace, that are deeply conscious of their wants, that account it a privilege to come to the Lord's table, need never fear to come.

IV. *A Memorial*: qualification, *love*. "In remembrance of Me." Memorials are heart-offerings: tributes of affection, whose foundations are laid in love, whose walls are reared with willing, loving hands. Enemies never erect memorials. Christ desires to be remembered. He has chosen His own memorial. His lowest touch, His deepest humiliation He would have immortalized. In that He glories most. There shall His memorial rest. Not on the height, but in the depth. Yet from the depth it shall be reared till its height shall be crowned with a heavenly light and universal glory: ye show His death till He come.

Who shall build this memorial to Christ?

The heart that loves. A sacrilege for any other to approach. Worthiness is love.

If the condition of approach is love, shall any one be content to stay away?

"MEMORIAL."

Obstacles to Salvation.

Jesus said, Take ye away the stone.—
John xi. 39.

WITHIN the dark hollow of the cave was death. Lazarus, the beloved brother and friend, was dead, and his body sealed within the tomb. Without stood Christ, not only a sympathizing friend, but the source of life. Between them lay the stone at the door of the cave. It was the barrier between Lazarus and Jesus, between life and death. It blocked the pathway of Lazarus from death to life, so Christ commanded its removal. Many who are dead in trespasses and sins are sealed in darkness by some such stone, and the stone must be removed before that heart can be called to life.

I. *A stone shutting Christ from many hearts is self-righteousness.* Self-conceit

is entombing many souls in a darkness as great as that in which Lazarus lay. It keeps out every ray of life and light from Christ. When men feel independent in their own strength, when by reason of a little honesty or philanthropy they feel exceedingly righteous, they feel no need of the Saviour. This stone lies against many and many a soul, and before the deadness within shall be brought to life it must be removed.

II. *Another stone separating Christ from dead men is some special sin.* Strange as it may seem it is still true, that for the sake of indulgence in some darling sin men will let go their hope for eternal life.

There are many hearts ready to accept Christ but for one thing which they will not give up, one idol they will not break, one sin they cannot forego. Alas! that this stone should lie at the door of so many hearts and keep out the life that stands ready to enter when opportunity comes.

III. *Another stone keeping Christ from dead hearts is wilful postponement.* Hearts that really want to see the Saviour and feel the thrill of His life-given touch wilfully postpone accepting him. They offer no good excuse, no valid objections; but days and months and years go by, the grave draws nearer and Christ stands without, while the soul is shut in hopeless darkness.

Hearer, instead of darkness you may have light, instead of anxiety you may have peace, instead of death you may have eternal life. Only, "Take ye away the stone," and let the Saviour enter.

CHALMERS.

Sorrow and Joy.

Your sorrow shall be turned into joy.—
John xvi. 20.

As in this verse, so in human life, sorrow and joy are closely joined. Happy the life in which they are so wisely joined.

I. PRESENT SORROW. "Your sorrow,"

1. *Sorrow is the lot of man.* This truth touches a chord in every heart. The sea of trouble is never here at rest. The night of weeping is not forgotten ere its shadows begin again to fall. "Watchman, what of the night? The morning cometh, but also the night." The echo lingers, "also the night." There is no path for human feet on which a shadow does not fall.

2. *Christ's people are not exempt.* Jesus to His disciples: "Your sorrow." Calamities befall the best. Character cannot be read by providence. There is a night of wrestling for Jacob, a pit and prison for Joseph, a den for Daniel, stones for Stephen, a cross for Christ.

II. PROSPECTIVE JOY. "Shall be—joy."

1. *Life is not all a gloom.* "The evening and the morning were the first day." All days have their light as well as darkness. Two chapters make up the history of every life—the chapter of sorrows and the chapter of joys.

2. *Religion is not all a sorrow.* Jesus wept, but He also rejoiced. The Gospel is a gospel of light and gladness. Jesus shed sunshine on the world. In Him was no darkness. "'Tis religion that can give sweetest pleasures while we live." The Gospel order is sorrow first, joy afterward.

III. CONNECTION BETWEEN THE SORROW AND THE JOY.

1. *Sorrow yields to joy.* Sorrow is temporary. "For a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness." "In the day of adversity, consider." "Weeping may endure for a night." "The hour of temptation." "These light afflictions are but for a moment." Sorrow is fleeting. Joy shall reign.

2. *Sorrow intensifies joy.* The dark background beautifies the real scene. Pain sweetens the ease that brings relief. Sorrow is discipline that touches into joy the chastened soul. "The greatest of afflictions is never to be afflicted." The towering mountain has its foundation laid in the depths. The greater beauties of Christian life are the

rewards of training under the masters—tears, pains, sorrows.

3. *Sorrow makes joy.* Your sorrow shall be turned into joy. Not merely yield to it, nor intensify it, but be itself transformed into joy. The sorrow shall become a joy.

"The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown."

The chrysalis, homely and helpless worm, lays off its humble garb, spreads its new wings touched by the light into exquisite beauty, and soars from flower to flower. So out of lowly sorrow emerges heavenly joy. Throw not the cross away. Of it the crown is made. Wings may be weights, but they are weights by which to rise. Sorrows may oppress, but they lift to heights. At last it shall be found that sorrows were but joys in disguise.

"SOLACK."

STRIKING THOUGHTS FROM RECENT SERMONS.

THE Lord pity the pastor of a church that has nothing but money. The possession of money does not necessarily make a man poor in heart. He may become, as Paul exhorts him to be, "rich in good works." But if he has learned to estimate everything and everybody in dollars and cents, he is a pauper, though he be a millionaire. A church composed of such members measures its prosperity by the amount of money it can raise, though it may not be particular as to the methods of raising it. Its rich men are willing in a condescending sort of way to build chapels for the poor, provided they can be relieved of their presence in the main church. They do not like the odors of poverty. They think it better anyway for the rich to be together and the poor to be together. They believe in a family church rather than a church family.—*Dixon.*

CHRISTIANITY invests a man with the highest dignity. It associates him with the noble spirits of all ages. There dwells in him that noble spirit that affiliates him with all noble spirits. He appreciates the feelings of Abraham as he journeyed to the mount, there to offer his only son as a token of his faith in God, for he has himself been tested. No noble spirit in this world escapes the test; nor would he if he could. He stands beside the pure-minded Joseph in the house of the voluptuous Egyptian monarch. He feels his patriotic blood move as he sees Moses smite the Egyptian, the oppressor of his people. He enters into the secret chamber of prayer in the night season with the pious David. He fires with indignation at the defamation of the temple.—*Wood.*

It took the persecutions of Marcus Aurelius to develop Polycarp and Justin Martyr. It took the pope's bull, and the cardinal's curse, and the world's anathema to develop Martin Luther. It took all the hostilities against the Scotch Covenanters and the fury of Lord Claverhouse to develop James Renwick, and Andrew Melville,

and Hugh McKail, the glorious martyrs of Scotch history. It took the stormy sea, and the Decem-ber blast, and the desolate New England coast, and the war-whoop of savages to show forth the prowess of the Pilgrim fathers—

When amid the storms they sang,
And the stars heard, and the sea;
And the sounding aisles of the dim wood
Rang to the anthems of the free.

It took all our past national distresses, and it takes all our present national sorrows, to lift up our nation on that high career where it will march along after the foreign despotisms that have mocked and the tyrannies that have jeered shall be swept down under the omnipotent wrath of God, who hates oppression, and who, by the strength of his own red right arm, will make all men free. And so it is individually, and in the family, and in the church, and in the world, that through darkness and storm and troubled men, women, churches, nations, are double.—*Talmage.*

YOUR three R's without religion will be but as tow in the flame; your so-called education will be then but as dust and ashes in the hour of death and in the day of judgment. They will not suffice to arm you against the enemies of the future. You might as well weave spiders' webs as barriers against a tiger's leaps. You have no safeguards but strong wills and tender consciences trained in the Word of God. Religion is the foundation, the rule, the motive of every life which is a life at all; nor can there be any negligence so insensate as that of those who are indifferent to it. Man has a body, and he has a mind, but he is a spirit; and if you neglect that life of the spirit, which is the divinest part of him, you are not training a man, but a monster.—*Farrar.*

MEN and women whose hearts are fountains of pity, whose eyes run down with tears, whose throats get hoarse with crying; these are mighty before God. The spring and fountain of many a revival, of many a deliverance for Israel, when all things are reviewed and explained, will be found in some poor bed-ridden believer, who cried to God for some little village sidden in sin, or congregation given over to spiritual death.—*McNeill.*

NEITHER Paul nor his colleagues were ever at a loss. Earth served them and heaven blessed them. Persecution only brought them into wider notice. The prisoner's bar became the pulpit of the evangelist. The far-reaching lines of the Roman dominion became the highways along which their message travelled. Their fresh word went down like dawn up in the fogs and mists of unbelief, and penetrated into the waste places of human thought and feeling, where despair fed on pastures of death, making them beautiful with the light of heaven. While the blind and the deaf in that hard Pagan world were still locking their gates against the new truth, its ideas were being sung in their fields, and its words were as sunshine in the dwellings of their slaves. So swiftly and surely did the word spread that ere the last of their little band was called to his rest, the Gospel they preached had reclaimed whole provinces and wide-reaching regions of spiritual life for the Lord. Fulfilled then beyond their keenest imaginings was the Master's promise, "Ye shall have power."—*Le Huray.*

SHAMGAR'S hand grew into the hilt of that ox-goad, and it became part of him. The ox-goad and Shamgar again became part of the arm of the Lord God Almighty. That was all in it, and that may be in you and me, God taking our individuality, and consecrating it and using it for His eternal glory. Now, be yourself, whether you be at the plough, or at the desk; God can do His work with the ox-goad; He can do it with the pen; He can do it with anything if it lies near His hand.—*McNeill.*

THEMES AND TEXTS OF RECENT SERMONS.

1. The Vacant Chair. "Thou shalt be missed because thy seat will be empty."—1 Sam. xx. 18. T. De Witt Talmage, D.D., Brooklyn, N. Y.
2. Future Endless Satisfaction. "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."—Psalm xvii. 15. Bishop J. Weaver, D.D., Maysville, Ill.
3. John the Baptist and Christ. "He must increase, but I must decrease."—John iii. 30. Nathaniel West, D.D., Ocean Grove, N. J.
4. The Divine Spirit in Human Progress. "There is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding."—Job xxxii. 8. W. H. Milburn, D.D., New York City.
5. The Faithfulness of Hope. "Hope maketh not ashamed."—Rom. v. 5. George C. Lorimer, D.D., White Mountains, N. H.
6. Earnest Work the Precursor of New Discoveries of Truth. "And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord."—2 Chron. xxxiv. 15. Rev. W. G. Thomas, St. Louis, Mo.
7. "The Present" and "Afterward." "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yielded the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."—Heb. xii. 11. E. A. Woods, D.D., Philadelphia, Pa.
8. The Elements of Success. "And they come unto Him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four."—Mark ii. 3. Rev. William J. Fezell, Louisville, Ky.
9. The Character of Saul. "Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights; who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel."—2 Sam. i. 24. Pres. E. B. Andrews, D.D., Philadelphia, Pa.
10. Now and Then. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward." Rom. viii. 18. Bishop J. Weaver, D.D., Maysville, Ill.
11. The Church and Modern Problems. "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men."—Titus iii. 8. Rev. George Adams, Brooklyn, N. Y.
12. In Christ Jesus, the Formula of Salvation. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."—Rom. viii. 1. George C. Lorimer, D.D., Martha's Vineyard.
13. The Nobility and Beauty of Service. "Who-soever of you will be chiefest shall be servant of all. For-ven the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister."—Mark x. 44. 45. Moses D. Hoge, D.D., Baltimore, Md.
14. Acknowledgment Demanded for Mercies Received. "Oh, give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so."—Ps. cvii. 1, 2. Moses D. Hoge, D.D., Baltimore, Md.

Suggestive Themes for Pulpit Treatment.

1. Iniquitous Revenues. ("Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues with injustice."—Prov. xvi. 8.)
2. The Humility of Honor. ("Elijah is come. . . he spake unto them of John the Baptist."—Matt. xvii. 12, 13. "Art thou Elijah? And he saith, I am not."—John i. 21.)
3. Unmotherly Mothers. ("Even the sea-monsters draw out the breast; they give suck to their young ones: the daughter of my people is become cruel, like the ostriches in the wilderness."—Lam. iv. 3.)
4. Where Responsibility for the Effects of a Murderous Traffic belongs. ("If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not He that pondereth the heart consider it? and He that keepeth the soul, doth not He know it? and shall not He render to every man according to his works?"—Prov. xxiv. 11, 12.)
5. The Conservative Power of Believing Parentage. ("And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed."—Gen. xxi. 13.)
6. The Great Obstacle to Faith. ("How can ye believe, which seek honor one of another, and seek not the honor which cometh from God only?"—John v. 44.)
7. God's Preparations for Planting the Heavens. ("I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of My hand, that I may plant the heavens."—Isa. li. 16.)
8. A Political Boomerang. ("As he that bindeth a stone in a sling, so is he that giveth honor to a fool."—Prov. xxvi. 8.)

THANKSGIVING THEMES.

9. God's Voiceless Witnesses. ("He left not himself without witness in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."—Acts xiv. 17.)
10. The Openhandedness of God. ("Thou openest thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing."—Ps. cxlv. 16.)
11. The Inheritance of the Church. ("He hath showed his people the power of his works in giving them the heritage of the nations."—Ps. cxi. 6.)
12. The True Exaltation of a Nation. ("The Lord hath avouched thee this day to be His peculiar people, as He hath promised thee, and that thou shouldst keep all His commandments; and to make thee high above all nations which He hath made, in praise and in name and in honor, and that thou mayest be a holy people unto the Lord thy God, as He hath spoken."—Deut. xxvi. 18, 19.)
13. God's Indescribable Gift. ("Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."—2 Cor. ix. 15.)
14. Averted Danger and its Call to Gratitude. ("It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not."—Lam. iii. 22.)
15. Public Acknowledgment of Private Mercies. "I will give thee thanks in the great congregation; I will praise thee among much people."—Ps. xxxv. 18.)

HELPS AND HINTS, TEXTUAL AND TOPICAL.

BY ARTHUR T. PIERSON, D.D.

Completeness in Christ.

In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; and ye are in Him filled full.—Col. ii. 9, 10.

THESE words constitute the key to this epistle; to understand them is to understand its whole argument. The church at Colosse, planted by Paul's fellow-laborer, and very dear to him, was infested with mischievous teachers. Epaphras had come all the way from Colosse to Rome to consult Paul about its critical condition. Two special errors, in part Jewish and in part gnostic in source, are the occasion of the epistle; The first, doctrinal, that *man's fleshly nature is no proper medium for the reception and revelation of the Divine nature*; and the second, practical, that *the spirit must find redemption in fleshly mortification and self-purification*. The first of these errors would naturally lead to the rejection of the incarnation; the second to the perversion of the truth that our sanctification is assured by our union with Christ.

On the other hand, Paul teaches that in Christ all the fulness of God is literally incarnate; and, secondly, that in our union with Christ in His death and resurrection-life, our present redemption from evil and final victory over it are fully found. Christ is the fulness of God, and the fulness of the believer is in Him.

Such is the truth taught in this epistle, and in fact in the entire New Testament, and it may be viewed from three points:

1. The typical nature of the life of Christ.
2. The effect of the believer's union with Him.
3. The progressive teaching of the New Testament.

1. By the typical life of Christ we mean that His life includes the believer in its experiences and triumphs. Christ

was the last Adam and stood for the race. To those who by faith are united to Him all that characterized His human life has a personal value and relation. In Him we were circumcised, buried in baptism, risen in His resurrection. In Him we were crucified and died and are seated in the heavenlies. So perfect is this unity in God's eyes that He regards every believer as having met Satan in the temptation and triumphed over him, as having expiated his sin on the cross, and as having vanquished death and hell in the conquest of his Lord. In the original Greek we constantly come upon a compound form of verb, ordinarily translated "together with," but better expressed by the particle "co." "In whom ye are co-circumcised, co-buried, co-risen, co-quickened," etc. As a simple believer phrased it, it is "Jesus Christ & Co."

2. The effect of the believer's union with Christ is, that there is transferred to him all the fulness there is in Christ. There are at least five favorite forms of representing this union in the New Testament, and curiously enough they exhaust the whole range of illustration, being taken from the mineral, vegetable, animal, human, and social kingdoms. They are the building, the vine, the flock, the body, and the marriage-bond. We are complete in Christ as the building is complete in the broad, solid, and strong foundation on which it rests; as the branches are complete in the vine that supplies vitality and nourishment; as the sheep are complete in the care and love of the shepherd; as the body is complete in the head, which is the seat of rule, of thought, of force, of action; as the bride is complete in the nourishing, cherishing devotion of the bridegroom. Compare John x. 14, 15 (Revised Version), xvii. 21-26. Knowledge, love, and glory of godhead are shared by disciples

3. The study of the New Testament

will show that from Matthew to the Apocalypse this completeness in Christ fills the whole book. In the four Gospel narratives we have Him variously set forth : by Matthew, as the Messiah and King who completely fulfils the prophecies of the Old Testament and perpetuates the Davidic line ; by Mark, as the Mighty Worker who completely represents the power of God ; by Luke, as the sympathizing Friend and Counsellor of humanity, who completely represents the wisdom and love of God ; by John, as the God-man who completely represents the Divine nature, and manifests God in the flesh, so that to have seen Him and known Him is to have seen and known the Father. In the Acts of the Apostles we have Him exhibited as the complete Lord of the Church, administering from His throne and on the battle-field, His militant kingdom. In Romans we are seen to be completely *justified* in Him ; in Corinthians, *dignified* in Him ; in Galatians, *sanctified* in Him ; in Ephesians, *unified* in Him ; in Philippians, *satisfied* in Him ; in Thessalonians, *glorified* in Him ; in Timothy, *qualified* in Him ; in Titus, *purified* in Him ; in Hebrews, *magnified* and *amplified* in Him ; in James we see that He makes our good works complete ; in Peter, that He fills our hope ; in Jude, that He assures our perseverance ; in John, that He is Light, Love, and Life. And even the little letter to Philemon has its office, to illustrate the fulness of our redemption in Him who restores us to God, changes the runaway slave into a brother beloved and a son of God, and pays all debts to law and justice.

¶ Three practical remarks :

1. We see the true value of such phrases as "for His sake," "in His name." They identify Christ with the believer. To accept us for Christ's sake is for God to look at His Son, and not at us, and treat us as He does His Son, because we are accepted in Him. What is asked in Jesus' name or done in Jesus' name makes Jesus the suppliant or actor,

2. We see why our hearts are battle-fields. As the Lord told Catharine of Siena, in "The Dialogue," the reason why she felt herself the prey of detestable thoughts was because He was hidden in her heart. His presence there made sin to appear hateful and stirred up all evil to resistance.

3. We see where all joy is found. George Williams called on Shaftesbury in his dying moments, and finding him in a depressed state, quoted the words of the text, and added, "Complete in Him : that is, nothing wanting to the believer."

The Knowledge of Eternal Life.

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life.—1 John v. 13.

THIS being the declared object of this epistle, we are not surprised to find the words know and eternal life conspicuous. The whole epistle is occupied with the *signs of Sonship*. *Light, Love, and Life* are the grand words which interpret the epistle, and under which all these evidences of the new nature may be arranged.

God is here directly declared to be Light and to be Love, and it is everywhere implied that He is also Life. Hence His own children must partake of His Light and Love and Life because partakers of His nature.

I. Light is here used as the equivalent for higher knowledge, as darkness is for ignorance. The child of God walks in light. Light is a revealer. Hence he knows God, knows himself and his sin, and knows the truth. He that is in darkness knows not God, denies his sin, denies Jesus, and denies the truth, embraces a lie, etc. The signs of being in the Light are mainly these three : recognition of *sin*, belief and confession of *Jesus*, and knowledge of *God*. Of many truths we may yet be in ignorance or doubt, but of these the true child of God must be assured.

II. Love, this is the synonym for a pure, unselfish affection and benevolence. Love is found in the world. Natural affection, selfish affection, the love of sympathy and of complacency. But this love is not of this world; like the warmth of the sun it is the outgoing of something that aims to bless others rather than benefit ourselves. "He that loveth is born of God and knoweth God."

This Love is expansive, expulsive, and explosive. It enlarges the heart, it expels evil, and it demands expression and action.

It expels the love of sin, the love of the world, and the hatred of man.

It demands vent in benevolent action and in confession of Jesus as Lord.

III. Life. Here we touch another class of mysteries. The life principle of God is in the believer and is opposed to death. Hence there is

1. A quickening power—obedience.
2. A sanctifying power—purification.

He that is born of God doth not commit sin and cannot sin—observe the force of the Greek present tense, continued action—*doth not go on sinning*. There is that in him which constrains him to *do righteousness* and put away iniquity. He has affinity with God. He purifies himself even as Christ is pure.

No sinner ought to be in ignorance of the way of salvation with the Gospel of John before him. No saint should be in doubt about his saved state with the First Epistle of John before him. To be saved one has only to believe on Jesus as the Saviour, to receive the gift of God's love. The disciple has only to examine himself as to whether he is in the light, the love, the life of God. If he sees and confesses his sin; if he accepts Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God; if he finds a love of God and of the brethren which expels the love of sin, of the world, and of self; if he feels the life of God impelling him to obey the commands of God, to renounce sin and to live for God, all this is the work of God, and of Him alone.

The Christian's Rest.

A BIBLE READING BY REV. F. B. MEYER, OF LONDON.

GEN. ii. 2. God rested. Rest was God's earliest gift to man. Augustine says our heart is restless till it rests in God.

Gen. v. 29. Lamech means rest; xlix. 10. Shiloh means rest.

The Book of Numbers is the book of Lost Rest. Compare Ps. xc., Rom. vii., and Heb. iii. iv.

The people of God marched to and fro, over desert sands, discouraged, disappointed; a type of the experience of most nominal disciples. Chaps. xiii., xiv. show how they lost the rest. The ten spies and the people who followed them looked at God through circumstances instead of looking at circumstances through God; and hence the sons of Anak filled their horizon and shut out God from view. Peter put the storm between him and Christ, and so sank. Unbelief and disobedience are translations of one word.

Heb. iv. 11. An example of disobedience. As a gust of wind disturbs a reflection in a lake, unbelief and disobedience interrupt fellowship. And if there be a real doubt as to the cause of alienation, to subject the soul to the searching of God's Word will reveal the secret, as the sacrificial knife opened up at a blow the very vitals of the victim (Heb. iv. 12, 13). Even the borderland between soul and spirit is revealed by the Word. We cannot, dare not use the knife. But our High Priest can and will if we submit to Him.

The Book of Joshua is the book of Rest Revealed, and has its counterpart in Ephesians. Compare Josh. i. 2, 13.

Dr. Watts located the rest in heaven, but it is here. In Joshua iii., v., vii. we have the passage across the Jordan, the circumcision of the people, and the defilement through Achan, as types of spiritual things. Caleb has his heritage in Hebron (Fellowship), and Joshua in Timnath-Heres (the Land of the Sun).

Ephesians is the Epistle of IN-NESS—

the prominence of the word *in* is very obvious. "In Christ" and "in the heavens," *i. e.*, heavenly experiences on earth. Our Canaan is here, in the heart at rest in God. The true Christian is like the carpenter whose sign over his workshop read, "*Residence upstairs*" (Eph. ii. 5, 6).

You can touch and taste your heavenly blessings, but only on a heavenly plane (Eph. i. 19, 20). The greatest proof of omnipotence was the raising of Christ's humanity from the grave and exalting our human nature in Him to the throne. That omnipotence is the unit of measurement in grace.

A Thanksgiving Theme.

And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord, etc.—Gen. viii. 20, 21.

THIS is the first great thanksgiving day of history! For a year Noah and his family had been shut in the ark, and amid a deluge of waters, tenderly guarded and guided by the Lord's hand. And now, as they emerge at God's command from the ark, and once more resume their abode on the new earth, the first thing Noah does is to re-establish public worship. He builds an altar and on it offers burned offerings, which were the highest expression of gratitude, nothing being reserved for priest or offerer, but wholly dedicated

to God. And few such offerings have ever been known in history—one of every species of clean beast and fowl. There must have been a hecatomb as well as a holocaust. We have never found in the Word of God a finer and more suggestive Thanksgiving theme.

1. It is a memorial of a year's providential and gracious care. Life and health preserved, daily mercies, special protection and provision, salvation in the midst of death and destruction, etc. It was a *family* feast for household blessings and covenant mercies.

2. It is a memorable celebration of deliverance. Here is no restraint upon grateful emotion. A large and abundant offering of acknowledgment. Great love demands great recognition. We ought to keep our Thanksgiving by acts that make its impression on us and others lasting.

3. It is noticeable that it marks a new covenant on the part of God; new relations are established at that altar with God. The Lord smells a savor of *rest* (see margin), and no sooner does man's offering send up its holy incense than God responds in new grace.

4. It is a turning point in history. Man begins a new year with God. And had the spirit of Noah's great offering been the determining influence of man's future history, what countless blessings would not the race have enjoyed from that day to this!

THE PRAYER-MEETING SERVICE.

By WAYLAND HOYT, D.D.

NOVEMBER 2-7. — THE FATHER'S BUSINESS.—Luke ii. 49.

A most important principle here emerges—*The Father's business for the boy of twelve was not the Father's business for the man of thirty.* When God makes a man there is first childhood, then youth-hood, then maturity, and to each of these stages are appointed appropriate duties. Our Lord in His per-

fect humanity was subject to this law of growth. He was child, youth, man. Therefore the Father's business for the boy of twelve was not the Father's business for the man of thirty. This Jesus recognized. He did not, there in the Temple, assert for Himself a place in the Temple. He did not thrust Himself out of the proper subjection for youth-hood and seek to forestall the

work of His later life. He laid His hand to the duties of obedience and subjection which belong to youth-hood. He recognized the Father's business pertaining to His then development. "He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them." He returned to the common and daily duties of a peasant boy in Nazareth. So He sanctified all homely and usual service. He was faithful here as afterward he was faithful in the Temple, preaching the Father's truth, and on the cross accomplishing the Father's will in atonement for human sin. And yet, as that was the Father's business for the man of thirty, the secluded subjection and obedience at Nazareth was the Father's business for the boy of twelve.

Learn, first, that very common and little things apparently may be for us the Father's business. That was a lowly home at Nazareth. Poor exchange, we would say, for the throne and streets of heaven. Only a single room serving for all uses, some mats, a cushion or two, some rude earthen vessels, possibly a painted chest. Such home and furniture as peasants have now in that Eastern country the peasant boy at Nazareth had. Customs do not change in that Eastern land.

And in environment so lowly our Lord set His hand to the lowly work belonging to it. We know that afterward in Nazareth He became carpenter. I am inclined to think the tradition true that Joseph died during our Lord's earlier life, and that therefore there came on His shoulders the support of His mother and the family. Holman Hunt's picture of it, with the rough wood about and the shavings littering the floor and the rude tools, tells the truth of things. And there, and in such surroundings, and with hands set to such tasks, doing the Father's business as really as He did it afterward in teaching, miracle, death, resurrection.

How surely we must see that the Father's business may occupy us about very lowly things! What rebuke here

for our discontent and brooding, castle-building! Oh, to enter into the Divine thought for life and to understand that the spirit with which we do is always vastly more than what thing we do! Oh, to make work worship, and to write over the driest, dustiest task, "For Thy sake!"

"A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine;
Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws,
Makes that and the action fine."

Learn, second, faithfulness in the Father's business for the now, though it be lowly and monotonous or even distasteful, is foundation and furnishing for higher Father's business in the then. Christ was not always peasant of Nazareth and Galilean carpenter. He became the Teacher and the Atoner. It is right for us to aspire. No man lives who ought not to wish to be more and higher than he is; but the only real path to loftier service *then* is faithfulness in the lowlier and appointed service *now*. It was Jesus faithful to the Father's business in the carpenter shop who was faithful to the Father's business on the cross. We can only do larger work for the Father in the future as we are faithful in doing smaller work for Him in the present.

Third, learn that the lowliest may have a mission from the Father. Jesus had such mission in the poor home and in the carpenter's shop at Nazareth. You may have in your place, though men call it lowly.

NOVEMBER 9-14.—SHUT IN; SHUT OUT.—Gen. vii. 16.

First.—Characteristics of those saved; the *Shut in*.

(a) They *believed God* (Gen. vi. 5, 6, 7, 13, Heb. xi. 7). It was no *immediate* matter of which God warned Noah. The flood was not to devastate next week or month or year. The slow courses of a century and more were to pass on. Yet the faith of these saved, shut-in ones darted through all the thicknesses of the hundred and twenty

years, and saw and seized as the most unshadowy certainty that which God declared.

There were no *apparent* symptoms of that of which God warned Noah, either in quakings of the earth, or in halting of the seasons, or in darkening of the sun, or in ceasing of the stars. There was no shock or jar shuddering through the calm and constant frame of nature. But, notwithstanding, Noah and his family trusted to the sheer and simple Word of God, and were sure that the deluge would come to pass.

People called them *foolish*, doubtless; cracked many a joke at their expense; prided themselves that *they* were too rational, cultured, etc., to be bothered with such nonsense; brought up all manner of theological objections—of Divine love, etc.; but notwithstanding Noah and his family *believed God*.

(b) The shut-in ones, the saved ones acted upon their belief. Their faith was more than a mere opinion, it was such conviction—such assent of intellect and consent of heart as prompted to corresponding deed. The vast ark was actually built by the believing ones, and afterward was actually entered by them.

(c) Having thus entered into the ark, and the Lord shutting them in, they were entirely *secure*.

Second.—Characteristics of the unsaved ones; the *shut out*.

(a) There *were* those unsaved.

(b) They neglected warnings. Noah was a preacher of righteousness.

(c) They would not yield to the strivings of the Spirit (Gen. vi. 3).

(d) They refused belief.

(e) They were lost; but they lost themselves.

NOVEMBER 16-21.—THE CHRISTIAN FAILURE AND ITS REASONS.—Deut. vii. 16.

Though the Israelites have passed out of Egypt, and beyond the Red Sea, and through the wilderness, and though another generation has taken the place

of the first faithless one, and though the Promised Land lies just before them, and though it is theirs, they have not passed beyond *the domain of struggle and duty*; they must go on to possess the land. In its southeastern border dwell the Moabites; north of them are the Amorites, strongly intrenched; above them the Hittites; on the west side, beyond the Jordan, are the Anakim; above these, a mighty nation, the Canaanites; near them the Perizzites, etc. The Israelites may rightfully claim the Promised Land as theirs, but before they can hold it for God or for themselves, they must dispossess and scatter and destroy the aliens who have already rooted themselves within it.

The apostle tells us these ancient histories are given us for our ensamples. In the light of this ancient situation let us think of the *Christian failure and its reasons*.

First.—*The Thing to be Done*. Too much is our Christianity over-anxious about its beginnings and too careless about its subsequent growth and reach. Too much, comparatively, is there a straining after conversion simply; too little, comparatively, is there endeavor after a succeeding Christian maturity and ripeness. We are all the time seeking just to get people out of Egypt; we are all the time too unconcerned as to whether these people go on to conquer Canaan for the Lord. Having "come to Jesus," the reign of Jesus is to be extended inwardly over the entire soul, outwardly over the entire life.

Canaan reached was not Canaan conquered. The converted man is not yet a sanctified man. The converted soul is a soul preoccupied notwithstanding. Hostile aliens have long had room and residence within it. Evil pride, vanity, jealousy, covetousness, passionateness, discontent, bad habits, etc.—Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites enough are yet resident in even the converted soul.

But Paul tells us the meaning of the Christian warfare—"Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of

God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." This is the thing the spiritual Israelite must do.

Second.—The Force by which this Conquest is to be Accomplished. "And thou shalt consume all the people which the Lord thy God shall deliver thee." Thou thyself; the Lord thy God—the two inseparable elements in the solution of the problem of evil for each individual soul. By patient toil toward conquest, by skilful marshalling of motives, by deliberate thrusting of the new life into the place of the old life, by the capturing of evil habits, by wise fleeing from temptation when you can, by manful struggling with temptation when you must, by a resolute holding of every inch of ground already won, you must conquer. But God was to go up with Israel; speed their arms, change conflict to victory. The soul and God—these are the forces of conflict.

Third.—Some Reasons for the Christian Failure:

(a) Ceasing of battle. After a while some of the Israelites stopped struggling against the aliens.

(b) Fear. These Israelites would not struggle against certain of the aliens because they had chariots of iron; even though God had promised to be with them. So some bad habit frightens a Christian from struggle.

(c) Success of a sort. "And it came to pass when Israel was strong they put the Canaanites to tribute, and did not utterly drive them out." Many a man, professedly Christian, dares not attempt to be the Christian he knows he ought to be because, successful in worldly affairs, his worldly interest will not let him. So he salves his conscience by putting his questionable gain "under tribute;" gives it, or a portion of it, in charity, etc.

Fourth.—Result. "Will be a snare unto thee." Was their failure not a snare? Call to mind the history of the Israelites, the destruction of the ten tribes.

The only proof of a real Christianity

is a continually advancing self-conquest.

NOVEMBER 23-28.—THE ACCURSED THING.—Josh. vii. 1.

Israel had just entered the land of promise. Jericho, so singularly besieged, had fallen. This Jericho was an accursed, or devoted, city. The Israelites were simply the judicial instruments of the Divine hand for the execution of the Divine judgment. Everything in Jericho was to be devoted to the Lord and to His treasury. The Israelites were to have for themselves nothing of it all. There is no space to vindicate such Divine decree of devotion. I think, however, it can easily be vindicated.

Well, Jericho has fallen. The city Ai is the next point of attack. Joshua sends men to reconnoitre. They report the place not very formidable, and advise that but two or three thousand men be sent up against it.

And here was one mistake. Success is the nurse of presumption. Success is very apt, in its sweep and rush, to raise such a dust the eye of judgment gets obscured. Jericho had gone down so easily, it would be nothing now to vanquish Ai, thought these spies. It is never wise to underrate an enemy. It is dangerous business to go into a contest, even though it be for God, with but part of your forces, when you might have marshalled all of them, supposing that Divine power will hasten to save your criminal weakness from discomfiture. No. "God carries His people only when they cannot walk; He pities our weakness, but not our sloth." We can never capture any "Ais" for God if the larger share of our energies lie lazily in camp. Not three thousand, but thirty thousand were needed to vanquish Ai. Not the pastor and the deacons and the missionary and the superintendents and some Sabbath-school teachers, but the whole Church organized and active for the conflict, is the best method for a spiritual victory.

And yet, I question, whether, even if all the hosts of Israel had gone up that day against Ai, and that with the completest preparation and the wariest vigilance they had been victorious.

Jericho was a devoted city. Jehovah had consecrated it to Himself for righteous doom. Therefore, if any man were to appropriate for his own use anything which was thus especially the Divine possession—he would commit sacrilege, and would himself become similarly accursed. Precisely this thing Achan did. He secreted the goodly Babylonish garment, the two hundred shekels of silver and the wedge of gold beneath the earth within his tent. Nobody knew it but Achan—and God. Joshua and the elders of Israel could not see the buried treasure. God saw, however. And when Israel went up against Ai, the men of Ai smote them; and the hearts of the people melted and became as water.

Notice this important point. Achan was nobody but Achan—just a single man, one of the privates in the armies of Israel; but our Scripture tells us the *children of Israel* committed a trespass in the accursed thing, and because of the sin of this one man Achan, the anger of the Lord was kindled against the whole Israel. Here is the principle, *the results of sin cannot be confined to the person sinning*. Paul enunciates the same principle 1 Cor. xii. 26. This principle is substantiated in the fact that man is not simply individual, but is organized into society. And in real way God holds society responsible for

the action of a member of it. Thomas Carlyle gives startling illustration of this fact. A poor widow woman suffering from typhus-fever, and refused refuge here, there, yonder, infects her whole ward with the disease. Also we see this fact constantly appearing in the Divine treatment of the family. The thirst for drink, which a man begets in himself by indulgence, and fastens in himself by excess, does not remain the man's alone; but by the laws of God such man frequently bequeaths it, an accursed birthright, to his children, and lays them open to the power of the fiend of drink, and greatly increases the chances that they bewhelmed in a drunkard's destruction. And when a man dashes through all the guards by which God would keep him from the greatest social crime a man may do, the swiftly thrusting swords of retribution do not pierce his own heart alone, but often upon the babe finding its wailing way into the world are their wounds found.

Now the Church is a social organism. Here, too, if one member touch the accursed thing, blight and powerlessness come to the entire body.

(a) The sin of the single member decreases the spiritual power of the Church.

(b) Dishonors the whole Church.

(c) Proportionately prevents the Church.

(d) Sets up in the Church a bad example.

(e) Hinders Divine blessing on the Church.

EXEGETICAL AND EXPOSITORY SECTION.

Studies in the Psalter.

By TALBOT W. CHAMBERS, D.D.

NO. XXXV.—THE 8TH PSALM.

The Dignity of Human Nature.

A MODERN critic of repute speaks of this psalm as the first of a number which celebrates the praise of God in

the phenomena of the natural world, and then he refers as instances to the onward march of the morning sun (Ps. xix.), the crash of the thunder-storm and earthquake (Ps. xxix.), and the glory and the order of creation (Ps. civ.). But this is misleading. The main object of the poet is not at all to set forth the glory of God as revealed in nature,

but simply to use that revelation by contrast to exhibit the honor put upon man as made in His image. The psalm, indeed, begins and ends with an admiring recognition of Jehovah's manifested excellence in the splendor of earth and sky; but in the intermediate portion this is dwelt upon only in order to display the Lord's condescending goodness to mankind, in regard both to the inanimate creation (vv. 3, 4) and to animated nature (vv. 5-8). That the author was David no one seems to deny or doubt. The phrase "upon Gittith" refers either to the instrument or the melody to which the lyric was adapted.

Jehovah, our Lord,
How transcendent Thy Name in all the earth,
And what glory of Thine Thou gavest the heavens!
Of the praises of children, even babes unweaned,
Hast thou founded a fortress because of Thy foes,
To silence the hating and vengeful.

When I look on Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers,
The moon and the stars which Thou didst establish;
What is frail man that Thou art mindful of him,
Or any son of man that thou visitest him,
And didst rank him little lower than God,
And with glory and majesty crown him?
Thou madest him ruler over the works of Thy hands;
All things Thou hast put under his feet;
Flocks and herds, all of them,
And also, the beasts of the field;
The fowls of heaven and the fishes of the sea,
Whatever traverses the paths of the seas.
Jehovah, our Lord,
How transcendent Thy Name in all the earth!

The divine name, JEHOVAH, denotes not only self-existence with its correlates, independence and eternity, but also the One who reveals Himself, coming forth historically in time and displaying His grace. The poet, looking abroad upon the heavens by night in the clear atmosphere of the East, bursts out into a rapturous acknowledgment of the splendor and brilliancy which proclaim a Divine hand and show forth its transcendent excellence. Nature, indeed, is glorious, but it is with the glory of God. Apart from Him the universe is empty and waste, utterly devoid of

meaning. But it cannot be separated from the name and thought of its Maker. Even children are aroused by the sight into admiration. ["The word *sucklings* in a warmer climate does not indicate an age so tender and unintelligent as with us. It was the Hebrew custom to wean a child when three years old or later. Samuel was not weaned (1 Sam. i. 24) until he was old enough to be helpful to Eli in the temple."]* Their immature minds can yet feel the wondrous display of the heavens and the earth, and their hearty tribute constructs a fortress against the malignant railers who deny the presence of God in His works. With all their hate and fury these enemies cannot overcome the unconscious, instinctive admiration of unsophisticated children praising the Most High and showing, as the poet says, that

"Heaven lies about us in our infancy."

No one can fail to recall the application made of this utterance by our Lord, as the evangelist Matthew (xxi. 14-16) tells us. When the children saw the Saviour healing the lame and the blind in the temple-area, and recalled the triumphal entry of the day before, they cried out, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" but the chief priests and scribes were sore displeased, and asked Christ if He noticed what they said. His answer was noteworthy: "Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?" † Their own Scripture discomfited the foolish objectors. He who stoops to accept the songs of the seraphim will stoop yet further to hear the lisping tongues of babes and weanlings.

But all this is only introductory. Having spoken generally of the glory of Jehovah as seen in the constitution of nature, David passes to a particular manifestation of it, which fills him with

* Dr. John DeWitt *in lo.*

† Our Lord quotes from the LXX., who substitute *praise* for *stronghold* or *fortress*, but the sense is the same, for it was the praise of the children that constituted the fortress.

astonishment at the Divine condescension. What impresses him is the vastness and splendor, the mysterious depth, and the exceeding glory of the heavens as seen at night. As he looks upon the sky, arched at a vast and unknown depth over our heads, and its flaming orbs apparently infinite in number, each keeping its appointed place and course, and thinks of the power and wisdom shown by the Divine Architect, he is overpowered by the thought, What is mortal man? He does not mean in comparison with the material universe, to which he is, in truth, superior,* but with the God who created and upholds this multitudinous brilliancy of the firmament. How is it that such an exalted Being visits and cares for the frail children of men, whose houses are in the clay, and who are crushed before the moth?

But even this does not state the plenitude of the Divine goodness. Not only does God remember and take knowledge of man, but He has fixed His place in creation as little less than divine. The words are startling; but there is no need of paring them down as did the old Greek translators, who substituted *angels* for *God*—a substitution which has been reproduced in the New Testament (Heb. ii. 7).† Man, being made in the image of God, has dominion over the inferior creation, and is indeed a god to the irrational tribes, which see in him the only exhibition of intelligence and will which they are capable of apprehending. Hence man is crowned with glory and majesty—that is, has royal dignity. He is a king by divine right, and has a widely extended dominion. There are

* "Man is but a reed, the weakest in nature, but he is a thinking reed. It is not necessary that the entire universe arm itself to crush him. A breath of air, a drop of water suffices. But were the universe to crush him, man would still be more noble than that which crushes him, because he knows that he dies; and the universe knows nothing of the advantage it has over him."—*Pascal*.

† Nothing in the argument of the epistle depends upon the rendering of this particular word.

those who would deny his prerogative, and seek in the name of science to confound him with the inferior animals or the clay out of which they were made. But the attempt is fruitless. Man's birthright cannot be taken from him. All things were originally put under his feet, and there they remain. Not simply that he is able by superior skill to exercise a coercive rule over the denizens of air and earth and sea, but that by virtue of his original constitution he is lord paramount. The creatures exist for him, not he for them. They are the beasts that perish. They are things, not persons. Their instincts are sometimes marvellous; but they have no likeness to God, and in no sense or degree bear His image. But man is God's vicegerent, and equipped with faculties that fit him for wielding this empire over creatures of earth. None of them is so strong, so subtle, so savage but that man, though relatively one of the weakest of creatures, in process of time becomes its master. This is in exact accordance with the design of his creation, as stated in Genesis (i. 26), "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." The devout singer recalls the original purpose as announced by Jehovah, and thankfully recites its accomplishment. But this hearty recognition of man's dominion over the creatures does not lead to any undue exaltation of the race. Here, as throughout the Psalter, Divine honor is reserved for Him to whom alone it belongs, and God's most precious gifts are made to minister to His praise and not to that of His creatures.

In the last verse the psalmist comes back to the point from which he started—Jehovah, our Lord, how transcendent is Thy name in all the earth! He can utter this exclamation with still more earnestness in view of what he has seen of the Divine perfection displayed more

gloriously in the honor bestowed upon man than in all the splendor of the skies. Those skies shall one day perish, they shall wear out as a garment and be rolled up as a scroll; but man will remain invested with all his original faculties. And while he remains he is a monument of Jehovah's loving kindness, set as His deputy in this lower world, and having all its forces, animate and inanimate, subjected to his will, and ministering to his pleasure. Well may we repeat every day and every hour, "Jehovah, our Lord, how transcendent is Thy name in all the earth."

1. The sentiment of the psalm at first strikes one as strangely discordant with the general tenor of Scripture respecting the frailty of man, who is like to vanity, whose breath is in his nostrils, whose flesh is as grass, whose days are a passing shadow, whose life is a vapor. But the discordance is only apparent. Sin has marred the image in which man was made, and hence the contrast between his capacities and his destiny. All that is said about his depravity and weakness is strictly true, yet no small portion of his original likeness to his Maker remains. He is still a spiritual self-conscious being, endowed with reason and conscience, and having that freedom of will that is essential to personality. It is in these distinguishing and inalienable qualities that his honor lies, and it is in the exercise of them that he gains and preserves the worldwide dominion spoken of in the psalm. No creature in air or earth or sea is born so weak and defenceless as man, or continues so long in that state, and yet he subdues all the rest and makes them minister to his comfort. And every new victory over nature, every fresh triumph of science or art, every novel application of natural forces, is an additional testimony to the inherent dignity of man as originally a child of God and made in His image. Nor need we fear that any discovery or philosophy will ever degrade him from that lofty position.

2. But the Psalm of David contains more than this. We learn from two quotations in the New Testament, one in 1 Corinthians (x. 27), "For He put all things in subjection under His feet," the other in Hebrews (ii. 8), "Thou didst put all things in subjection under His feet," that the royal psalmist was lifted above himself and led to use language which not only recalled the grant made to man when unfallen, but also contained a prophecy of its complete restoration in the future. The universal dominion over the creatures was made to the race in the person of the first Adam, their common ancestor. Clouded by his fall, it is restored to the people of God by the last Adam, their common head and representative. Man is yet to have lordship over "all things" in the widest sense of that comprehensive phrase; but it is in the person of the Incarnate Son, the Word made flesh, who by His blood has redeemed the lost heritage. This splendid ideal is yet to come. The picture, like many others in psalm and prophecy, is to be transformed into reality in the great day when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory, and all the nations shall be gathered before Him, and the assizes of the universe shall begin. Then shall be displayed before all worlds the true, the imperishable dignity of human nature, since One wearing its form shall judge the secrets of all hearts and dispense the eternal destinies of angels and men.

Christ Preaching to the Spirits in Prison.

BY DEAN H. MARTYN HART, DENVER, COL.

He went and preached unto the spirits in prison.—1 Peter iii. 19.

THE resolution of the difficulties of the passage would be enormously advanced if it were certain who are the spirits in question. The sacred writer does not leave us wholly without an answer. St. Peter describes them as "those who

were sometime disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing."

In other words, these spirits who are now "in prison" were living on earth previous to the flood, and were drowned by that catastrophe. They had, too, the opportunity of escaping that destruction by obeying some definite command; this they disobeyed, and they perished.

Moreover, although the narrative does not say so in so many words, still it is evident an exception is here stated. These spirits are not the ordinary dead. If they were, why should the heralding of the good news be only to them? If the Lord, as we might well expect, went on with His blessed work, "liberating the captives," in the other world as He had done in this, why did He not carry the news of freedom to all the dead? Why should the inspired writer particularly specify that it was to a certain class only? And he further defines this class as being "in prison;" which, if language means anything, intimates that they were under a restraint other than that imposed on them by their own natural condition.

It is true Abraham said to Dives that there was a great gulf fixed between them, but it was evidently a moral gulf, because Dives was aware of no obstacle which would prevent Lazarus coming to his help. But in the case of these particular spirits, they were in actual restraint; they were surrounded by conditions which prevented them doing what it would otherwise have been possible for them to do, and which they may be supposed to have been desirous of doing; they were put under restraint to prevent them from associating with others, and going to places where it was not desirable they should go. We may go a little further yet. From the fact that the Lord did preach to them it is clear their imprisonment was conditional, and that there was either present or future hope of escaping from their prison and once more

enjoying freedom. I quite agree with Dr. Witherspoon* that this passage gives no support to the hypothesis of a probation after death, but its support is denied from the nature of the spirits, not from the wording of the passage.

They were not the spirits of men, but of the Nephilim, the offspring of the angels and the "daughters of men." And it was for the destruction of these beings that the flood was sent. If the Mosaic narrative be taken to mean what it says, it tells us surely no wonderful thing: that some of the orders of life above us "left their proper habitation," their proper sphere of life, as St. Peter says, and cohabited with the daughters of men. I say this is scarcely wonderful, much less inconceivable. We have stringent laws to-day to prevent the very same offence. The offspring of this intercourse the Hebrew termed "Nephilim," creatures who were anomalous, born contrary to law; the LXX. translated Nephilim by the Greek equivalent γίγαντες, which our translators rendered again by "giants." "There were giants in the earth in those days." But "giants" is not the equivalent of γίγαντες. The Greek word was the exact word, the Greek giants were the offspring of Cælum and Terra, the Heaven and the Earth, precisely what the Nephilim were.

Why, when we know nothing whatever about it, should we hesitate to accept an authoritative statement of some one who does know? Such hesitation seems to me unreasonable. St. Jude certainly believed it, for he draws a close parallel between the sin of Sodom and that of these angels, "going after strange flesh." True, he may be quoting from the Book of Enoch, but what of that? Inasmuch as the Holy Ghost permitted him to quote, his quotation received the imprimatur of the Truth. Reading the Mosaic narrative from this point of view, certain things

* HOMILETIC REVIEW, November, 1890.

appear to be meant. As soon as the fact is stated that there had occurred the breach of the third commandment, and the solemn and awful descent of "life" had been tampered with, the Lord said, "My Spirit shall not forever strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years."

To say that this verse means that the Holy Spirit, striving to make men live the Divine life, and finding His sanctifying influence so persistently thwarted that He here signifies that the day of grace had reached its end, and the day of judgment was set, will not account for the sequence of the thoughts. "For that he also is flesh" cannot mean that God had power over him; this went without the saying of it. Neither could it mean to say that after a probation of one hundred and twenty years flesh should be destroyed; for the flood not only did not destroy flesh, but it did not alter flesh. For the Creator summed up the character of men before and after the flood in precisely the same words (Gen. vi. 5 and Gen. viii. 21), a fact which must have been patent to omniscience. Then for what purport was the flood? It was the means God used to stay the course of anomalous life.

"For that he also is flesh" is translated by very competent authorities, "For in their erring he is flesh," meaning to say that the Spirit, who, as the Nicene Creed avers, is "the Life-giver," had communicated to an order of angelic beings, here termed "the sons of God," a certain kind of life. By their own deed they had mingled this life with another "kind" of life, and in doing so they had become "flesh." St. Jude says, "They kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation," the condition of life for which they were equipped. This power over life need not astonish us. We even have it in some degree. By altering the environment we can cause creatures to adopt other habits of life, and why should we not believe that intelligences above us

have very large powers to deal with that force we call "life"?

But by this wanton act they had placed themselves at least within the possibility of mortal death; "in their erring they had become flesh," and God announced their destruction to Noah, saying, "The end of all *flesh* is come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence through them"—that is, the orders of life had been violently perverted and intermingled. He announced that yet one hundred and twenty years of probation should be granted. It is not improbable that to Noah was "committed the word of reconciliation." He is styled in the New Testament "a preacher of righteousness." It is certain that if time was given for probation, there must also have been revealed "a way of escape." There must have been given some command, by obeying which they could have retraced their steps in some way and recovered themselves. St. Peter says this command they disobeyed. He particularly states that the act of disobedience was not the act of their fall, or the fall of their progenitors, but it was a course of disobedience which continued "in the days of Noah." Just as it is to-day, the sin of the world is "taken away," but men are lost because they will not obey the Gospel.

It is not without warrant that we may distinguish between the angels who wrought this evil and their innocent progeny. It may, with some reason, be concluded that "the spirits in prison" to whom the Lord preached were the offspring of this sin of the angels and not the authors of the "violence." For St. Peter says that the sinning angels, "who left their first estate," were cast down by God to "hell," and for "hell" he uses the classic word Tartarus, the only word in the New Testament which is equivalent to our word hell—a place of torment; and it is only used in this place and connection. We have no right to suppose that the prison in which the spirits were was this Tartarus; indeed, if it

were, why did not the apostle say so ?

Surely the perpetrators of the wrong and their victims, with their non-consenting offspring, are not likely all to be in the same place and condition ! What flood could affect angels ? The waters of the deluge could only drown flesh ! But the God of the angels "sat above the water-flood and reigned a King forever." He caused the wrongdoers to be incarcerated in the eternal prison. And what of their offspring, and why did they merit the loving act of the Saviour ? There are not a few symptoms that it is only in this state of existence that we are able to coerce or in any way to alter our inner man. We surely here can control our spirits. But what right have we to conclude that we can do so when we are out of the flesh ? Read the parable—the history—of Dives and Lazarus, and it can only be at all explained upon the supposition that Dives had lost all control over his desires, he could neither allay them nor repress them. If it had been in consonance with the nature of things,

would not our Lord have also proclaimed the glad tidings to the rest of the dead ? And inasmuch as there is no intimation that He did so, we may conclude that they had no power to receive the words of life which they had rejected here. But the Nephilim are differently constituted. They have something at least of the angelic nature.

Now angels can control themselves, for if they were unable to do so, those who fell would have been blameless, not being responsible. The Nephilim partaking of this nature, in what degree we cannot tell, are not beyond the pale of hope ; and although they did not accept the way of salvation "while the ark was a preparing," yet being what they were, they were capable of receiving it, although "out of the body." We are not told whether they did or did not, because the use the apostle makes of this profound incident is only to illustrate the fact that the people of Christ must have always the nature of their Master, who was intent on "well-doing," no matter what might be the present condition of His existence.

EUROPEAN DEPARTMENT.

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

The Heart in Christian Apologetics.

It would be flattering the age, but a slander on truth to regard our times as in general marked by great intellectuality. Never before were there so many truly intellectual workers ; but amid the millions who constitute the age they are insignificant in numbers. The great but rare intellects do not give our generation its most striking characteristics. Not a few observers of the times think they discover evidences of intellectual degeneracy in the foremost nations. Laborers are absorbed by efforts to rise into better condition ; the trend of wealth is toward pleasure ; the schools fit men for place rather than for scholarship ; from court circles to aristocratic clubs and the usual social gatherings no

one is impressed with intellectuality as a prominent feature ; and neither the daily press nor the circulating libraries give evidence that the hunger of the age is an intellectual craving.

But it is true that the intellect is set up as the standard by which everything is to be tested. Thus men who cannot define science declare that it gives the only knowledge of reality, and determines all values. Great confusion is the result, particularly among the socialistic masses. But little is left for their minds if they are to accept only what they can demonstrate ; hence they blindly accept what is taught by others in the name of materialistic science. It has become common for men of the world to demand a clear intellectual ap-

prehension and rigidly logical demonstration as the conditions of religious faith. They substitute knowledge for faith, and thus commit the fatal mistake of agnosticism. The results are mischievous. Objects are subjected to mathematical tests which are not in the sphere of mathematics, and vast realms of the deepest human interest are perverted or wholly ignored.

Here is a fashion of the world which is seriously affecting the Church. There are strong tendencies in theology and in the pulpit toward intellectual standards as the sole tests of the validity of faith. Rationalism has its intellectual dogmatism, just as there is an orthodoxy which is built on heartless rationalism. Everything is to be demonstrated as in natural science. This is the Procrustean bed into which religion and morality are tortured. Yet Christ taught that if one wills to do the will of God he shall know of the doctrine; and philosophical thinkers have declared that the life probably affects our thought more than our thought affects the life.

Even where feeling is regarded as an essential element in religion, we hear its apologetic value denied. "The heart proves nothing," it is said. Thus all the testimony of Christian experience is robbed of its convincing power; and yet, if there is no argument in that testimony, then the Church becomes impossible. This shows the necessity of a thorough inquiry into the value of religious emotion as a witness for the truth of Christianity.

Our age has made it an axiom that subjective views do not establish objective reality. If a wish or fancy, a hope or fear, has in itself the proof of external existence, we shall have to go to lunatic asylums for our strongest demonstrations. Not what men believe in is valid, but only what they have ground for believing. Faith and feeling and religion have been depreciated in our day because they have too often offered as proof what is proof only to him who already believes and needs no proof. Frequently feeling has been exalted at

the expense of intellect; and when by undue exercise the feeling was worn out, rationalism took its place. We go from extremes to extremes.

Those are right who affirm that mere feeling, however intense, cannot prove the existence of God, the truth of Christianity, and the immortality of the soul. We know that false religion as well as the true one can appeal to religious emotion. Fanaticism may be the strongest evidence of the genuineness of religious experience, but it is no evidence of its objective truth. But the fact that religious feeling does not demonstrate the great dogmas of religion is not proof that it has no apologetic value.

The religious feeling is a direct and unmistakable evidence of the nature of man. It is a manifestation of the heart, a revelation of the soul. What a man thinks may pertain to objects outside of him; what he says may be hypocritical; what he does may fail to express himself fully; but what he feels is an immediate expression of what he is. What he feels may be deeper than the intellect can fathom or formulate. For spirit, for heart, for personality, for love, there are no mathematical equations; and yet they are actualities. Now the religious emotions give a revelation of the Spirit—of its powers, its adaptations, what it needs, what will satisfy it. Were there no religious craving, then there would be no evidence of a religious capacity. We have religious needs, a religious instinct, spiritual capacity, and that gives the basis and the sole possibility of religion. The psychological basis of religion is more prominent in thought than ever before, and its study has established the conviction that religion is a necessity of human nature, and that therefore it is here to remain. This conclusion has been reached inductively by psychologists, just as scientific facts are established. But if man is religious, then this religious nature must be accounted for. Whence? Why? Whither? Can matter produce the spiritual element in man and interpret the spiritual move-

ments in history? It is thus evident that our religious feeling leads us to the very foundation of human thought, on which every religious structure must be reared. The religious nature as revealed by the feeling is ultimate; it cannot be shaken. Here is proof than which none can be stronger, and which nothing can overturn.

But not only is there apologetic significance in the heart in that its feelings reveal what we are. The religious aspiration of humanity is but a search for that religion which will meet the purest and deepest of human needs. We do not hesitate to say that a religion is valuable in proportion as it meets the religious needs. A religion which perfectly satisfies our religious nature has for us the strongest evidence of validity. If it meets our needs as food does hunger, we can hardly question its reality. We may not understand it fully; but if it is to the soul what light is to the eye, it brings to us proof of its genuineness. I cannot demonstrate its validity to others because the proof is moral, and depends on inner conditions. As we must believe our own nature, so we must believe in the genuineness of the adaptations to our nature. But this belief is not blind feeling; it takes into account all intellectual factors within reach; but the feeling itself is a most weighty element in the total proof of the genuineness of religion.

When now we come to Christianity and see its adaptation to the human heart, we find in this fact a strong argument in its favor. We, of course, supplement the argument from history and by means of all intellectual inquiries. Christian testimony receives its proper place as a witness; and the power of the Christian religion over the human heart receives its evidential value. While thus we cannot claim for the individual heart the value of demonstrations such as are given in objective facts by science, we nevertheless demand for it a most important place in Christian apologetics. It brings proof and evidence, directly and indirectly,

for religion in general and for Christianity in particular—proofs and evidences which no Christian teacher can afford to ignore, and which are especially needed in our day. We do not want a religion which has only emotional proofs, but one which is a harmonious union of the intellect, the heart, and the will; which gives each its right place in relation to the rest; which gives each its proper weight of evidence, and which uses all for a correct estimate of the validity of spirituality.

The Renewal of Life in the Evangelical Church.

THE Church is awakening to self-consciousness, and seeks to rise to higher Christian life and to attain greater efficiency in Christian work. Not indeed all in the Church have been aroused; but the leaders, men of position and influence, theologians, preachers, and laymen, are quickened and are laboring to awaken others. Sufficient reason for the awakening is found in the very condition of the Church. While materialism buried the spirit in the mire, and reduced all that is sacred to vanishing phantoms; while Jesuitism was undermining the work of the Reformation and preparing to restore to papal allegiance the land of Luther; and while atheism among the masses was growing to proportions which threatened to overwhelm the State and society and the Church, professed believers remained indifferent, tradition ruled, soulless forms prevailed, and to the State which governed society were also committed the interests of religion. But now it is clear that the very existence of the Evangelical Church is threatened. Earnest Christians speak of Protestantism as moving along the edge of an abyss. Tones of despair are heard. Prophets have arisen who foretell ruin. Others preach hope, but make the awakening and reformation, or rather regeneration, of the Church the condition of its realization.

The religious literature consists chiefly

of pamphlets devoted to the issues of the day. They come and go like meteors—suddenly, unexpectedly. They discuss the doctrines, the life, the methods, the organization of the Church. However varied the views, in one respect all are agreed—a reform is needed; it must be radical and universal. The Gospel instead of human formulas; Christ as the essence of the Gospel; spiritual power in place of mechanical forms; preaching that is scriptural, but with modern adaptations; more grace in persons, less grace in dead things; the destruction of clerical arrogance and the development of lay activity; the division of parishes, so that instead of twenty to one hundred thousand souls, each shall have but five or six thousand; Christian contact with the masses, in the home, the socialistic meeting, the workshop, if they cannot be reached from the pulpit; the abandonment of quarrels among brethren, and compact union to meet a united foe—these are among the demands ceaselessly emphasized in the current religious literature. The need of reform is so apparent that the failure to see it sooner is evidence of the spiritual death that prevailed. The appeal is now made to Christian women to lend their aid in the mighty conflict; and yet the traditional position of woman is such that she must break with her past record and with present customs if any enlarged sphere of Christian usefulness is to be open to her besides the deaconess' work. Ministers have done their utmost to suppress lay activity, and have ridiculed women whose Christian love impelled them to public service for the Master. The present order must be destroyed to make efficient lay activity possible. Take this typical instance as evidence. At a recent conference in Kiel an intelligent layman declared that he was earnestly desirous of taking part in the work of the Church, but complained that, according to present arrangement, there was scarcely anything left for him but external and merely formal work. Even where ministers are will-

ing to let laymen work, the laymen cannot, it is said, be found, for the reason that they have not been trained, and have had no opportunity to be trained.

Parallel with the demand for the reform of the Church is the demand for a renewal of theology. The thinkers insist that they will not be doomed eternally to chew the cud, but that they will go directly to the Word for fresh food, as the fathers did, as the reformers demanded. A marked change is taking place in the method of faith. It is notorious that in State churches the method has heretofore consisted in the evolution of faith from traditions, catechisms, and creeds. But the religious consciousness has been aroused; men inquire into the source and validity of the traditions, into the authority of catechism and creed. Now there is a demand for a new evolution of faith—namely, from the Bible itself. The living fountain is declared to be sweeter than standing water. The new method makes the personal faith inspired by Scripture the source of theology, not theology the source of faith.

Thus a new life has entered theology, or, rather, the theology of the day is but an expression of the new life of faith, a life created and nourished by Scripture and the Divine Spirit. This theology is not to domineer religion, but is an effort to give the intellectual expression or formula of religion. Hence the demand now heard everywhere that theology is the handmaid of the Church, a help and inspiration to religion. The Bible is original, faith is original, but theology is an echo. Theology is vital only so far as it is permeated by the religious life of the Church. The energy of Christian theology is but the energy of Scripture embodied in a theological form.

How far the new life will be able to leaven the whole Church will have to be determined by the future. In ever-increasing numbers Christians are made aware of the deep spiritual needs of the day. And necessity develops creative energy where it does not induce despair.

Experience has proved that the State cannot quicken or save the Church. Those who are themselves spiritual must do the spiritual work. The conviction that self-help is the only human help possible is relieving the Church of its false dependence on the State, and developing its own resources. Evident, too, is it that mere changes in form or organization cannot do the needed regenerative work. The new life seeks the substance, demands real power, and wants the form to grow out of these, not to be their substitute.

A Berlin Criticism of American Students, Professors, and Educational Institutions.

BERLIN is one of the chief educational centres of the world. It attracts many educators from different countries to study its schools, the branches taught, and the methods of teaching. Recently a number of Americans had a conference for the purpose of discussing American education. The especial aim was to consider the defects in this education, with a view to their removal. As a consequence, the discussion took the form of criticism. The criticisms aimed at the exposure of general evils. It was admitted that these evils are not universal, that they prevail in different degrees in different institutions, that vigorous efforts are made to overcome some of them, and that our education has great advantages and bright hopes. While thus the discussion aimed to get at the root of the defects in our education, it was by no means pessimistic. The subject was considered under three heads:

I. Criticism of American Students.

1. They are not taught the value and the purpose of their studies. They pursue Latin, Greek, mathematics, history, and other subjects, without understanding their importance in mental discipline, their value for scholarly purposes, and their use in the professions and in life. Hence they pursue these studies in a perfunctory, mechanical way because required by the course,

and necessary to pass the examination and secure a degree. The study, not being understood or appreciated, is not rational, is not pursued wisely, and lacks inspiration. Frequently the students learn at the end of their course what they should have known at the beginning; and when it is too late they appreciate what mental discipline and valuable information their studies might have afforded.

2. They learn many things, but do not become students in the best sense. Some place or profession is their inspiration, not a love of study or a passion for truth. The scholarly instinct is not developed, they do not become lifelong investigators. They imagine their education finished when in reality it has not begun. The many who abandon study as soon as they leave school prove that the true student has not been developed.

3. They mistake the accumulation of learned material for mental power. As the Germans say of such persons, "They know much, but they *can* nothing." Their minds have been made a storehouse, but they themselves have not been educated. While their memories have been exercised they have not become scholars and thinkers.

4. They lack method. This is almost universal, and its effects are lamentable. Students from our best institutions do not know how to study to the best advantage; hence they waste time and effort. Not having learned how to handle a subject, their work is haphazard, not systematic, cumulative, and progressive. They are doomed to drudgery where they might be masters.

5. Heterogeneity is apt to take the place of thoroughness. Instead of being profound and exact, their ideas are general and confused. Their minds are quick and ready, but not penetrative. Their thinking lacks evidence of severe discipline.

6. They do not understand the age and its peculiar requirements; hence they do not appreciate the special adaptation of the scholar to the times.

Often there is a lack of comprehensive views respecting the subjects studied. Conceit is, of course, found, and is in part due to the fact that there has been no opportunity to compare one's attainments with those of students in other lands. Frequently there is a marked ignorance of the literature in their favorite studies, no doubt in many cases due to the lack of good libraries during their course. Many have no idea of the value of a large library and of its most advantageous use.

The defects found among students naturally led to a consideration of the instructors and the instruction.

II. *Criticism of the Professors.*

It was affirmed that many of them are not specialists in their special departments. They have neither love nor peculiar adaptation for their spheres. They require too little of themselves and of their students. Often their views are too local; they fail to get the inspiration of the thought elaborated in other institutions and in other lands. They are not progressive, do not keep up with the researches in their specialties, and therefore their work becomes routine. Many are overworked, and teach too many subjects.

Even in the more specific statements respecting professors the criticism by no means applies to all. Many exceptions are admitted. But it was claimed that the criticisms offered applied to a large number of the professors in the larger as well as in the smaller colleges.

1. They teach, but they do not train. Such professors lack the very element which has made the Jesuits so efficient as educators. They attempt to communicate knowledge, but forget that the student can only be educated by what he does for himself, not by what others do for him. It is with teaching as with almsgiving: he helps best who helps the needy to help himself. All truly educated men are self-made men. Professors fail to consider that men are not educated by others, but that they always educate themselves. Hence they do not throw the student enough on his

own resources. The Socratic method is not prominent enough. The teachers seek to promote intellectual growth by means of external additions, whereas it always consists in inner development. The mind is treated as a mechanism, not as an organism.

2. They teach what others have taught, but fail to give that impulse which leads the student to think for himself. Much of our instruction ends with facts or abstractions, instead of giving living thought and exciting fruitful ideas.

3. The soul is not viewed as a totality, in which such a unity prevails that no part can be affected without affecting the whole mental structure. Hence the intellect is treated as if it could be developed by itself. The feelings are neglected; and yet they determine all values. A one-sided intellectualism is the result, which is severed from the heart with its tastes, its impulses, and its inspirations. The will is likewise ignored, and thus the ethical element is neglected. Teachers think their work done when they have elaborated subjects; whereas their ultimate aim should be the development of will and the education of men. The power of the will as an essential element in intellectual ability is not properly appreciated.

It was stated that there is often a sad lack of pedagogical and philosophical principles. The psychological basis of education requires more study. There is an almost irresistible tendency on the part of educators to become dogmatic; they forget that they exist for the students, not the students for them. They seem more concerned about systems of thought than about the freedom, the spontaneity, the mental life, and the growth of the student.

These considerations were followed by

III. *Criticism of our Educational Institutions.*

Especially the colleges were discussed; but the subject was too large for details. It was pronounced a serious defect that our education as a whole

lacks unity of purpose. There is lack of organization. Therefore it represents disintegration, contrariety, and confusion rather than system. Our whole education needs reforming and systematizing on the basis of some comprehensive unifying principle.

Most of our colleges were declared to be only academies; they should be treated as preparatory schools. With their limited means and few teachers they attempt too much. Their claim to be universities and to finish the education is a piece of arrogance. They profess to do much of the work in a few years for which the German gymnasium and university require at least twelve years; and they must, of course, fail. Many of them lay more stress on externals, such as buildings, than on thorough scholarly work. The church institutions are often run in narrow denominational grooves. The teachers are chosen from the graduates, whose experience is limited to the influences of the college; hence traditional methods and stereotyped forms prevail. Inefficient teachers are appointed, and it is difficult to get rid of them.

When the chief aim is training for denominational purposes, it is too much to expect a liberal education in the deepest and broadest sense. There is much complaint of antiquated institutions. An educational scheme is adopted to which all students must adapt themselves, while the individuality, the personal peculiarity of the student is ignored, and while the special demands of the times are not considered.

Owing to the prevalence of false principles, which vitiate so many processes in our educational institutions, it was held that it is not so much reform that is needed as an entirely new beginning. It was emphasized that many American students, after spending some time abroad, pronounce the home institutions lamentably deficient. Some speak with bitterness of their course at home, because it failed to afford them the proper means for instruction and training. Instead of building on what they have

learned, they declare that now they are obliged to unlearn what required so much time and effort in the past.

The whole subject was discussed from the American as well as from the German standpoint. The relative merit of German and American institutions was not, however, considered. While the latter have their defects as well as advantages, there is no question that the German gymnasium and university are by no means perfect. Indeed, the reform of their educational methods is now one of the burning questions in Germany.

Notes.

The Formation of a new Creed.—Professor Lipsius says: "We cannot make a new dogma. Nor is this necessary. Long before the days of Ritschl and Kafton evangelical theology has been laboring to bring about, in the spirit of the Reformation, a transformation of the dogmas; and every one who recognizes the need of this is in duty bound to aid in this transformation. . . . But the result of this labor ought not and cannot be a new dogma, a new doctrinal law, which all members of the Church are obliged to obey as Divine truth. For this demand is Catholic. It is enough constantly to learn to distinguish between the permanent elements of faith and what is but transient dogmatic formula. Whether this permanent element of faith can be put into a new confession, born out of the inmost essence of evangelical Christianity, must be determined by the future."

Creeds are not manufactured to order; dogmas are not arbitrary creations and then stereotyped. He who undertakes the task is apt to mistake his personal confession for that of the Church. Creeds are a growth. And when churches outgrow their creed, they cannot choose a new one and put it on as a garment, but the new creed must be a development out of the new faith of the Church. To attempt to force upon a church a new creed for

which it is not prepared is as foolish as to attempt to force it back into the creed which it has outgrown. Even if the existing confession is not a correct statement of the actual faith, there are always great principles in the Evangelical Church to which believers cling; and it is by faithfulness to these principles that the new formulas of faith must gradually be developed.

Theism and Pantheism.—Can these two be so harmonized as to form but one system of thought? The question is interesting, and no less important than interesting. The problem is now discussed by German scholars. One affirms that pantheism and theism can never be reconciled. Certain it is that the pantheism of Spinoza has no room for personality, least of all for a personal God. But that of Spinoza is not the only possible pantheism. Thinkers now speak of a pantheism which involves personality. A German writer claims that a union of pantheism and theism was characteristic of Herder and Goethe, as well as of Leibnitz and Lotze.

Peter's Pence.—The Bavarian *Vaterland*, a strictly Catholic journal, says: "The Roman nobility which adheres to

the Vatican has been engaged in bank speculations, and has thereby lost the larger part of the Peter's Pence—namely, 26,000,000 francs. Monsignore Folchi, a member of the high nobility and the manager of the Pence, used the money for speculation, without security, and has now lost it. How eloquently has the need of the Pope been described for years, in order to get money for Rome from the poor people, to whom every penny was a loss! This makes opportune the question whether, after such abuses, it is still proper to continue the collection of the Peter's Pence. . . . What a warning! They cannot even take care of their own money, and yet they demand for themselves a State that shall belong to the Church, and ask that other countries shall aid them in realizing this demand!"

In spite of the loss of the money of the poor through the culpability of the noble manager, efforts are now made to secure an extra contribution of Peter's Pence early in 1892. The loss has made the Pope's need still more eloquent. All the Catholic associations of Italy are working to make their gifts to the Pope unusually large. And yet there is no end to the lamentations over the poverty of the Italian peasantry and laborers!

MISCELLANEOUS SECTION.

Realistic Religion.

By JAMES McCOSH, D.D., LL.D.,
PRINCETON, N. J.

I.

I AM a realist in philosophy. I am sure of my own existence and that of the things around me: the earth on which I walk, the house in which I dwell, and the people I meet with. It is this conviction which gives me a confidence and stability in the discharge of the daily duties of life.

II.

I am also a realist in religion. What

I believe in I regard as real, as much so as the things I see and touch and handle. I believe and act as seeing Him who is invisible. This gives a steadfastness to my faith, till it becomes like that which I have in the things which I perceive and taste and feel.

III.

It is thus that I hold communion with God. "Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ." This fellowship is mutual. It is not the Father speaking alone or hearing alone. It is not the believer speaking alone or hearing alone. I

He speaks to me and I listen to Him.

IV.

I speak to God. I feel a want and I give expression to it; I am sure that none but the God who knows me and who feels for me can enter thoroughly into my case. I therefore pour out my soul before Him. I tell him what I want; I tell what I need. He knows it all. But it is a good thing for me to express it to Him. It relieves me of a burden. I tell Him of my temptations, and pray that I may be delivered from their power. I tell Him of my sins, and seek to have them forgiven. I meditate on His love, and seek to be embraced in it. I do all this as I would hold converse with a fellow-man, only with full confidence and assurance.

V.

He hears me. It would be cold and comfortless if I had to speak to one who had no ears to hear nor heart to feel. I do not feel as I would have done had I been required to pray to these cold mountains or these distant stars that will not draw nearer to us. My heart craves for and it meets with a response. Love Him as I may, I am sure that He loves me with a ten thousand-fold greater affection. He hears me as my mother heard me in my younger years; when I fell I cried to her and she hastened to raise me up. So I am sure that God is not afar off, that He is interested in me and ready to attend to my wants.

VI.

God speaks to me. He does so in a general way in His providence, which is not a rule to me, but is a means of providing for me what I need and of delivering me when I am encompassed with difficulties. God speaks to me in a special way in His Word as I read it, as I hear it preached, as passages of it come into my mind. We listen to the voice of God speaking in these ways, as in former times we listened to an earthly

father, as in his wisdom he spoke to us of unseen dangers and means of usefulness. God we are sure has a thousand means of pointing out to us the evil and the good; to encourage us to avoid the one and to follow the other.

VII.

I listen to God. We inquire what is His mind that we may make it the rule of our conduct. We do not leave Him behind us; when we set out on any line of conduct we take Him with us. We call upon Him and He goes with us. In difficulty we apply to Him to help us out of it.

Thus do we meet with God at His mercy seat, and we commune with Him in the secret place of the Most High.

VIII.

The realistic spirit is exhibited in the same way in the ordinary duties of life. We perform them with the idea ever before us that we are doing them to God. We might feel weary in the performance of the arduous duty, but we persevere because we feel that God is calling us to go on. We might rebel against this heavy trial which is weighing us down, say, thwarting us when we were bent on gaining a certain point, or arresting us when we were bent on activity, or removing a beloved friend, a member of our family. But we submit when we see that the trial is sent by our Heavenly Father. A difficult duty is set before us, and we at once undertake it because we know that He will carry us through.

Such is realism in religion. The nearer we come to it we are the more perfect. When we reach it there is a continuity and consistency given to our whole character and conduct.

The Service Preparatory to the Lord's Supper.

BY REV. HERBERT W. LATHE, NORTH-AMPTON, MASS.

NEARLY all the churches of Christ hold some service designed to prepare

Christian believers for participation in the eucharist. With some, as the Baptists and Methodists, the laity take a conspicuous part in this service, while with others, as the Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Episcopalians, the meeting is chiefly in the charge of the minister. This preparatory service is one of great importance, and may be made very effective in nourishing and stimulating the spiritual life of the Church. The occasion brings the people together under circumstances favorable to religious impressions. All minds are turned toward the approaching sacrament. All hearts are peculiarly tender and responsive. Then, if ever, there will be a quick reception of faithful words. The pastor may venture to lead the way into green pastures, assured that his flock will follow. The world is shut out. The restraints and formalities of the pulpit are happily absent. A familiar and affectionate tone is permitted to the leader. Let him dip deep into the wells of salvation. Let him bring forth his most spiritual meditations, his richest experiences, his deepest feelings. He may say things which the world could not understand, for he addresses the mature experience of renewed and redeemed souls.

This is a service to which a majority of church-members feel disposed to come. Many who are seldom at the prayer-meeting are present at this gathering. This inclination, whatever its motive, the pastor should encourage. Without excusing neglect of the prayer-meeting, let him lay stress upon the preparatory service. Without teasing his people to come, and so cheapening the occasion, let him show that he regards it as the time of special obligation and privilege. Then he must make the service well worth coming to—such a helpful, uplifting season that all his people will be drawn to it. This he can accomplish only as he prepares himself with great fidelity. He should offer something different from his usual prayer-meeting talk. Let him muse

till the fire burns. Let him note down during the month any subjects or thoughts which are appropriate to such a time. And then with the preparation of prayer and self-examination, and with the baptism of the Spirit, he may go expectantly and confidently to fulfil his part in the service.

What, then, should this service be? What its aim? What its spirit? What results should be sought and, if possible, secured? The profitableness of the eucharist itself may depend largely on this initial service, and an unwise conducting of the preparatory meeting may actually unfit the disciple for sitting at the Lord's table. "You remember and admire," says Coleridge, "the saying of an old divine, that a ceremony duly initiated is a chain of gold around the neck of faith; but if, in the wish to make it coessential and consubstantial, you draw it closer and closer, it may strangle the faith it was meant to deck and designate." How may this "chain of gold" be rightly hung about "the neck of faith"?

1. The service should be, not only in name but in fact, preparatory. It is a means to an end. It is a prelude, a preface, an introduction. Its end is to tune the spirit for the coming heavenly music. Therefore it should differ from an ordinary meeting for conference and prayer. Its outlook is forward. Its spirit is anticipatory. Not to satisfy hunger, but to whet the appetite, is its object. Whatever else is or is not accomplished, the mind and the heart of believers should be brought into loving fellowship with those vital truths and facts for which the approaching sacrament stands.

2. If the service is to be truly preparatory it should be conducted in the line of judicious encouragement. There are occasions when it is a preacher's duty to make his people feel overpoweringly their sin and unworthiness. This is not predominantly his purpose as he invites them in Christ's name to the Supper. The Passover was festal in its nature. The eucharist is a festival.

Gloom and sadness are foreign to its spirit. Serious it is, and solemn too, but exultant and triumphant. It symbolizes coming joy and perfect deliverance. It brings before us not simply past sacrifice, but future glory. Let it look toward hope. The conscientious disciple approaches it timidly. He remembers what Paul says about partaking unworthily. He recalls his personal imperfection and sin. At this moment he will bear encouragement. He may be reminded that his sins are blotted out. He may be assured that Christ will welcome him lovingly at the table. All the joyous thoughts associated with the saving work of the Redeemer may be rehearsed, that the sacrament, while losing none of its impressiveness, may be attractive.

3. It will not be inconsistent with the above if the service is habitually turned toward a healthy self-examination—not a stern introspection, not a morbid self-analysis, but a devout meditation upon the condition and the needs of the religious life.

Of all the published sermons of Dr. Bushnell, there is but one which might fairly be termed weak. It is the one entitled "Self-Examination Examined," in which he sets out to show that there is no biblical warrant for self-examination. One almost feels disposed to ask whether Dr. Bushnell ever read the Psalms of David, the searching exhortations of the prophets, the probing interrogations of Paul, and the loving admonitions and condemnations of our Lord Himself. The man must be possessed of heroic obtuseness who can read God's Word and not be prompted at every page to search and to examine the recesses of his soul, and Dr. Bushnell, as any one who has read his biography well knows, happily contradicted his sermon by a life in which he almost daily illustrated those quaint words of George Herbert :

"By all means use sometimes to be alone ;
Salute thyself ; see what thy soul doth wear ;
Dare to look in thy chest—for 'tis thy own—
And tumble up and down what thou find'st
there."

The preparatory service is a peculiarly favorable time for self-examination, because it furnishes salutary correctives of the possible evils of "seeing what the soul doth wear." Compelling the final thought toward the free and full salvation, it relieves the strain of a too exacting self-dissection. If a sensitive nature tends toward spiritual self-consciousness or is in peril of depression, the ever-recurring significance of the sacrament revives the drooping hope, and prompts at once to humility and steadfast assurance. Certainly a rigid introspection cannot be named as a foible of modern Christians. Should it not be stimulated rather than discouraged? And what time is more propitious than the hour when the saints come face to face with this supreme privilege of commemorating the dying love of Christ? The apostle seems so to think, for he says: "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup."

4. And this leads to the complementary thought that at this service Christ, and not self, should be the central object of meditation. Every sentiment here gathers around a personal Redeemer. Whatever the topic, or whether there be no nominal topic, the service is to be so directed that, at its close, all eyes shall be turned toward the cross. The attitude of the disciples is to be, in a noble sense, that of the soldiers, of whom it is recorded, "and sitting down, they watched Him there." This by no means implies monotony of thought or of subject at these preparatory meetings, but that Christ is to dominate them all. Many planets may have various orbits while revolving about a central sun. If the writer may draw on his own experience for illustration, such themes as the following have been found profitable: "The Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes Interpreted Spiritually;" "Christ and His Disciples separate from the World;" "Adorn the Doctrine;" "I have Called you Friends;" "The Hidden Life;" "Whose I am and whom I Serve;"

"Such as I have, give I Thee;" "Christian Assurance;" "Hath Everlasting Life;" "Buildd Together;" "Christians should be more than they seem to be" (Matt. xi. 2-6); "Apprehended that I may apprehend;" "Christ's Guest-Chambers" (Mark xiv. 14); "Saving Life by Losing It." Let the speaker bring out the richest themes, so that men will say, "Thou hast kept the good wine until now." A wise use of THE HOMILETIC REVIEW will help one at this point, for many of us can sympathize with Dr. Emmons, who, though a very profound and original thinker, once confessed, "I can chase the game much better than I can start it." Wherever the leader finds his themes, he may handle them so as to present their relations to Him who is the truth. And he will never throw his pearls in the mire if he brings them to the family gathering of the saints, the "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father."

5. It must be added that, from time to time, the meaning of the sacrament should be explained. The explanation should be clear, simple, intelligible. Young converts are continually coming into the Church, who ask, "What mean ye by this service?" Even mature Christians need to have the significance of the ordinance repeatedly brought to their remembrance. Indeed, what minister of the Gospel, though he has himself explained the ordinance a hundred times, does not delight to hear the old story from other lips? Of course it is not profitable to present all the theories of the eucharist, nor is it desirable so to explain it that

there shall seem to be no holy, mysterious, and inexpressible meaning in it beyond what man is capable of putting into words. But is it a recovenanting and a reconsecrating of the disciple? Does it symbolize the death of Christ for our sins? Does it testify our appropriation of the benefits of that death? Is it a type of the union of the disciple with his Lord? Is it a confession of the dependence of the believer for all spiritual life upon Christ? Does it declare and secure the sanctification of the faithful participant, through the spiritual reproduction in him of the death and resurrection of our Lord? Is it a confession of Christ before men? Does it "show the Lord's death, till He come," and is it thus a preaching of the Gospel to every creature? Does it express the unity of Christ's followers in one fellowship of love? Is it a means of grace? Then should these meanings be unfolded before the Church. Perhaps some pastors would prefer to do this in a sermon on Sunday. But these truths will bear repetition, and an informal and familiar presentation of them may sometimes be more effective than an elaborate discourse. But whenever and however they may be set forth, let us deeply impress believers with the fact that of all the seasons which they are permitted to spend with one another and with their Lord, one of the sweetest and most precious, one most to be desired and most like heaven, is the hour when they gather to partake of the body broken and the blood shed, in response to the word of their Saviour, "This do in remembrance of Me."

PREACHERS EXCHANGING VIEWS.

Conference, Not Criticism—Not a Review Section—Not Discussions, but Experiences and Suggestions.

Some Suggestions.

It is our desire to make this department of our REVIEW one that shall prove eminently helpful to all our read-

ers. Reaching as it does many thousands of those who are engaged in the active work of the ministry, and among them many who have had great success

in the development of the forces at their command, we would have it become a channel of communication between these, that the less experienced may be helped by those of larger experience, and the general work of the Church be rendered more efficient by suggestions born of successes or warnings consequent on failures. With the idea of realizing this end, we venture to suggest the following topics for the consideration and treatment of our readers: The Pastor and his Relations to the Sunday-School; The Pastor and the Choir Master; Should the Pastor Lead the Prayer-Meeting? Should Youthful Converts be given Public Service, and if so, What? How to Hold Young Men in Church and Sabbath-School; Should the Sunday-school Lesson be Studied at the Prayer-Meeting? Should a Church ever Contract a Debt? Church Fairs—are they Desirable or Undesirable? Donation Parties—do they Foster the Selfishness of Church Members? Annual Clearances of Church Obligations; The Free Pew *versus* the Pew Rental System; How increase the Efficiency of Church Officials? Women Officials in Churches; Should our Churches ever be Closed? The Church—how far a Social Institution? Denominational Clubs—are they Helpful or Hurtful? How Render the Second Service more Efficient? Is one Preaching Service Sufficient? Should a Minister be a Mason? Denominational Federation in Missionary Fields and in Sparsely Settled Neighborhoods; Do Mission Chapels Pay? Should Ministers Preach Prohibition?

Pulpit Prayers.

PASTORS are apt to run in ruts in their pulpit prayers. They need to give earnest thought and special preparation for this part of the service as much as any other. It will not do to say that because we have the promise of the Holy Spirit to indict our prayers, therefore we should not have any particular thought beforehand what we

shall pray for. As well might we say that because the Spirit will specially help us when we attempt to preach, therefore we need not think out our sermons before we preach them. The Spirit works and helps in our preparations for the pulpit. He does not favor our running into the loosest commonplace either in sermon or in prayer. He does not bless shiftlessness nor slovenliness. All pastors should make special preparation for their pulpit prayers. Let them pray for power of utterance in the pulpit before going there, and let them prayerfully think of some of the main objects for which they should pray. Don't confine your prayers to your own people. Widen the scope and include various branches of Christian work abroad. Pray for missions, tract societies, temperance societies, educational institutions, and the Christian press. I have frequently read Dr. Joseph Parker's printed prayers to give me freshness and turn me out of customary drifts. Try this.

C. H. WETHERBE.

My Way!

My way is as follows: Early in the week, while I have much time and when my mind is active and keen in thought analysis, I select the text and think out the outline of the future sermon. Then I write this outline, noting carefully the leading thoughts, the lines of argument, and the proof-texts, studying here to show myself "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." I lay this outline aside with other similar outlines, and then in my reading and thinking and observing, when I light upon anything that will help me, I interline it where it should properly come. When time and circumstances are favorable, this sermon, which has thus been in gestation for some time, is carefully studied and written out *in extenso* and preached.

O. P. GALLOWAY.

PRAIRIE HOME, ILL.

The Young Men.

IN the July number of the REVIEW A. B. H. desires some suggestions on the problem, How to Hold Young Men in our Churches. For myself I would like to see a discussion of this important question in the columns of the REVIEW. Here are some points that have helped me.

I. *Get acquainted.* A great deal depends upon this. No pastor can hold together and influence young men for good unless he makes a point to get acquainted with them; and so well acquainted that he can call them by name. If we would learn to call people by name when we meet them we would sooner find a way to their hearts.

II. *Recognize them* wherever you meet them. If possible, take your place at the church-door after service and shake hands with them, and make them feel you are glad to see them there and have a personal interest in their welfare. Visit them in their places of business or at their homes and invite them to your home.

III. *Win them to Christ.* Let all the above suggestions be means to this end. When you have won them to the Saviour you have gained the victory. The young people whose pastor is an earnest soul-winner will soon crowd the place of worship.

IV. *Put them to work.* Find something for them to do as soon as they are converted and keep them at it. Let them feel that the Church has a place for them. This will win their interest for and loyalty to the Church. Have a young people's society.

J. W. MAHOOD.

SERGEANT BLUFFS, IA.

Ex-Pastors.

THERE are many pastors whose experience with ex-pastors living on the same field has been exceedingly unpleasant, and some have declared that they would never settle again where there was such an one. Of course not

a few ex-pastors are a real and comforting help to the present pastors. And where this is not the case the fault should not be wholly charged to the ex-pastor, for the active pastor is, in many cases, not a little to blame. Sometimes the latter is jealous of the former, especially if the ex-pastor was his immediate predecessor. The former pastor may have many warm friends, growing out of his late pastorate, and it is natural that these should express their interest and pleasure in him in various ways. But this often tends to occasion the outcropping of jealousy in the present pastor. For this reason an ex-pastor is often placed in a very embarrassing position. He finds himself being charged with trying to "steal the affections" of the people, whereas he may be far from attempting such a thing. There are instances where both pastor and ex-pastor are blamable for the clashing which occurs, and both need great wisdom and much of Christ's spirit in order to get along together in a manner which shall be an honor to both and a blessing to the cause which they profess to love.

C. H. WETHERBE.

To "Communicate."

THE HOMILETIC REVIEW is a great help to the preacher, and through him to the people in the pew. But the writer has in mind the duty of the hearer to make some sort of response, even if it be only an Amen, to the preacher. We know of a church where not one of the officers or leading brethren has for three or four years spoken to the pastor directly a word of commendation of his sermons. This is not because of dissatisfaction, for the pastor knows that he is appreciated. But this knowledge has to come in a roundabout way. Such neglect to say a word now and then to the effect that "I was interested in your discourse this morning," or "Your words helped me," is a matter of habit, or it may be that it

arises from fear that praise may do harm.

Paul says (Gal. vi. 6): "Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things." Words are "good things" in this world, where we are to help one another. The preacher needs not only the financial aid of his people, but the word

that cheers from those to whom he ministers. He does not like to feel that he must go elsewhere, as an exchange, before he can receive the word of commendation from the appreciative hearer, nor wait for some stranger from another church for such a response. He would like the spontaneous word from nearer home.
E. N. A.

EDITORIAL SECTION

LIVING ISSUES FOR PULPIT TREATMENT.

Roman Catholicism in America.

If the son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.—John viii. 36.

To say that the spirit of Romanism and that of liberty are not and cannot be harmonious or friendly, is to voice a truth that is already too well known to need the repetition. It is a truth emphasized by past history and confirmed by present experience, that the tendency of Romanism is to make men, intellectually and spiritually, slaves. Freedom of choice, whether in the matter of doctrinal interpretation, of intellectual discipline, of political action, or even as to the manner of living, is regarded as inimical to the interests of the system which claims pre-eminently to represent and conserve the glory of God. As a consequence Rome is directly and outspokenly hostile, and logically so, to our American institutions. A free school, a free press, a free ballot, a free conscience, are dangerous to her interests and demand her antagonism. Such a thing as individual right apart from her domination she cannot concede. Her will makes and gives right, as it is law. Devotion to that will is imperative, however it may conflict with other considerations of a personal, a social, a political, or even a moral character.

But the love of liberty and the conviction that the right to it is universal are bound to grow in intensity as the advantages of it are seen. Whatever

may be the teachings of the system under which men have been educated, if growing experience and observation prove to them that there are errors in it, and that certain of its demands are not consonant with individual interests, its hold upon them will become weaker as the days go by. This has been the case with Romanism in its experience in our own land. So marked has become the apostasy of those who come to our shores from the Roman Catholic countries of Europe, that a memorial has recently been submitted to the pope urgently demanding his consideration of this condition of things. It represents as among the causes of this defection:

1. The lack of sufficient protection for the emigrants at the time of their departure from home, during their voyage, and on their arrival in America.
2. The inefficiency of priests and parishes of their own for the different nationalities of immigrants.
3. The pecuniary sacrifices, often exorbitant, that are exacted of the faithful.
4. The public schools.
5. The insufficiency of societies, Catholic and national associations of mutual aid, protection, etc., for the laboring classes.
6. The want of different representatives of the different nationalities of immigrants in the episcopate.

In the table of statistics appended to the memorial it is shown that whereas the Roman Catholic population in our land ought to be in the neighborhood

of 26,000,000, it is in fact but little more than 10,000,000, and that the loss aggregates, therefore, in the neighborhood of 16,000,000. Coming from within the Church itself, the statements are certainly suggestive.

The latest census adds to the interest excited by these statements of the memorialists by the statistics which have just been made public. It goes to show that with all the complaints of weakness made by officials resident here Rome has still large interests among us—interests large enough to constitute a serious menace to the institutions of which she is the pronounced foe. At the same time it also shows that the friends of these institutions have sufficient strength, if they will but exercise it with wise precaution and unitedly, to guard them for all the future from the dangers that threaten them.

The total number of communicants is 6,250,045, who are attached to 10,221 organizations, an average of 611. Of the 10,221 organizations, 1469, or about 14.4 per cent, worship in halls, school-houses, or private houses, which, exclusive of private houses, represent a seating capacity of 69,159, while the 8765 edifices owned by the Church have a seating capacity of 3,366,633, making a total of 3,435,792 for the whole Church, which is somewhat more than half the number of communicants.

The total value of church property, including edifices, the ground on which they stand, furniture, bells, etc., is \$118,381,516. The average value of each edifice is, therefore, about \$13,500. The metropolitan see of New York, with its 472,800 communicants, has church property valued at nearly \$9,000,000; that of Chicago comes second, with property worth \$6,457,064, and that of Boston third, with a total of \$6,379,078. Brooklyn comes fourth, with a valuation of \$5,751,907, and Newark fifth, with \$4,297,482. These five sees have more than one fourth of the entire valuation of the Church.

In the distribution of communicants the arch-diocese of New York comes

first, with 572,806; Boston second, with 412,060; Chicago third, with 326,640; Philadelphia fourth, with 251,162; Brooklyn fifth, with 228,785; St. Paul sixth, with 203,484, and Baltimore seventh, with 192,597. There are twenty-two sees which contain upward of 100,000 communicants each.

The seating capacity is for church edifices only, exclusive of halls and school-houses, and the communicants are those belonging to parishes having church edifices.

Arch-Dioceses.	Seating Capacity of Church Edifices.	Communicants.
Baltimore.....	74,024	190,577
Boston.....	142,809	407,536
Chicago.....	115,065	324,632
Cincinnati.....	68,900	129,780
Milwaukee.....	93,011	111,016
New Orleans.....	50,415	181,964
New York.....	148,303	452,645
Oregon.....	11,462	26,164
Philadelphia.....	107,667	251,162
St. Louis.....	102,025	121,621
St. Paul.....	91,180	193,039
San Francisco.....	49,805	112,180
Santa Fé.....	89,370	81,315
Total.....	1,143,336	2,583,612

From these statistics it will be seen that the great strength of Rome is to be found in our large cities. It is in them her power is especially perceptible. As is indicated by the memorial to which we have referred, she feels the imperative necessity of holding on to the immigrant populations that, in increasing proportion, are massing themselves therein, and her hold upon these will depend largely upon her ability to keep them down to their present level of ignorance. Only thus can she work out the political schemes which her actively inventive genius is ever devising, in every one of which is her own aggrandizement. This, her determined purpose and effort, must be met with an equally determined purpose and effort on the part of the friends of freedom. Let them not be deceived by the confessions of waning influence any more than by the false claims of the Year Books, but remember that the price of liberty—liberty of conscience.

of intellect, of political activity—is eternal vigilance and self-sacrificing endeavor.

Dr. Karl Sell, the German historian, describing the Jesuit in "The Church in the Mirror of History," says of him that he is pre-eminently a politician. It is against his ever-plotting shrewdness and never-flagging devotion to "Holy Mother Church" the forces of a liberty-loving Protestantism are called to be ever on the alert. With him everything is a means to an end—the glory not of God, but of Rome; and no means, whatever its character, is

unworthy of his adoption which will tend toward the realization of that end. He impresses into his service not only the virtues and estimable actions, but even the vices and crimes of men, in order to the accomplishment of his purpose. These things are not to be forgotten. Nor should the words of that great Frenchman, whose name is cherished in the memory of our nation for his devoted services and sacrifices in our behalf, be less vividly kept in mind; "If the liberties of the American people are ever destroyed, they will fall by the hands of the Romish clergy."

EDITORIAL NOTES.

Quality, not Quantity.

It is thrown in the face of those who hold to the wisdom of a prohibitory policy with respect to the liquor traffic, that Iowa, a State in which that policy obtains, shows a decline in the rate of the increase of its population during the past decade from 36 to 18 per cent. This is declared to be a noteworthy indication that Prohibition is fatal to the development of the material interests of a community. It is beside our purpose at this time to seek to disprove the assertion, or to emphasize the fact that this declaration comes rather inconsistently from those who have been maintaining all along that Prohibition in Iowa has shown itself a failure in dealing with the liquor problem. Certainly it needs no very clear mental vision to see that if Prohibition in that State has failed so signally, it cannot be responsible for the decrease alluded to, any more than a minus and a plus can have an equal value when applied to the same quantity. All that we desire to call attention to here is that rapidity of growth is no indication of a healthy development. Everything depends upon the quality of the acquisition. Not until the enemies of Prohibition shall have shown that the 18 per cent, said

to have been added to Iowa's population during the last decade, do not represent a more desirable element than a larger percentage of additions would have done under changed conditions, can it be held that that State is any the worse for the seeming falling off in its rate of growth. It is not always an undesirable thing to be rid of a certain amount of adipose tissue or to prevent its accumulation. Most assuredly if Iowa gives indication, as we believe will be found true, that she has solved the problem, in part at least, as to how to protect herself against the incoming of a class of citizens whose presence would gladly be dispensed with in other of our commonwealths, she is to be congratulated, not commiserated. We make no claims to the possession of prophetic gifts, yet venture to predict that she will have no occasion to regret the day when she declared her preference of a pure citizenship to any other. There is that in the Divine economy which counts for something more than numbers, and well will it be for all our States when they shall prove it in their experience.

A Dishonored Office Parentage.

It is to be freely admitted that between 1850 and 1870 the rate of increase in the pre-existing

population of this country fell sharply off; and that between 1870 and 1890 that decline has gone on at an accelerated ratio. From the first appearance of foreigners in large numbers in the United States the rate of increase among them has been greater than among those whom they found here; and this disproportion has tended continually, ever since, to increase. But has this result been due to a decline in physical vitality and reproductive vigor in that part of the population which we call, by comparison, American, or has it been due to other causes, *perhaps to the appearance of the foreigners themselves?* This is a question which requires us to go back to the beginning of the nation. The population of 1790 may be considered to have been, in a high sense, American. . . . For forty years the increase, substantially all out of the loins of the four millions of our own people living in 1790, amounted to almost nine millions, or 227 per cent. Such a rate of increase was never known before or since among any considerable population, over any extensive region. . . . But as the foreigners began to come in larger numbers, the native population more and more withheld their own increase. . . . Population showed no increase over the proportions established before immigration set in like a flood. . . . Surely, if this correspondence between the increase of the foreign element and the relative decline of the native element is a mere coincidence, it is one of the most astonishing in human history.

Such the words in which President Francis A. Walker, under the theme of "Immigration and Degradation," calls the attention of readers of the August *Forum* to a growing evil in American society—viz., the increasing disinclination among our native population to assume the responsibilities of parentage—a fact which is conclusively proved by the statistics given by the writer.

Three possible solutions of the problem as to why this should be the case are advanced, the last of which is favored by President Walker: 1. The two phenomena, an increasing immigration and a decreasing native birth-rate, may be simply coincident and without any relation of cause and effect between them. 2. The foreigners may come because the native birth-rate is declining. 3. The growth of the native population may be checked because of the incoming of the foreign element.

This last solution, as argued by the writer very suggestively, is probably

the true one. The association of the ideas of poverty and ignorance with the large family, as represented by the immigrant foreigners, has led the more refined and sensitive American to a gradual narrowing of the home circle, while the increased necessity of industrial competition has rendered seemingly imperative an economy in the family life. It has not been, President Walker declares, in opposition to certain European sociologists, that the native American stock has degenerated physically, but that limitations have been forcibly set to its development by the conditions of an excessive and largely undesirable immigration. He believes that were a check to be given to the latter the former would return to its normal rate.

Certainly if his theory be true, it will be well for us to put it into practice as soon as possible, to cry "halt" to the foreigner and "forward" to the native-born. We believe that the light honor given to marriage in our land, as indicated by the outrageously lax divorce laws upon our statute books, is largely due to the utterly false ideas which obtain with reference to children and child-bearing. The very highest honor of woman is maternity. So it was rightly regarded of old time by the people of God, and so it should be now. No public station which woman may come to occupy can ever take the place of that in the home. And a nation's degradation has ever attended a declining appreciation of the exceeding honor of motherhood. "Children are a heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is His reward." To adopt and act upon a contrary view is to throw away a "heritage" and forfeit a "reward." If American refinement cannot endure the thought of families that suggest the "poverty and ignorance" of those of certain unfortunate classes, the sooner it loses something of its squeamishness the better. When fashion takes the place of nature in setting the limits of family development it has come quite a way out of its sphere; and if American intelligence is so afraid

of the industrial competition of less privileged classes that it will not consent to enter the ranks of the competitors, it thereby proves the falseness of its claim to its title. That cannot be true refinement or true intelligence which sets itself against a law of nature and a law of God.

Ecrasite in the Pulpit.

Two Austrian engineers named Siersch and Kubni have recently invented an explosive to which they have given the name *ecrasite*. Its power, relatively to that of dynamite, is said to be as 100 to 70. Experiments made with a bombshell loaded with it against palisades representing 100, 250, and 500 men at ranges of 300, 750, and 1200 metres, recorded marks on every division of the palisade.

Every sermon should be characterized by some such efficiency in reaching individual hearers with the truth that it conveys. It should have something in it that is adapted to every one that listens to it; should possess penetrative power sufficient to bring the issues of life and death to every conscience; should strike men with force sufficient, if not to slay their love of self and sin, at least to wound them and send them smarting to their homes. The Word of God rightly applied pierces to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Such application should be the aim of every preacher. Commissioned by One who is Himself "the truth," he should present his message in such wise that every listener might seem to hear the words addressed to him individually. "Thou art the man." Dr. Hunter, of Glasgow, writing of the characteristics of an effective sermon, asks, "Is a good sermon a sermon that the people judge, or a sermon that judges the people?" and answers it by saying that he "is not sure that a good sermon should place any one in a condition to express

any opinion about it, but rather that it should give him a view of God and of himself and of life about which he would prefer not to say anything; one which would send him away to seek the silent meditation, the silent prayer, and the silent God as quickly as possible." The "*ecrasite*" needed in a sermon is such a fulness of the spirit of truth as shall convict every one who hears it of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment and the "*magazine*" where it may be obtained is the closet.

Queries and Answers.

Questions of general interest to clergymen will be printed in this department. The questions sent to us should be put in as brief forms as possible. Answers from our readers are requested. They must be (1) brief; (2) preceded by the number of the question to which they reply; (3) the name and address of the writer must accompany each answer. The name of a writer will not be published if we are requested to withhold it.

1. Name the best work on dancing, as viewed from a religious standpoint.

[Professor William C. Wilkinson's "The Dance of Modern Society," Funk & Wagnalls, Publishers.—Eds.]

2. What instances, if any, does ancient history afford of individuals seeking fountains of perennial youth and elixirs of life for old age?

3. What are the most famous health-restoring springs in the world? F. N. MULLINEAUX.
OXFORD, MD.

ANSWERS TO QUERIES IN AUGUST NUMBER.

1. Masonic funeral services in church edifices, while not uncommon, are inappropriate. Church services are apt to be sufficiently long without the tediousness of the Masonic ritual. This, without reference to the utter ignoring of Christ and His resurrective power, which characterizes that ritual. C. C. M.

ANSWERS TO QUERIES IN SEPT. NUMBER.

1. The answer to this question is given by our Saviour in Matt. xii. 32. The reference is to the Pharisaic identification of the Holy Spirit with Beelzebub. S. I. T.

2. Custom in Evangelical churches makes the uncovered head the expression of reverence; yet God is worshipped in Spirit, and not in form. Arms and flags are frequently if not ordinarily present in military services in the sanctuary. Their presence gives the preacher an admirable opportunity of pointing the lesson of their consecration to the holiest uses. A. S. T.

BLUE MONDAY.

Homileticana Jocularia.

WHILE I was pastor several years ago of an important church in the upper part of South Carolina I had occasion one day in pursuance of my pastoral work to visit the county jail. I was struck with the appearance and behavior of one of the several prisoners occupying one of the iron-barred rooms. He was standing somewhat off by himself and seemed quite intent on a book which he was closely scanning. It turned out to be Webster's Elementary Spelling Book; he turned out to be a preacher of the Gospel in jail for illicit whiskey-stilling in the rough mountain region of the county. He scarcely took time from his book to return my greeting. "A-b-a-s-e, abase; i-n-c-a-s-e, incase; a-b-a-t-e, abate; s-e-d-a-t-e, sedate," on, on he rushed with his lesson. "You seem to be hard at it, my friend," said I, in kindly salutation. "Yes," answered he, with snappish impatience, "I had nothing else to do while I was up here, and so I thought I'd get my *larning*; I never got my *larning* before;" and off he went again, as though he begrudged the time he had given me, mumbling out his lesson in a crooning monotone and keeping time with the motion of his head. I mention my exceptional preacher—the only one such I have met in a lifetime—in order to prepare the way for some exceptional preaching which I shall describe. Not that this preacher did the preaching. Not at all. But if we have such preachers as I have described, why not such preaching as I shall describe?

It was certainly a very original though not a very elegant homiletical feat which I remember to have heard some years ago, in the case of the brother who took a singular text and preached a singular sermon. His text was, "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" (Hazeel to Elisha in 2 Kings viii. 13). He reached the climax of his suggestive discourse—and was it not suggestive?—by ringing the changes on the question of the text thus: Is thy servant a dog—(1) a *suck-egg* dog; (2) a *sheep-killing* dog; (3) a *mean-hound* dog; (4) a *crop-eared, bobtail, low-lived-cur* dog; (5) a *miserable, little, snapping, fire* dog? The preacher certainly got the spirit of the text and quite as certainly, I have no doubt, the attention of his congregation.

I used to hear a preacher, who had quite a reputation in the neighborhood where I spent my boyhood, and who was in fact a man of great power, in some respects, in the pulpit. Though an uneducated man, he had great natural eloquence and wielded much influence. One of his favorite figures of speech he claimed to be biblical. But not so. For example, he described the wicked as spreading himself like "the green-berry tree;" but this gave both to him and his average congregation a better conception of the Psalmist's meaning than the more orthodox "green bay tree."

I heard this same brother elaborating in pre-

cise detail what it was "to be clothed in one's right mind," alluding to the demoniac whom the Saviour had healed, and who was now sitting at the feet of Jesus, "clothed and in his right mind."

A neighbor of mine, who was quite a patriarch in the community in which he lived all his life, and in which he preached for nearly half a century, solemnly told his congregation on one occasion—it is quite likely he told them so time and again—that Israel was composed of the two elements, "is," "rael." Thus Israel "is" the "rael" (*real*) people of God. He wouldn't allow the little matter of spelling to stand in the way of such a hermeneutical achievement.

The old gentleman fairly took the breath away from his congregation one Sunday morn'g with his definition of gross darkness. "Darkness shall cover the land, and gross darkness the people." A gross means twelve dozen, one hundred and forty-four. Take the darkest night you ever saw and multiply it by a hundred and forty-four. Behold the result, gross darkness. Take a great gross and the figure would be stronger still. Tangible figure. Tangible darkness? (Ex. x. 21).

The late Gen. G.—used to go to hear a neighbor of his preach. The preaching was quite as grotesque as original. "Well, General, how did you like my sermon to-day?" quoth the preacher, as the two rode off together from the church. "The fact is, John," answered the other, in his usual familiar style, "it's the poorest I ever heard except one." "Ahem! What one was that, General?" "The one you preached here a month ago." S. A. WEBER.

AIKEN, S. C.

A Ludicrous Wedding Blunder.

It occurred several years ago in this wise. An elderly man who occasionally visited the town in which I then lived fell in love with a lady member of my church. He had been married twice before, but she was a "maiden fair." He was an Episcopalian and she a Baptist. When he came to our town after making the acquaintance of the lady in question, it was his custom to attend his own church in the morning and hers in the evening.

As the time drew near for the auspicious event, the excitement of the old gentleman grew intense. Meeting me in the street one day, when he was evidently under a great tension, he called me by the name of the Episcopal rector, looking into vacancy while keeping his hand on my shoulder. In a state of great confusion he informed me that he was about to be married, but was having some little difficulty about whom to invite to perform the ceremony. Said he, still addressing me as before, "You know that I am a rigid Episcopalian, and I assure you that it would be my decided preference to have you, but the lady insists that she will be satisfied with no

one but Mr. ——— (mentioning my name). "Now, I hope you will take it kindly and give me credit for my wishes in the matter." I assured him that I was perfectly satisfied with the arrangement, and thought the lady did quite right in demanding the services of her own pastor on the occasion.

He thanked me very cordially, assuring me he experienced great relief from my attitude as thus discovered, and, still looking into vacancy, he paid me what he supposed was a compliment. It seems that the rector in question had exchanged with a neighbor on the previous Sunday, and he observed that the supply was far inferior as a preacher to the regular incumbent. Thinking he had done his best to get out of a difficulty, he moved off at a rapid pace, without discovering the mistaken identity.

The next day we met again, and he burst out laughing. When able to speak, he asked: "Why did you not kick me yesterday when I was making such a fool of myself?" He told the story himself at the wedding dinner, amid much laughter.

A. H. S.

Meanest Parishioner.

I HAVE found him. He came to me to be married; said his girl was modest, wished to shun publicity, and would like to come with a few warm personal friends and be married at my house. My wife and I threw open the parlors and turned on all the gas, and made everything as lovely as possible. The ceremony over, the party, who had driven in carriages in the most stylish way, re-entered their hacks and departed, the "best man" leaving a sealed envelope in my hand, which, when opened, disclosed a check on one of our leading banks for \$30. We were, of course, very happy; but not so a day or two afterward, when, presenting the check, we learned that it was utterly worthless, as our generous friend had not then and never had had, a cent of money in the bank. We of course swallowed our indignation and said nothing; but that night about nine o'clock the "best man" came to inquire about the contents of the envelope he had so innocently handed us, saying that upon a similar check, but drawn upon a different bank, where the groom had never made a deposit or owned a cent, he had advanced the money and paid for the carriages and all the other expenses of the wedding. The bride was a beautiful and accomplished girl. By some inadvertence she learned of the bogus checks, and was so overwhelmed with mortification that the groom was forced to come and make a pitiful apology, and promise to redeem the check; but up to this time the parson only holds a promise as worthless as the original check, and at last accounts the "best man" was still out for the carriages. Surrender the case and send on your prize.

W. D. T.

I WAS called to assist in a meeting in Texas recently, where I found my "meanest parish-

ioner." He is worth \$40,000. His wife was dangerously ill. He dismissed the attending physicians to decrease expenses. The elders of the church called to see him on the subject, and asked him if he would let his wife suffer for want of attention because it cost something. He replied that he was not going to die poor himself.

J. W. H.

General Clerical Anecdotes.

WE were engaged in holding a protracted meeting and were having a very precious time, in which many were being converted and added to the Church. There was a family in the town in which was a sweet little girl of about two years old, and she and I were very fond of each other. One evening as I was engaged in prayer, just before preaching, and while my whole thought and soul were being poured forth in earnest petitions for Divine grace, this little child noiselessly left her parents, and made her way up the aisle, and on to the rostrum at my back, all unknown to them or to me, and, raising her little hands, brought them down, one on each of my shoulders, with all her force and with a scream of delight, which so startled me that I sprang to my feet. All who had watched the performance were convulsed with laughter, and all that I could think of was "Amen," which I said and sat down. But upon remembering where I was I called for a hymn. It was sung with some difficulty. I then called on a good Bro. to pray, after which I was sufficiently composed to enter upon my discourse.

A. M. O.

WHEN a prominent contributor to this review was settled in a New England town he attended the Monday morning ministers' meeting at the house of Rev. John Todd, D. D. According to the usual custom, each minister told about his Sunday's sermon. When it came to this young man he told of the excellent impression that was made by his morning sermon, and said it was due in a great degree to a forcible illustration that he used; and then told his brethren the story of a boy climbing up the steep side of the Natural Bridge, cutting his way up in the lime stone, until his knife dropped from his tired hand, and then held on until a rope was let down to save him. He urged all the ministers to use such illustrations. Dr. Todd replied in his peculiar way, "Yes! I have used that same illustration. I wrote it when I was a Sophomore."

C. J. H.

A CLERGYMAN in Iowa, in one of the larger cities, announced at the close of his service that the German brethren would hold a series of meetings in the church during the week, and added that he hoped the white brethren would avail themselves of the invitation to be present also. He meant English brethren. It is needless to say that a smile played over the faces of the congregation, while he hurriedly pronounced the benediction.

D. A. W.