









DANIEL STEELE.

JESUS EXULTANT;

OR,

CHRIST NO PESSIMIST,

AND OTHER ESSAYS.

BY

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BOSTON AND CHICAGO :
CHRISTIAN WITNESS CO.

1899.

BR 85
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Dedicatory.

TO THE MEMORY OF MY MOTHER,

CLARISSA BRAINERD STEELE.

1788—1853.



PREFACE.

The sunset hour of life's brief day has afforded me leisure, and God has given strength to review the themes which have engrossed my thoughts during its early and midday hours. So many and so emphatic are the daily commendations of some of the fruits of those hours of happy toil, which are in the form of books, that the writer has been encouraged to gather another basketful of the same kind of fruit and send it to the world's autumnal market ere the winter's snows shall have covered his orchard. This basket contains a greater variety than he has ever set before the Christian public. He has purposely omitted the culture of one species — the crab apple.

The special purpose of the first two chapters is to cheer the hearts of all Christian laborers with the assurance of the ultimate evangelization of the whole world by the agencies now employed in the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, and to counteract the depressing effects of that theory of the last things which teaches that the world will wax worse till the end of the present age.

The seventeenth essay institutes a search among all the schools of philosophy for a measure large enough to ascertain the proportions of man. The search demonstrates that the gospel of Christ is the only mirror in which man can get a full-length view of his own greatness. The latter part of this chapter the reader will find more interesting than the beginning.

D. S.



CONTENTS.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. JESUS EXULTANT	1
II. WESLEY EXPECTANT	30
III. THE WHOLE FAMILY IN HEAVEN AND EARTH	41
IV. BEHOLDING AND SHARING CHRIST'S GLORY	63
V. THE CALL TO PREACH THE GOSPEL	81
VI. ST. PAUL'S ONLY THEME	98
VII. THE KINGDOM OF GOD	118
VIII. THE DAY-STAR IN THE HEART	144
IX. THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE	165
X. THE SONS OF GOD	183
XI. POWER FROM ON HIGH	200
XII. THE HOLY SPIRIT'S EARTHLY TEMPLE	223
XIII. BUYING AND SELLING TRUTH	234
XIV. THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES	253
XV. KNOWING BY OBEYING	278
XVI. THE GREATER WORKS OF BELIEVERS	295
XVII. WHAT IS MAN?	309

JESUS EXULTANT.

CHAPTER I.

JESUS EXULTANT.*

“*Jesus exultavit Spiritu Sancto.*”—*Luke x. 21, Vulgate.*

A PEASANT youth went forth one day from a mean and obscure country village in the East with the idea that he would conquer the whole world. The method of conquest adopted by this aspiring mechanic in the humble walks of a private citizen was as novel as his scheme appeared to be chimerical. He did not employ the printing-press to laud his merits and create public opinion in his favor. This instrument of power had not been invented and enthroned over civilized society. This young artificer, who had just left the workshop with callous palms, had no intention of raising a new political party to lift him into supreme authority by its votes as a demagogue identifying himself with the “dear people” of whose rights he was, by loud profession, to be the philanthropic champion. It was not in his programme to amass vast armies and direct them with Napoleonic strategy over bloody battlefields to the empire of the world. It was

* “He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth.”—*Isaiah xlii. 4.*

not his purpose to intensify race prejudice and to hurl the strongest nation against the weaker ones in accord with the wicked maxim of tyrants, "divide and conquer;" nor did he organize secret leagues sworn to compass his ambitious design. Nor did he plot to crown himself lord of all by the employment of human cunning and Jesuitical intrigue in the cabinets of kings. He relied only on that intangible abstraction which men call truth. This was his victorious sword. His bullets and bombs, his cannon balls, grape and canister shot were words which have been contemptuously defined as "mouthfuls of spoken wind." His agents were to be no astute diplomatists skilled in making the worse appear the better reason; no philosophers from the Porch or the Academy, but a company of ordinary craftsmen drilled only in the rudest forms of labor.

With a manifesto as magnificent as the supremacy of the world, and with weapons so impracticable, and agencies so insufficient, this uncultured, untravelled, unknown young man began to astonish and alarm his family and narrow circle of friends by declarations implying that his scheme of universal conquest was absolutely certain of accomplishment. He even coolly assumes it as a fact already accomplished. Hear him incidentally drop the assurance of his ultimate triumph over all the nations of the earth. Of a woman who had at great self-sacrifice expressed confidence in his character, sympathy with his purpose and loyalty to his person, he said: "Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the **WHOLE WORLD**, that also which this woman hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." Thus when sur-

rounded by a beggarly retinue of a dozen common working men, as feeble a military force as Falstaff's regiment, together with a few women gathered from homes of poverty, and possibly from haunts of vice, this villager of Galilee assumes without the least waver of doubt that, beyond oceans yet unnavigated, and through islands and continents yet undiscovered, his heralds will surely make their way and lift up their voices to proclaim his right to rule the world, despite the foreseen and foretold resistance of every nation to the proclamation of this new King. And what is still more wonderful, the sovereignty at which he aimed is far more difficult than that acquired and exercised by the Alexanders, Cæsars and Napoleons of history. It was not the subjugation of men's persons by physical force, but the conquest of their hearts by a purely spiritual power working through the enlightenment of the intellect, the conviction of the moral reason, and the persuasion of the will. It is a harder task for a man to make another love and obey him with a disinterested affection and a genuine loyalty than it is to make a million men fear, cower and bow the cringing knee at the behest of armed power. This young man aimed at a still higher mark, the radical transformation of the whole human race from sensual to spiritual; from sinful to holy; from slavery to lust to the freedom of purity; from the yoke of unholy tempers and degrading passions to obedience to conscience; and from a love of falsehood to delight in the truth. He purposed to re-create fallen humanity by extracting the inveterate, hereditary proneness to sin which sooner or later breaks out in personal sin entailing guilt. If you wish to realize on a small

scale the ease or difficulty of this transformation, try to lift some sinner out of the miry pit in which he is rapidly sinking. Go to yonder fallen sister and try to lure her back to the path of virtue; go to that vile rake boasting of his fiendish skill in pushing frailty off the precipice of infamy, and turn him into a self-sacrificing missionary to the Congo State, willing to lose his life to save a soul; join a woman's crusade against the saloon and try to breathe humane feelings into the flinty heart of the money-worshipping dramseller; or attempt the reformation of one poor, bloated, beer-soaked, blear-eyed sot, lifting him out of the gutter and so transfiguring him as to be a fit companion of saints in this world and worthy to be enthroned with archangels in the world to come. Go try to inspire generosity in the heart of that aged miser sleepless on his bags of gold. Endeavor to effect a radical change in these characters whose evil habits are as changeless as the spots of the leopard or the hue of the Ethiopian, by turning their natures from their downward course and making them run uphill toward holiness and heaven. Go forth and try to make all bad people love you, not by warm hand-shakings as a candidate on election day, not by patting vile men on the shoulder and calling them "jolly good fellows," not by flattering their pride and excusing their vices, but by scathing rebukes for their misdeeds, and you will begin to realize the magnitude of the work to which this Hebrew Reformer confidently put his hand. By uncovering every man's sins he proposed to attach him by cords of love to his own person. It was the attempt to perform the prophetic miracle of changing the thorn into the fir tree and

the brier into the myrtle tree—the everlasting sign of the supernatural origin of the Nazarene, a sign which will attend all the Christian ages, for it shall not be cut off. More than the radical change of individuals did he undertake. He put forth his hand to reconstruct society from its very foundations. The sins of mankind had entrenched themselves in organizations and become embodied in social institutions, incorporated and shielded by governments, licensed and protected by law. Might was making right. Wrong was universal. Civil governments, though instituted by God for human well being, had been perverted into instruments of personal aggrandizement to the detriment and oppression of the groaning millions. Neros were standing on the necks of prostrate nations. Liberty had fled from the earth; justice had fallen in the streets; philanthropy was a myth dimly floating down from a long-lost paradise. Slavery was almost universal. Every continent and habitable island, except Australia, was groaning beneath the curse of human bondage without the mitigations breathed into it by the gospel working out its inevitable extinction. The Roman master could, under the shelter of law, chop up a slave into mince-meat for his fish pond or inflict any refinement of torture which his caprice or fury might suggest. Everywhere polytheism, teaching the grossest sensuality with the sanctions of religion, reared her impure altars and lured her willing votaries to the most licentious rites. The Asiatic Ashtoreth, the Venus of Greece and Rome, gathered to her consecrated brothel temples crowds of impure worshippers. Lustful impulses were regarded as holy, and debauchery was sacred.

We who have never seen idolatry are apt to think that it is quite respectable and that God's threatenings of punishment uttered against it in the Bible are altogether too severe. A visit to the idol temples of India to-day would open your eyes. There they are to be seen, as there were seen in the days of Herodotus in the fifth century before Christ the mammoth images of Phallus and its myriads of vile worshippers of both sexes. (See your dictionaries and cyclopædias.) To be more explicit would subject your preacher to the charge of impure utterances in a holy place. Vices now nameless in the purified vocabulary of Christian civilization, but named with sickening frequency in Latin and Greek lexicons, were lying unconcealed everywhere on the very surface of society. Even the men of taste and culture, the poets, were idealizing with all the drapery of an unchaste imagination impurities worse than beastly, making vices unnatural the themes of their muses, and shamelessly confessing their personal indulgence in loathsome practices which in all Christian lands the police would banish from decent society. You will find in an unexpurgated edition of Horace leprous verses which all the gold in the Bank of England could not have hired Tennyson or Longfellow to write. The truth is that when Jesus Christ began his moral transformation of mankind, Rome, the fountain of law, was putrescent in its immoralities. Pompeii and Herculaneum were cesspools of lust, sealed up by Divine Providence with lava torrents and ashes, to be preserved to coming Christian generations as specimens of pagan character, their exhumed walls presenting paintings which vouch for the truth of the first

chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. Through all lands, on thousands of altars, were human sacrifices burning, sending up their offensive odors into the nostrils of the Almighty. Even the worship of civilized men and high-born women was inconceivably impure. Those incitements to vice of which our laws prohibit even the sale, were publicly paraded in every street, and filled the infant mind with a depraved animalism which stifled and poisoned the unfolding of the moral nature. The only temples that could draw a crowd were those of the libidinous Flora and the lascivious Bona Dea. At the festivals of these obscene goddesses, before the Roman day had sunk to its short-lived twilight, crowds, not only of harlots, but of mature matrons, might be seen wending their way to these temples in the *Via Sacra*, not simply with their persons negligently exposed, but in a state of absolute nudity. In the spacious and magnificent baths which the prodigality of successive emperors had reared in the imperial city, both sexes at the price of a farthing were indulged in promiscuous bathing. In the crowded theatres, when the first scenes of the play had been acted, and the passions of the audience had been fired by obscene verses, a sea of voices usually called out, *Nudentur mimæ*, "Let the actors be disrobed," and the order was no sooner issued than obeyed. Obscenities far more polluting than any to be seen in the worst penny theatre that attracts the dregs of New York, London or Paris, were enacted in the Flavian amphitheatre for the amusement of the emperor and the nobility of Rome. Vice had attacked the very foundations of society, and *families were expiring so fast that a premium was*

offered to the man who would transmit a legitimate offspring to posterity. Humankind was gradually dying out, and if the process of dissolution had continued unchecked by the infusion of a pure blood and the preaching of a chaste creed, the race must have become extinct.

Brutal and cruel indeed were the amusements of the best classes of Roman citizens. Gladiators were trained to butcher one another to make a festive holiday. The refining influence of woman was destroyed by the yoke which harnessed her with the beast of burden to draw the plough or cart of her hard-hearted master, man. It is painful to present these pictures, but they are necessary to correct the rose-colored views of paganism with which modern sceptics are regaling our young people, presenting an Arcadian simplicity and purity transcending the moral virtues of Christianity.

But the worst of this bad case has not yet been told. The depravity which was lying on the surface of society was inborn and not the result of imitating bad examples; not a contagion by contact with vicious associations and easily medicated by such outward appliances as ethical instruction, the refinement of the intellectual tastes and the culture of the religious sensibilities. Both Jews and Gentiles believed in the deep moral degradation of the human race. The one reading in a Hebrew psalm, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me," and the other dolefully singing with Ovid,

"My reason this, my passion that persuades ;
I see the right and I approve it too,
Condemn the wrong, and yet the wrong pursue."

Both believed that sin, like the shirt of Nessus, must

stick to a man till death should strip it off; that sin is necessary, and holiness is impossible to mortals. This was deadening every aspiration after purity and paralyzing every effort of men to lift themselves and others Godward. How strong, think you, is the missionary spirit in the bosoms of western frontiersmen and how earnest will be their efforts to convert the red men while they believe the slogan, "There are no good Indians but dead ones"? How strongly will men aspire after present likeness to God, whose creed is that there are no holy people on earth but those in the graveyard? This dreadful creed was producing a universal moral paralysis when Jesus went forth from Nazareth to the task of making a holy race out of those degenerate offspring of Adam whose very blood was poisoned with the virus of hereditary evil. He was not discouraged, because he knew that where sin abounds he could open the flood-gates of God's more abounding grace to wash away not only guilt but the very inborn seed of sin.

Again, the world up to the birth of this peasant youth had been a stupendous moral failure, utterly falling short of the design of its Creator, not because man was without a knowledge of his duty, but because there was an unbridged chasm between knowledge and right moral action. If you had taken a vagabond out of the slums of Antioch or Corinth and requested him to write out his moral creed, he would immediately have set down a list of the sublimest moral principles, with no more thought of living up to them than he had of flying to the moon. His knowledge would have afforded no motive to holy living. To produce this some wholly new agency more effective

than anything yet known must be employed to overcome this dreadful "bent to sinning."

Out upon such a world our Hebrew Reformer looked from the hilltop of Nazareth and calmly prepared for its moral conquest. In imagination I hear him thus soliloquize: My spirit, the breath of purity and love, shall change this vast scene of suffering and sin into an Eden of delight. Before my simple words idols hoary with antiquity and leprous with vileness shall hie to the bats and the moles; cast-iron superstitions which have been a nightmare on human hearts for thousands of years shall slink away before the light of my evangel. The sanctifying agent whom I will send forth shall disinfect the pollutions of the whole world. The humane spirit of my gospel shall break the fetters of the slave; chain up the dogs of war that they no more hunt and devour men; shall climb the ivory steps of thrones, steal into senates and soften legislation; shall exhale its fragrance in the world's schools and purify those fountains of influence; shall silently, but surely, clarify the world's literature and chasten art, and shall liberate music and all the daughters of song from their long captivity to the twin tyrannies of lust and wine, and turn all their bacchanal orgies into holy hallelujahs. That downward trend of human nature I will change into an upward tendency, through the Holy Spirit whom I will send down from the heaven to which I will ascend.

The magnitude of this work did not appall the heart of the young carpenter, though as he surveyed the coming race of men he saw a sight more sickening than Milton represents Adam as seeing when on a mount of

vision he saw the congregated crimes and woes of his posterity all along the ages spread out on the plain below in one ghastly panorama, and Adam, though not of woman born, could not but weep at the sight of his offspring sinning and suffering as a sequence of his own transgression. Jesus with confidence predicts his own success in his single-handed contest with the ingrained depravity of humanity, though well he knew that every radical reformer had fallen before the malice of those whom he would bless: Socrates, the zealous city missionary of Athens, toiling for the moral uplifting of the young men, compelled on charge of religious non-conformity to drink the hemlock; and Hebrew prophets, for their fidelity to Jehovah, stoned or sawn asunder, destitute, afflicted, tormented. His heart did not fail nor his cheek blanch, though well he knew that

“ Right had been forever on the scaffold,
And wrong forever on the throne.”

Nor was he disheartened though, in his prospective view of his own life, a bloody cross confronted him but three years distant.

Strange young man! Did his friends put him in a strait-jacket, or thrust him into the cell of the lunatic? It is not wonderful that none understood him, that few believed, that many cried out madness, and that his own brothers distrusted his mission, if not his sanity. But chimerical as appeared his avowed project, he was perfectly sane. For he has accomplished enough already to prove his ability to accomplish the entire scheme of moral conquest. Jesus Christ rules so much of the world to-day as to remove all ground for doubt that he

will rule the whole at last. The eternities are his. If it is necessary the Son of God can take a million years to lift up the submerged nations, as he took countless ages to elevate the submerged continents. "He shall not fail nor be discouraged till he have set judgment in the earth." Oh! what a boon to the world, what a benefaction above all price is one truly courageous soul possessing unflinching faith in the final triumph of goodness, amid the present almost universal prevalence of iniquity. How that steady and strong soul tones up my fainting spirit! As if in vital connection with the pulses of that mighty heart mine cease their tremulous palpitations and beat with a steadier, stronger throb. Because he is confident we also believe and take heart.

Having outlined the stupendous work proposed by Jesus and the appalling discouragements and difficulties, we now inquire into the grounds of that marvellous confidence which from the very first dwelt in his bosom. Was it egotism and mere self-conceit? Was it a boast groundless and empty? Nay. It was a confidence which knows that it stands not on the sand, but on the everlasting granite of reality. What, then, are the grounds of this assurance? We have disclaimed for him reliance on the sword and trust in money and political combinations, and the prestige of royal blood, and the influence of the press, and oratory and philosophy, in fact, all the ordinary means of attaining dominance over human affairs.

1. No small ground of confidence was the knowledge that death would not end his labors in the world. We are all more or less disheartened by the prospect of death

near at hand. We cannot with the highest confidence enter upon any great enterprise the accomplishment of which involves a period longer than the average of human life. The thought of death naturally dampens ambition and moderates greed in reflective minds. It chastens eagerness for fame to know that—

“The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour : —
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.”

But there could be no such limitation to the enterprise to which Christ put his hand. Death was no obstacle to his purpose to attain the dominion of the world. He knew that he would rise on the third day, that death had no power over him, that the tomb could not contain his body and that hades could not confine his spirit when he should will to come forth in triumph. He knew that death instead of retarding would hasten the universal establishment of his kingdom; that his blood shed as an atonement for sin would shake the very foundations of Satan's dominion over human hearts, and that his resurrection, in exact fulfilment of his prediction, would fortify his gospel and make its evidences as absolutely immovable as the pillars of Jehovah's throne. If Satan inspired the crucifixion of the Son of God, he never so completely overshot his mark and so fatally wounded his own cause. For he put into the hand of Jesus a sword with which he will conquer the world, destroy the works of the devil, and bring in his own everlasting kingdom. The empty tomb of Jesus is an argument which infidelity cannot answer. The earth contains the bones of every

other great religious founder. Confucius's tomb is visited in China; Zoroaster, the father of the fire-worshippers, lies buried in Persia. The dust of Buddha, the Hindoo sage, venerated by 470,000,000 votaries, is mingling with the soil of India. In Mecca the coffin enclosing the ashes of the false prophet is surrounded daily by dusty pilgrims, while the body of Abraham is entombed at Hebron. But who will show us a bone of Jesus Christ? To what spot shall we journey to pay homage to his dissolving dust? Not to the rock-hewn tomb in Jerusalem where Joseph of Arimathæa tenderly laid him. "Come and see. He is not here. He is risen. Behold the place where the Lord lay." Not a bone of his will ever be dug up, not a particle of his dust cleaves to our planet as it sweeps around the sun. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. All are prospectively conquered in his victory over death at the very beginning of the battle.

2. Another element of confidence was Christ's knowledge that he has an ally in every human bosom. Man is depraved, earthly, sensual, and sometimes devilish, but he is not a demon hopelessly fixed in his badness. He has a reason which recognizes the truth. He has a conscience which hears the voice of duty. He has sensibilities capable of admiring the moral beauty of Christ, and a free will which has the gracious ability to elect his yoke. Yea, even the worst of men have an æsthetic delight in the law of God while rejecting its sway. Though carnal and sold on the auction block to sin, the despot, the worst man approves God's law as holy, just and good. All he needs is motive power. This Christ

can supply. He is the dispenser of God's grace. By becoming a man he put himself into the circle of human sympathies. He knows to what part of our fallen nature he can appeal and awaken a favorable response. There is a chord which, if touched by the divine hand, will yield the plaintive melody of penitence and the joyful sound of thanksgiving. The adaptation of the gospel to meet the approval of the conscience, to satisfy the demands of the intellect and to fill the cravings of the affections, made it morally certain before Jesus Christ opened his lips on the Mount of Beatitudes that he would conquer the rebellious race at last. For no more surely is the ear adapted to sounds and the eye to light than the soul is adapted to feel the power of Christian suaves. Obedience to Christ commends itself to every man's conscience. There is a door to every heart, and our Saviour knows the path to that door. He can awaken the sleeper within by a knock too gentle to destroy freedom. He comes with no sledge hammer. "When I am lifted I will draw [not drag] all men unto me." The drawings of Christ are universal, but not irresistible. The story of the cross has conquered millions of hearts, and it is ever new. It thaws the icy affections of the Greenlander, and awakens the stupid Hottentot, while it overwhelms with wonder the man of science who can measure the distances of the fixed stars, weigh the planets, and unbraid a ray of light. Thank God, there is hope for every man, for there is within him a traitor to Satan and an ally to Christ. The ear of conscience may be gained and the man may be drawn to the embrace of his Redeemer. Were it not so I would

not dare to enter the pulpit again to plead with the impenitent. Were it not so Jesus would have fainted at the first glance at a race hopelessly submerged in sin. He would have shunned the fruitless agony of Gethsemane and the useless cross on Calvary, and he would even now, on his mediatorial throne, cease his intercessory prayers and let the hopeless world of sinners lie forever in the ruin to which they have sunk.

3. Another ground of Christ's confidence is the new weapon with which the battle against sin is to be fought and victory won. This is not an invention for the wholesale slaughter of men, like a breech-loading gun, but a spiritual instrument of the highest efficiency never before wielded on the earth. It is a sinless and perfect human character rising in full-orbed splendor upon a world of darkness. There is a power in example transcending the suaviseness of tongues. The author of "Paradise Lost" very appropriately represents Satan as trembling when, from the top of Eden's walls, he first beheld a sinless man and "felt how awful goodness is." A holy man is a living rebuke to all unholiness. Unimpeachable integrity is a battery which can never be successfully assaulted. Argument may be repelled by superior logic, but holy character is absolutely unanswerable. The perfect son of man reveals by contrast the imperfections of all fallen beings who gaze upon him. One instance of a holy humanity is a demonstration of its attainability and a prophecy of its possible universality. The sinless Jesus walks forth upon the earth an incarnate rebuke to sin, in the fourfold record of his life. "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" Enoch, Moses, Job and Daniel had

flaws which weakened their characters and detracted from their rebuking power. But, lo, here comes forth from Nazareth to the gaze of the universe and to the surprise of men an absolutely sinless man, the joy of God, the wonder of angels and the envy of demons. Holiness on the earth is now and henceforth a possibility. Moral perfection is no longer ideal. It is real. From this rock all the assaults of Satan rebound, pouring confusion upon the falsifier. What follows? If stainless purity whiter than snow is possible in one dweller in a house of clay, it is possible in all, else Christ's example instead of being a stairway to heaven is a millstone to sink us in despair. A model impossible to imitate tantalizes and paralyzes. Possibility in all is the ground of obligation in all. "Be ye yourselves holy in all manner of living; for I am holy."*

Hence the character of Jesus is an unconquerable aggressive power. The mythic shield of Minerva had on it the head of Gorgon so frightful that its very terrors turned into stone all who looked at it; but the photograph of Jesus on the gospel page is so lovely that it changes from stone to flesh all who gaze intently upon it. "But we all with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit."†

4. The agencies at Christ's command are another ground of assurance. It was the boast of Franklin that he could draw the lightning down from the clouds, and

*1 Peter i. 15, 16, R. V.

†2 Cor. iii. 18, R. V.

of Professor Morse that he could make it the world's news carrier, and of Cyrus Field that he could use it as a thread beneath the oceans for weaving the nations together; and of other inventors that they could make it light our streets and draw and warm our cars. It is a worthy boast to be able to harness invisible powers and make them toil for human weal. But Christ relied on a mightier invisible agency for the dethronement of spiritual wickedness, for the procurement of which he went down into the tomb and thence mounted the skies to send down the Pentecostal gift to raise dead souls to life and to stamp them with his perfect holiness. To his tearful disciples he said, "I will send the Comforter," the spiritual transformer. By him penitents are born anew and believers are sanctified wholly. He can destroy the propensity to sin, root and branch, and make spotless holiness a reality in living men without the aid of death or of purgatorial fires. After his ascension the Son of God poured out the Spirit of promise, the personal Paraclete, to abide permanently in believers, as their present and perfect sanctifier. Hence his serene confidence in the ultimate triumph of his kingdom. When William Carey, the pioneer Baptist missionary, went to India to preach Christ to the Hindoos, he called at the office of an English judge and unfolded his plan of evangelization, expressing his unwavering faith in the conversion of India. The judge impatiently heard him and then replied, "I advise you, young man, to return to England. You have undertaken an impossible enterprise. You cannot convert the Hindoos. They have a religion older than Christianity, interwoven with all their

social and industrial life, separating them into indestructible castes. They have sacred books of the highest antiquity, learned priests, magnificent temples, and the holy Ganges in which from time immemorial they have washed away their sins." Carey calmly replied, "Sir, I am not attempting to do this work alone. I rely on the coöperation of the Holy Spirit to break down these barriers and soften these hearts." "Well, well," rejoined the judge, "if you can connect God Almighty with your project, I have nothing more to say against it." Jesus Christ can link the omnipotent God with his scheme of world-wide conquest. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

Here a class of mistaken Christians would relax their efforts and lie down and rest. Because God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, they imagine that success is certain without human aid. They reason thus: The agency of the Spirit is universal. He visits all souls. He reproves the Hindoos and the Hottentots as well as the New Englanders. All are on salvable ground. Why, then, should I give my money or my children, or why should I go myself to heathen lands? This is a superfluous sacrifice. Christ will succeed because it is in prophecy and in the divine decree.

This sophistry cuts the sinews of effort and dries up the streams of gold flowing into missionary treasuries. It is true that the Spirit reproves the world. He passes by no human soul, however degraded by sin. With every one he debates the high themes of duty and of destiny. He wages war against every one's sins. But his success depends largely on his weapons. The sword of

the Spirit is the Word of God. It is not his office, since the New Testament was completed, to reveal religious truth, but rather to apply and vitalize truth already revealed to a few to be by them communicated to all. Here comes in the grand incentive to Christian propagandism through sermons, schools, books, tracts, and home and foreign missions, and personal testimony and effort everywhere and with everybody, to shed the light of gospel truth upon their minds and thus put the sword into the hand of the Spirit for his most effective work. He is ready for aggression upon all the regions of sin. At this point the purpose of Christ will fail unless there is something in his religion which secures the hearty cooperation of human agency.

5. Here we come to another interesting ground of confidence in the universal spread of Christ's reign over the nations. The requisite human agents will not be wanting. It is of the very genius of Christianity to multiply them. Jesus had a solid basis for his reliance on men in his conquest of men, in the nature of the Spirit's regenerating work. This is the inspiration of fervent love to God and to men created in his image. This will secure self-sacrificing activity for the salvation of others. This makes successful Sunday-school teachers. This calls young men from the plough and shop to the pulpit, and crowds the decks of departing steamers with volunteer missionaries to all pagan lands. The gospel of Christ generates its own propagators. There is no need of employing cohorts of angels. How wonderful that Christ's conquered foes are his only agents for further conquests! No general suppressing a rebellion expects

to strengthen his army by enlisting the conquered enemies of his country. When General Sherman cut himself off from his base of supplies and of recruits in his famous march through Georgia to the sea he did not expect conquered Confederates to wheel into line with the Federals and fight valiantly for the cause which they were just now destroying. But King Jesus does the very thing which a worldly king would regard as supreme folly. The immediate enlistment of conquered enemies is one of the fundamental and indispensable principles on which he conducts his holy war. He expects every prisoner of war, the moment that he lays down his arms, to take the oath of allegiance, to seize the sword of the Spirit, and to fight bravely for the enthronement of his conquerer. Jesus conquers by love. His victory is the inspiration of love to the victor. The first impulse of every truly regenerated soul is to invite others to submit to Jesus also. If this impulse declines it is because loyalty to him wavers and love has grown cold. Aggressive activity in bidding others to the feast of divine love is indispensable to genuine discipleship to Christ. When General William Booth, in the slums of London, first lifted the banner of his Salvation Army with its significant emblem, "Blood and Fire," and announced his purpose to Christianize the submerged tenth of that great city and convert the outcasts of all the nations, he was asked, "Where will you get your preachers?" In sublime trust in the transforming power of the gospel of Christ, pointing to a row of low groggeries, he replied, "Out of these dramshops."

The gospel's self-perpetuating power is in exact pro-

portion to the degree of love in the hearts of Christ's disciples. Love is the warm atmosphere in which the missionary spirit is born. When Samuel Mills, one of the five young men whose self-consecration to the evangelization of India occasioned the formation of the American Board, was asked by his father what put it into his head to become a missionary, he answered, "Father, it was your prayers at the family altar."

The confidence of our risen Lord Jesus in the sufficiency of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of consecrated men and women to evangelize all nations is in striking contrast with the despair of some good men in modern times in view of the slow advance of the gospel and the gigantic obstacles which still obstruct its progress. Such persons, undervaluing the agencies now active, and forgetful of their long probable future on the earth, boldly declare that the church under the dispensation of the Spirit is a stupendous failure, and that the glorified Christ will soon descend, not to judge the whole race of men and to wind up human probation, but to subdue his foes, not by love evinced by self-sacrifice, as hitherto, but by sheer almightiness terrorizing the stubborn souls which would not yield to the suaves of love divine and of saving truth applied by the Holy Spirit. How does this faintheartedness of eclipsed faith contrast with the courage and steadiness of the Son of God! While some of his disciples lose heart and despair paralyzes their sinews, he bids us go bravely forward to certain victory. He knows that greater Luthers will arise to challenge hoary errors; that new Wesleys will come forth in future generations to breathe spiritual life into dead churches

and to lift Christendom to the summits of holy character; that poets sweeter than Watts and Charles Wesley will touch the sacred lyre; that mightier Whitefields will fly over the continents and oceans, like the angel of the Apocalypse, preaching with overwhelming power. He sees future David Livingstones and William Taylors exploring the last dark corners of the world to hunt up the last pagan soul and to lead him to Christ. He sees rolling down the future ages tidal waves of revival power drowning out unbelief, purging our great cities, sweeping away the saloon and the brothel and all other fountains of crime. Christianity is not a spent shot moving against the enemy's works.

6. Another reason why Christ is not discouraged is found in the foreseen fact that the world will always be ruled in the interest of his kingdom. "For he is head over all things unto his church." The rise and fall of empires alike will impel the chariot of King Jesus onward. The results of all modern wars have been overruled for the breaking down of barriers to the extension of Christ's kingdom. If war is to lift its horrid front in the future, the outcome will be the humiliation of barbarism, the opening of larger missionary fields, and the better protection of the messengers of salvation. Study the political history of the world since on the day of Pentecost the risen Christ "opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers," and see how great events have wonderfully conspired to enthrone him over the nations. Well may Mr. George Bancroft, a secular historian, say, "I find the name of Jesus Christ written at the top of every page of modern history."

How comes it that Bible-reading nations are in the ascendant over all the world to-day—their commerce steaming over every sea, their power acknowledged by Turks and all other barbarians that roam the land and the wave, their navies thundering along every coast? Our Lord Jesus is at the world's helm is the sufficient answer, and he is no pessimist.

After reviewing these grounds of Christ's confidence let us now inquire what effect should his calm assurance have on his disciples who are still in the midst of the battle. Should it not be the antidote for that bane of Christian effort, discouragement because of small results? Because whole nations have not been evangelized within the memory of living men, some people are ready to give up the cause of despair. Such people need the tonic of a stronger faith arising from an upward look at the glorified Head of the Church. Calmly he stands

“ Out of whose hand
The centuries roll like grains of sand,”

offering his ceaseless intercessory prayer with unfaltering faith in his final success, though idolatries cast their dark shadows across the continents, and semi-paganism, baptized in the name of Christ, buries the simple gospel beneath a mass of traditions, hiding his saving power, and teaching ignorant souls to offer ten prayers to Mary to one to the Son of God. Yet he does not lose heart. For this reason we should not. Hear his words, “Be of good cheer; I have overcome.”

Remember how it was in the darkest day of our nation's recent struggle to keep the Union founded by Washington from being blotted out forever. Many

faint-hearted patriots were inclined to allow the dismemberment of the Republic, and others were despondently sighing, "We cannot conquer eleven seceding sovereign States," and all foreign nations reëchoed the doleful cry. The Federal credit was rapidly falling and Confederate bonds were selling at a higher price in London than the United States' securities, and gold was more than 250 per cent premium, and reverses attended our army of the Potomac, and our brave boys in blue were starving in Southern prisons, and our great commercial metropolis was in the hands of a bloody mob resisting the draft by plundering houses, burning negro orphanages and terrorizing the citizens. How was the faith of the loyal people kept from a total collapse? Next to trust in God and the justice of our cause, the confidence of the mass of the people hung upon their leaders. Had Lincoln and Grant, Stanton and Chase, these four men, in the year 1864 issued a statement that the Federal cause was a hopeless failure, their despair would have palsied the hands of the loyal people, and the noblest and freest nation beneath the sun would have been rent asunder. But under the Spirit of our God, the pluck of our leaders, those providential men, saved our Republic by toning up the hearts of the masses who were loyal to the old flag. Their words of cheer in those gloomy days fell on fainting patriots and held them back from the slough of despond, the gulf of ruin. So, my Christian friends, in the great war against sin and all the powers of darkness let us keep near our divine Captain, and hear his words of cheer, and catch the hopefulness which animates him who "shall not fail nor be discouraged till he has set judg-

ment in the earth." Amid the convulsions of empires, the downfall of nations, and the apparent fluctuations of his kingdom, the great spiritual temple is noiselessly going up, stone upon stone. The Master Builder looks calmly through the storms and tempests which drive away the workmen and seemingly retard the work. Yet the sublime edifice is to the omniscient eye always rising till the cap-stone shall be brought forth with shoutings, and Jesus, looking from the skies, shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied with the full realization of his purpose.

Beloved, I have come to you uttering no doleful words of despair, but rather of hope and assurance. Yours is the exceedingly great privilege of enlisting in a cause destined to succeed. The banner of the cross will never be folded up and laid aside on the shelf of the antiquary labelled, "The Lost Cause." Ye are called to fight under a captain whose confidence never falters, whose courage was never shaken, and whose triumph over the serried ranks of foes is more certain than to-morrow's sunrise. At his coming coronation he will not be ashamed to acknowledge as his brethren all who have valiantly stood by his banner amid the smoke of the battle. Be heroic in the service. Be discouraged by no obstacle. Be daunted by no foe. Preach a large gospel, adequate to man's deepest needs, the good news of complete deliverance from sin. Be aggressive. Panoplied of God go forth and bring in trains of captive enemies transformed into friends whom Christ, the great Captain, will soon lead through the lifted gates in glorious triumph. You are to share his glory. "The glory which thou hast given

me, O Father, I have given them." "He that overcometh shall sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

Our subject has a national as well as a personal application. In every war there is a decisive battle, and in every battle a critical moment, a turning point, called by the Greeks *τροπή*. It would seem that God has chosen the United States as the great battlefield of the world, and the close of the nineteenth century as the critical hour in the momentous contest between Christ and Apollyon, the commander-in-chief of the hosts of darkness. We need to be on our guard against political pessimism to which we are specially liable because of the disposition of politicians to beslime one another. It is true that there are evils in our glorious Republic which threaten its life. But there is a hopeful outlook. One of the greatest perils has recently disappeared. The crime of human chattelism was abolished not less by the rising tide of the Christian world's moral condemnation than by the exigency of the Union. There is a power which can mitigate, subdue and finally extinguish the haughty spirit of caste and the bitter race hatreds which disturb our national peace and disfigure our Christian civilization. That power is love to God and man. This love is shed abroad in believing hearts by the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven by our glorified Redeemer. The concluding clause from which our motto in Isaiah is taken is this, "And the isles shall wait for his law." The recent victories of our navies, as marvellous as any in Old Testament history, not excepting Joshua's discomfiture of the Amorites at Gibeon, have placed the

last waiting islands where the gospel can elevate and save their degraded, benighted and oppressed millions. May the future historian of our Republic never have to record that American Christians failed and became discouraged in view of the Herculean task providentially laid upon us in the victories of Manila and Santiago. Rather let us rejoice because the Head of the church, our ascended Christ, has entrusted us with this great responsibility, and honored us by making our nation a prominent instrument for setting judgment in the earth and enthroning his law over the long-waiting isles. It is true that our free institutions may be subverted by two millions of voters unable to read their ballots. But we have the light by which this appalling ignorance may be dispelled, the light of gospel truth, an open Bible, and millions eager to read and thousands impatient to put into their hands the spelling-book, the key of all knowledge, and the Bible, the safeguard of all freedom. An African college president making the most highly praised address at the opening of the great Southern Exposition at Atlanta is the leader of a procession of respected, learned and eloquent Africans to whom future generations of white men and women will listen with pleasure and patriotic pride. A pure gospel fearlessly preached through all our country north, south, east and west, will unify our people and cement our Union till the end of the world. There are in our metropolitan city indications that the reign of King Alcohol over law and law-makers is to come to an eternal end. It cannot endure the faithful preaching of the gospel of purity and temperance by the teacher in the public school, by the

parent at home, and by men and women on the platform and in the pulpit. The cause has already made rapid strides over vast areas of our country, especially over the Southern States. It is destined to be universal. A gratifying and significant token of this is the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church towards this baleful traffic in intoxicants. This completes the solidarity of the organic Christianity of America against this iniquity.

To Christianity alone do we confidently look for the cure of customs and practices which cause the decay of the family—the social evil, club life and easy divorce. These will wither and die as the spirit of Christ more and more purifies the individual and sanctifies society.

In conclusion we remark that he who never felt the first tremor of fear or shade of doubt is more than a man. It is human to feel despondency at times. The wisest and holiest of men have sometimes felt despair chilling their enthusiasm and paralyzing their strength. The secret of Christ's calm self-reliance and unshaken assurance of success is that he is God manifested in the flesh, having all the resources of omnipotence for his work and the lifetime of the eternal Father for its completion. No other theory of his person is a satisfactory explanation of his unique and unflinching hopefulness.

“ Jesus is God! If on the earth
This blessed faith decays,
More tender should our love become,
More plentiful our praise.
We are not angels, but we may
Down in earth's corners kneel,
And multiply sweet acts of love,
And murmur what we feel.”

CHAPTER II.

WESLEY EXPECTANT.

WHEN John Wesley took for his motto, "The world is my parish," he was impelled by the expectation that the whole world would be evangelized and Christ's kingdom would be completed before his coming to judge the whole human family. But he is claimed by those who insist that Christ's second coming will be to begin his kingdom, and to complete it by his visible reign during a thousand years. This brings us to the question, Was Wesley a premillennialist?

We answer yes, and no. There is a great variety of chiliasts—a term preferable for brevity. Hardly any two agree in their speculations. But one question divides them all into two distinct and antagonistic groups: "Is Christ's kingdom completed before his second advent?" The first group answers, "Yes;" the second says, "No, the kingdom is set up after Christ's descent and is completed by the conversion of the Jews first and the ingathering of hosts of Gentiles through the preaching of Christian Jews. The present dispensation was not designed to disciple all nations, but to preach the gospel for a witness, and to gather Christ's bride, an elect number who are to be associate judges and joint rulers with him a thousand years on the earth. The world is rapidly sinking into moral ruin which the church, even when filled with the Holy Spirit, is unable

to save. The spectacular descent and coronation of Christ on David's throne in Jerusalem, a human form encompassed by the splendors of divine majesty, chaining and imprisoning Satan and awing wicked men, is the only hope of the church." The second group includes nearly all the modern chiliasts, who are further characterized by a denial of the simultaneous resurrection and the general judgment of mankind, the righteous and the wicked together. Our first group insists that the world is growing better under the spread of the gospel at home and in pagan lands, gradually leavening human society with the spirit of the pure, meek and holy Christ; and is heroically planning for the conquest of the world through missionary agencies endowed with the Holy Ghost.

To which of these groups did Wesley belong? You can easily classify him by asking the following questions: Did he preach the gospel for a witness merely, or for the conversion of the world of lost sinners? Did he believe in unconditional election, who spent his life on one long battle against the five points of Calvinism, and altered Bishop Ken's doxology and taught his people to sing:

" Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
Praise him, all creatures here below,
Who would not have one sinner lost;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost " ?

Was Wesley a pessimist? Did he despair of the present dispensation? Was Methodism born of pessimism? Did Wesley believe and teach that one sinner would be forgiven after Jesus ceased his mediatorial intercessions and mounted the judgment throne at his second coming?

All persons who have any knowledge of the life and writings of John Wesley will say "No" to every one of these questions.

Let us examine his "Notes on the New Testament," issued in 1754 and revised in 1787, four years before his death. Turn to his note on Acts iii. 21—"until the times of restitution of all things:" "The apostle here comprises at once the whole course of the times of the New Testament between our Lord's ascension and his coming in glory. The most eminent of these are the apostolic age, and that of the spotless church, which will consist of all the Jews and Gentiles united, after all persecutions and apostasies are at an end." Mark! This is before Christ's "coming in glory." This is in exact accord with the exegesis of Meyer: "Christ's reception into heaven continues until the moral corruption of the people of God is removed." There is no place for pessimism here. If Wesley must be called a chiliast, as Tyerman, his biographer, says, he cannot be classed with the modern premillenarians who insist that the devil is engineering both the church and the world on the down grade with no brake on the wheel and an open draw-bridge just ahead, and the only rescue is the visible descent and coronation of Christ.

Turn, now, to Rev. xx., the only millenarian chapter in the Bible, and that, too, in its most symbolic and enigmatic book. Wesley follows Bengel quite closely. The angel descending with the chain is not Christ. "The binding and loosing, the beginning and ending of the thousand years will not be known to men upon earth; the saints will reign with Christ a thousand years in

heaven"—not on the earth, after Satan has been bound another thousand years. From the invisible binding of Satan to the first visible appearance of Christ on the great white throne is two thousand years *plus* "a little season." We infer from the dreadful massacres of 100,000 men in Armenia that Satan in the form of organized public hostility to Christ has not up to date been bound and put under lock and key, though the gospel's advance has greatly diminished his power. According to Wesley's exegesis we are living more than two thousand years before the time when Christ will visibly appear on the earth. Why Wesley is called a premillennialist is a conundrum too hard for the student of Wesley's Notes. If his earlier writings, sermons and hymns contain any teaching which would be called chiliasm, it certainly cannot be of the modern sort which regards the present dispensation insufficient for the conquest of the world and extends human probation at least a thousand years after Christ's second coming. Even Tyerman, while calling Wesley "a millenarian," admits in reference to his "Notes on Rev. xx." and his sermons on "The Great Assize," "The General Deliverance," "The General Spread of the Gospel" and "The New Creation," that "there may be found in some of them statements scarcely harmonizing with the millenarian theory."

The second coming of Christ, the general resurrection, the general judgment and the conflagration of the world are all so closely connected that it is impossible to wedge in the personal reign of Christ during a millennium. Hence even our first group have insuperable difficulties in harmonizing their theory with the Bible; while the

second, in teaching the salvation of sinners after the coming of Christ to judge the quick and the dead, maintain the following paradoxes: Repentance, without the chief motive, the appointed day of future judgment, and repentance unto salvation after the intercession of Christ, the giver of repentance, has ceased; conviction of sin after the Divine Reprover has withdrawn from the world; the new birth after "the ascent of the Holy Ghost" (Dr. A. J. Gordon); assurance of sonship to God without the Spirit of adoption; public committal to Christ without water baptism and the teaching of his commands, both of which terminate at his second coming; growth in grace without its chief appointed means, the holy eucharist "showing forth the Lord's death *till he come*;" Christian maturity attainable by the study of an outgrown and exhausted Bible whose incentives to purity, hope, fidelity, watchfulness and patience are all in view of "the coming of the Lord;" and, finally, salvation by sight, not by faith.

It will be impossible to prove that Wesley ever endorsed such a jumble of contradictions. We do not hesitate to say that were he living to-day he would earnestly oppose the distracting theories of the modern premilenarians, fitly represented by Dr. A. B. Simpson in a recent sermon: "Millions are giving and working to-day to get the world converted instead of working intelligently with Christ to gather out a people for his name, and to hasten his return and the inauguration of that day which will accomplish more for the conversion of the world than all the centuries of our ignorance and failure." The inference is natural that Congregation-

alists should cease to support the American Board in its divinely inspired purpose "to get the world converted," that the Baptists should cease to prosecute the work begun by Dr. Judson, and that Methodists should abandon the glorious missionary scheme inspired by Wesley and initiated by Dr. Coke, and all quit their "ignorance and failure" to disciple all nations because of following these blind leaders, and should begin "to work intelligently" under the guidance of modern millennialism "to gather out a people for his name, to hasten Christ's return to accomplish more" by one stroke of his omnipotence for the conversion of the world than all the prayers, tears, toils and sacrifices of all the preceding centuries!

When speculative vagaries are entertained as theories only, they may do little damage, but when they are put in practice they become ruinous. It is time that all our periodicals and all our pulpits should rebuke this spreading practical error.

The intensely evangelistic career of Wesley and his faith in the gospel of Christ as sufficient for the conquest of the whole world in the pentecostal dispensation have impressed his followers with an optimistic hopefulness. Hence Methodism opposes pessimism.

The present age has witnessed the uprising of a numerous company of prophets of despair. They go about teaching the dismal doctrine that the world is growing worse and worse, that it is like a ship so badly wrecked that there is no hope of saving her under the management of her present captain and crew, and the best thing to be done is to rescue as many passengers as possible before she goes entirely to pieces. This is Mr. Moody's

favorite illustration. In fact it is openly declared that the efforts of our Missionary Boards to save the world are a waste of time and treasure which might be spent more profitably in "preaching the gospel to all nations for a witness" and thus hasten the end of this ineffective dispensation of the Holy Spirit, and the inauguration of the personal reign of Christ on David's throne in Jerusalem. Then Jews and Gentiles will be converted in a wholesale way, and the gospel will speedily dominate the whole world. Nearly all modern millenarians are pessimists. Many millenarians of former times were not of this type, but rather thorough believers in the possibility of the conquest of the world by the church vitalized and energized by the Divine Paraclete. The difference between these two types of religious teachers arises from the fact that the one believes that the kingdom of Christ will begin after he comes, and the other that it will be completed before he comes. The latter will naturally bend all their energies to the glorious work of converting the world, believing that no sinners will be saved after Christ descends on his throne of judgment. Both John Wesley and John Fletcher had sympathy with this view. It presents nothing specially repugnant to Methodism, nothing to discourage, to paralyze and to cut the sinews of effort. It does not dishonor the Holy Spirit and discredit the church, as the other view is constantly doing. From the very beginning Methodism has magnified the Holy Ghost in his various offices. It is his immediate contact with the soul of the penitent believer which is the distinguishing doctrine of Wesley. It is "the spirit of adoption" crying in the heart, "Abba,

Father," which is the key-note of Methodism. Her doctrine of entire sanctification magnifies the Pentecostal dispensation. The universality of the atonement demands the parallel doctrine of the universal effusion of the Spirit in the conviction and conditional regeneration of the world of mankind. Wesley would set no limits to the work of the Spirit. Were he living now his voice would be loud and vehement against the teaching that the mission of the Spirit was not designed to reach and conditionally save all men, but only a very few to constitute Christ's elect bride, and that after the failure of the Spirit to sway the mass of men Christward, he would himself awe them into submission by the majesty of his visible presence. No true followers of Wesley can have patience with such an utterance as gospel truth. These are some of our reflections as we read these disheartening words of a celebrated living evangelist, "that one reason for discouragement in missions was that we were sometimes working on the basis of an expectation of converting the world in this dispensation, whereas the true Biblical hope authorized in the Word is only an outgathering from all nations of a people for God. If we expect the conversion of the world under this dispensation we have no authority for it in the Word, and the facts after 1900 years are utterly disappointing, whereas if we accept the other basis it is not only scriptural, but historical, for the facts bear us out, for that is exactly what God is doing." This means that he is not trying to save the whole world at present, but only a few to enjoy his favor as his bride, or to constitute his kingly cabinet, when his visible kingdom shall

be established by his coronation at Jerusalem. If there is no authority in the Word for the conversion of the world now, it is remarkable that scores of missionary societies in Europe and America, after a diligent study of the Bible, should undertake this impossible enterprise on the basis of the command in the great commission, "Go ye and disciple all nations," and the promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," or till I come again at the end of "the age" (R. V., margin).

If this great charter on which all our missionary enterprises are based teaches anything, it teaches the possibility of making disciples of all nations and it pledges the presence of Christ from that hour. That presence has been an invisible spiritual presence during nearly two thousand years. The inference is natural that Christ will remain invisible until the conquest of the world shall have been accomplished. This tallies exactly with Acts iii. 21, thus translated and annotated by Meyer, the celebrated exegete, "Whom the heaven must receive until such times have come, in which all things will be restored. Before such times set in, Christ comes not from heaven, such times as shall precede the Parousia (presence)." In Rom. xi. 25 Paul teaches that "when the totality of the Gentiles shall be converted, then the conversion of the Jews in their totality will also ensue. All this, therefore, before the Parousia, not by means of it" (Meyer). The parable of the leaven "hidden in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened" has always been understood as an assurance of the ultimate conquest of all nations by the assimilating power of the gospel through the agency of the church vitalized and ener-

gized by the Holy Spirit. Who can endure the interpretation that "this parable teaches the progress of corruption and deterioration" in Christ's visible church before the millennium? Yet some people outside of the insane asylum are thus interpreting this parable in the interest of pessimism. Such teachers of error are successful in gathering a large following in the evangelical churches, because of a widely prevailing desire to hear "the last things" preached in the modern pulpit. Since the topic of the second advent was wofully discredited in 1843 by William Miller's false midnight cry, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh," there has been a silence almost universal on this subject in American pulpits. The result is an unrest on the part of the laity and a neglect of prophetic studies by the clergy so long continued as to disqualify them for the clear statement and defence of this line of truth. Their thoughts are chaotic, "without form and void, and darkness is upon the face of the deep." The Apocalypse is usually skipped in our schools of theology on the ground that nobody understands it. But a brighter day is dawning. Progressive men like Prof. Moses Stuart of Andover and Prof. Cowles of Oberlin blazed the path which younger men like Dr. Harper are widening and grading. The principle underlying this method is the application of the prophecy to the condition of the people to whom they were spoken, with an occasional forward glance, by way of encouragement, to the coming Messiah. All the imagery of Daniel applies to events before Christ instead of the pope and Martin Luther, etc., many centuries distant. Prof. Cowles and Prof. Stuart show that the first eighteen

chapters of the Revelation were designed for the encouragement of the seven churches in view of the bloody persecutions during the ten years preceding the destruction of Jerusalem. The study of these modern exegetes, and especially of Dr. David Brown's masterly book, "The Second Advent" will bring order out of chaos and prepare the preacher to proclaim "the whole counsel of God."

CHAPTER III.

THE WHOLE FAMILY IN HEAVEN AND EARTH.*

WHILE God is the CREATOR of all the animal species that walk the earth and sport in the waters and fly in the air, he is the FATHER of rational and moral intelligences only. There is in the Holy Scriptures a restricted use of this term which must be carefully observed by all who would not fall into the deadly embrace of modern liberalism. Therefore in the interest of clearness of thought and in vindication of Christian truth, let us see first what we mean by the phrases "children of God," "sons of God" and "fatherhood of God." Strictly speaking, there is but one Person so linked to God by the genetic tie as to be "the Son of God." Hence he is "the only begotten Son." His being is grounded on the divine *nature* and is without time limits. He is the eternal Son. All other beings are grounded not on the nature of God, but upon his *will*, within time limits. They are creatures. The Divine Logos is never spoken of in the Holy Scriptures as a creature. God is never called the creator, but the Father, of our Lord Jesus Christ. His sonship is unique and unshared by any other being

* Eph. iii. 14. The Authorized Version, "*whole family*," instead of the Revised Version, "*every family*," or (margin) "*every fatherhood*," is strongly sustained by "The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges," in harmony with chapter i. 10, where "all things in heaven and earth" are summed up in Christ as head, and with ii. 21, where "all the building," and not "each several building," is being completed for "a holy temple in the Lord." The Greek for "all" or "the whole" is the same in the last passage as it is in the motto of this chapter.

in the universe. Sonship to God, when applied to others, is figurative, as is also the fatherhood of God. What then is signified when an archangel or a man is called a son of God? There are several things in the relation of a human son to a father which might be the foundation of this metaphor, such as actual descent and possession of the identical nature—which we have disclaimed for all creatures—or resemblance, imitation, obedience, love; qualities which may be summed up in the word likeness. This likeness is both natural and moral. The natural likeness of the human creature to the Creator consists in personality, intelligence, a moral sense, implying freedom and spirituality, *i. e.*, spirit is the essential principle. The moral likeness exists when man possesses qualities like God's moral attributes, love, holiness, justice, wisdom and truth. But since the moral attributes eclipse the natural in excellence, likeness to God is predicated only of the possession of the moral qualities. Satan, though still like God in his natural attributes, is in no scriptural sense a son of God, because of his lack of the moral likeness. This is true of all unregenerate men. They are not sons of God. Christ plainly told certain Jews that they were of their father the devil, because they had taken on his moral characteristics. The very tap-root of modern liberalism, universal salvation on the ground of the universal fatherhood of God, lies in a neglect of these scriptural distinctions, and in making the divine fatherhood natural and genetic, like human fatherhood, and in reasoning from the latter to the former on this wise, "As no human father would be so cruel as to banish his child from his presence forever,

much less will the divine Father." The fallacy lies in the assumption that a wicked man is a child of God, when he is really a child of Satan, because he has taken on his moral likeness. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews declares that certain men "are bastards, and not sons." It will not do to literalize or carnalize the terms "son" and "Father" in speaking of man's relation to God. For the outcome will be universal salvation on the ground of a fondling sentimentalism, an unholy love on the part of God, instead of moral likeness to him in holy character. Another error is expressed in the maxim, "Once in grace always in grace," based upon the idea, once a child always a child. Substitute "once like God, always like God," and the fallacy immediately stands out to view, for Satan once bore the moral image of his Maker. If sonship to God is pressed as a proof of the impossibility of becoming a son of perdition, why may not sonship to the devil be alleged to be an insuperable barrier to becoming a son of God? Are our positions sustained by the Bible? We reply that in the New Testament sonship is the peculiar and distinguishing privilege of those who by faith receive Jesus Christ (John i. 12), and it consists in conformity to the image of the Son of God (Rom. viii. 29), and in no case do the words "sons of God," "children" and "Father" indicate anything but a spiritual likeness. Once, and once only, St. Paul, while preaching on Mars Hill, taking natural religion as his starting point, so as to stand on common ground with his pagan audience, speaks of the human race in the words of a Greek poet, as the offspring of God. Even here he is careful to limit the metaphor

to likeness in those natural characteristics in which men consciously differ from "gold or silver or stone." For they are conscious of freedom and moral accountability. In all the New Testament the terms "son," "child," "sonship," "adoption," and "Father," when applied to the relation of men to God, signify a spiritual likeness enstamped in outline by the Holy Spirit at that religious crisis figuratively called the new birth, and in completeness at the subsequent crisis of entire sanctification. Utterly foreign to the Gospels and the epistles and to apostolic preaching as reported in the Acts of the Apostles, is salvation on the ground of the natural fatherhood of God. Such a doctrine would "make the cross of Christ of none effect," because it would be needless in the scheme of salvation.

If we turn to the Old Testament we shall find, in the words of Oehler, that "The meaning of the divine fatherhood is not physical, as if God were called the Father of men because he gives them natural life and preserves them in it, but it is national. It denotes the relation of love and moral communion in which Jehovah has placed Israel to himself. This relation is quite unique; Jehovah is only the Father of the chosen people, not the Father of other nations." He says, "Israel is my son, even my first-born." The sonship of individuals, Oehler insists, was not the privilege of Old Testament saints, inasmuch, in my opinion, as the Holy Ghost, the sanctifier, was not yet given. "The notion of *divine sonship*, as conferred upon the Hebrew nation in general, and then upon the theocratic king, nay, as affirmed in a special sense of the godly, was still but a notion to be fully real-

ized only in the future. The highest relation of intercourse between God and man, instituted by prophecy, does not attain to the eminence of that filial state inaugurated by the New Testament; for which reason Christ declares the greatest of the prophets to be less than the least in his kingdom." That individual sonship to God was a strange doctrine to the Jews, who were diligent students of their Scriptures, is seen in their indignant surprise that Jesus should dare call God his Father.

Germane to this discussion is the exposition of 2 Pet. i. 4, "That ye may become partakers of the divine nature." "That is," says Dean Alford, "of that holiness, and truth, and love, and, in a word, perfection, which dwells in God, and in you by dwelling in God." St. Peter calls that the divine nature which the divine Spirit effects in us, the image of God re-imprinted on us by the Third Person of the adorable Trinity. The only man who is literally a partaker of the divine nature is the God-man. All who truly believe in him partake, according to their finite capacity, of the moral attributes of the Father, and in this sense are sons. It is a remarkable fact that the Greek verb for "become" in this text is in the aorist tense. This is a puzzle to the scholarly dean, who cannot accept the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification instantaneously wrought by the Holy Spirit through faith. But in his explanation he makes an admission which implies all that Wesley ever taught on this line. He says, "The account of this usage of the aorist has not been anywhere, that I have seen, sufficiently given. It is untranslatable in most cases, but seems to serve in the Greek to express that the aim

was *not the procedure*, but *the completion*, of that indicated." If it is completed in the present life, there must be a definite instant in which the work is finished. This is all that Wesley ever contended for.

Alford very properly quotes John xii. 36, "Believe on the light that ye may become sons of light," as another instance of a definite completion aimed at, and not a process. In this case it is the new birth, the beginning of holiness, since the command is to the unregenerate Jews; but in 2 Pet. i. 4 the definite completion is entire sanctification, because Peter is addressing "them that have obtained a like precious faith with us," and is showing to them the full extent of salvation in "the exceeding great and precious promises" which "are given unto us." Why Peter should change the first person to the second; the "us" to "ye," we know not, except it be a delicate intimation that he had become a partaker of the divine nature in a sense not applicable to those whom he addressed, that he had obtained complete conformity to the image of the Son of God and was a full-grown son, while they were more or less carnal and were even still babes (1 Cor. iii. 1). St. John also makes two grades of sonship (1 John ii. 13), "little children" who know the Father and cry, "Abba, Father;" and young men who are strong and have permanently conquered the evil one through the Word of God abiding in them by the grip of faith which never relaxes its hold. Reader, to which of these classes do you belong? If to neither, aspire to be born from above; if to the first class, be not content with Christian infancy, but aspire to the strength and victory of Christian manhood. Beware of old babehood. A dwarf awakens only pity and disgust.

All who are born of the Spirit into this family of God on the earth may have a satisfactory, yea joyful, assurance of sonship expressed by the Greek word *epignosis*, a certain and perfect knowledge, not inferential, but intuitive, excluding all doubt and inspiring "joy unspeakable." Should Gabriel write this assurance across the arches of the sky in letters of light, he would not intensify the confidence of the soul which hears the Spirit crying Abba, Father. For the senses, or rather our inferences from them, may be fallacious, but our intuitions never can be. The new-born soul is endowed with a set of new intuitions. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned. Thus Christianity rests on self-evident truth. This foundation sceptics and agnostics cannot overturn. "Our Rock is not as their rock." Therefore we need not wait till the last day to find out whether we are sons of God, nor climb up to heaven to-day and look over the shoulder of the recording angel to see whether our names are inscribed in the book of life. There are safeguards set about this question on which destiny hinges. By a sort of double-entry arrangement one copy of God's family record is kept in heaven, and another in the heart of the believer. "The Spirit beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God." "He that is born of God hath the witness in himself." We do not deny that there are children born into the family of God with very weak eyes, who fail at first to read their title clear because of their feeble grasp of faith. They have astigmatic vision, with no distinctness of outline. They see men as trees walking. We have a word of good cheer for such. There is a hand which can touch those eyes the second

time and bestow perfect vision. While we have strongly insisted on an immediate knowledge of our adoption by the new birth through the direct witness of the Spirit, we would also emphasize that mediate knowledge which is deduced from the marks of regeneration found in the Scriptures and their corresponding marks observed in ourselves. Hence it becomes us to be very familiar with those marks, the criteria of present character and of eternal destiny.

I. All who belong to the family born of the Holy Spirit are characterized by an unmistakable family likeness. It is a great law running from the top to the bottom of creation that like begets like. The sons of God, whether archangels who have stood before the throne from the day of their creation, or babes in Christ born into the kingdom to-day, all bear his moral lineaments as incarnated in the model man, man at his climax, Jesus Christ our Lord. The natural features of this family vary almost infinitely. There are we know not how many orders of purely spiritual beings in heaven—angels, archangels, cherubim, seraphim, thrones, principalities, dominions and powers. We are ignorant of their specific differences. But in one particular they are all alike; they prefer holiness to sin, wearing the spotless robe of original righteousness, and loving their Creator with the full measure of their powers. Among the family on earth there are such minor differences as nationality, color, culture, social standing, intelligence and property; but they all wear the image of Christ stamped by the Holy Spirit. Their Christ-like cast of countenance makes them brothers to the archangels on

their thrones. They wear the robe of an imparted and inwrought righteousness, washed in the laver of regeneration, and afterwards whitened in the all-cleansing blood of the Lamb. The children of God are all characterized by holiness in its various degrees, from a new principle lodged by the Spirit in the penitent believer, like a spark dropped from the skies, to the full glow of pure, that is, perfect, love consuming all sin. A sin-loving son of God is a contradiction.

II. The next trait is a strong family affection. The ties of blood kindred are weak in comparison with the love that burns in the bosoms of the regenerate and sanctified. Jesus, our elder brother, evinced the superiority of spiritual kinship when he deliberately set his disciples above all the members of his mother's family, herself included: "He who doeth the will of my Father, the same is my mother, and sister, and brother." This love for those begotten of God will intensify till it absorbs and consumes all other loves. In the day of judgment the ties of spiritual affinity will be so strong that natural affection will shrivel into insignificance in contrast, so that the parting of families in that day of doom and their eternal separation will produce no distressing pang in the bosom all aglow with the flame of love to Christ and the brotherhood of the regenerate and sanctified. Natural affection is designed for the needs of the present life, but love as the fruit of the Spirit abides forever. This is a sufficient answer to the sentimentalists who assert that the punishment of an incorrigible sinner in hell would destroy the joys of heaven for the father, mother, brother, sister, husband or wife. Our affections

will be so purified as to delight only in the presence of the pure and to abhor the society of the vile and to acquiesce without a murmur in the sentence, "Depart, ye cursed." An illustration of this truth occurred in the life of Dr. Robert Breckenridge, an anti-slavery Presbyterian clergyman of Kentucky. When the Southern States attempted to secede from the Union, he stood by the old flag; but some of his sons sympathized with the rebellion. One son, who lived at a distance, had not made known to his patriot sire on which side he would be found in that contest which was soon to drench the Republic in blood. This son was seen one day dismounting at the gate of the old homestead. His father opened the front door and asked this question: "My son, do you come loyal or rebel? Answer, for no traitor to his country shall enter my house." The son replied, "Loyal," and was warmly welcomed. We all feel like swinging our hats and giving this heroic old man three times three cheers. Now, if that indefinite sentiment called patriotism can become, with our approval, so intense as to overshadow and even extinguish family ties, so that the patriot can rejoice in the victory of the Federal army, even though a rebel son lies dead on the battlefield, how far above all natural ties may the love of Christ and his kingdom lift us, so that we may applaud that act of his justice which punishes one of our own human kindred in arms against the King of kings! To you who say that I am mocking at the tenderest sensibilities and rudely handling the most sacred and sensitive tendrils of the heart, let me commend the study of the words of the infallible teacher: "If any man love father or mother,

brother or sister, more than me, he is not worthy of me." "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, his own life also," when they oppose his loyalty to Christ, "he cannot be my disciple." Our kindred and our former selves are to be resisted as enemies to our highest well-being when they obstruct our fellowship with him who has redeemed us with his own blood. This justifies all that we have said about the superior intensity of Christian love.

III. This family all speak a peculiar language, not a terrestrial, but a celestial dialect. It is neither an alphabetic language, nor is it pictorial, nor hieroglyphic, but a heart language, heart beating to heart in spiritual unison. Why should they not? A thousand pendulums electrically connected will all give the same time-beat. All the saints on earth and in heaven have the same heart-throb of spiritual life because they are all vitally connected with the heart of the Lord Jesus. This common language is a common feeling. Hence it can never be mistaken. A half a century ago, in the evening services at camp meetings, the scoffers sometimes would utter mock hallelujahs, but there would always be a lack of unction in their intonations which quickly exposed the imposture, and the good old Methodists would exclaim, "It's the voice of the goats, not of the sheep." The language of Christian feeling can never be successfully counterfeited. The language of the dry intellect, the language of the head, may be misunderstood. Hence wherever religion has consisted in theological dogmas alone, fierce strifes have arisen. But when the gospel has

been addressed to men's hearts, and has been received by faith in its transforming power, the weapons of denominational warfare are cast away, and believers vie with one another in magnifying our common Saviour. Such, thank God, are the happy times upon which we have fallen. We live in a day when the Holy Spirit has come down upon the evangelical churches, and we now understand one another, because our hearts speak. In the eras of the warmest theological controversy this heart unison was not noticed amid the din and discord of clashing swords. Professor Shedd says that "Tried by the test of exact dogmatic statement there is a plain difference between the Arminian creed and that of the Calvinist; but tried by the test of practical piety and devout feeling, there is little difference between the character of John Wesley and John Calvin. The practical religious life is much more a product of the Holy Spirit than is the speculative construction of truth." The advance of spirituality will be the advance of that unity for which Jesus prayed in his wonderful high-priestly prayer in the seventeenth of St. John. It is said that an Asiatic Christian convert met a converted Feejee on the deck of a ship. Ignorant of each other's native tongue and burning with new-born love to God and man the one exclaimed, "Hallelujah," and the other immediately responded, "Amen." By these words they recognized each other as brethren in Christ Jesus. But what are these but two Hebrew words transferred, not translated, into all our modern tongues, words which once resounded over the hills of old Canaan? They suggest the ease with

which believers communicate when they have learned the language of New Canaan.

IV. This family have a common secret which has never been divulged. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving him that receiveth it." With the Orientals the white stone was a marble tablet used as a card of admission to feasts. The new name is an emblem of a new nature which none but the recipient can understand. Father E. T. Taylor used to glory that he belonged to the white-stone company. If you would know this family secret do not knock at the doors of the countless secret societies so rapidly multiplying in all our cities, for they cannot tell you. Ask no one but the Lord Jesus himself, for none of his disciples is commissioned to divulge this divine mystery. The half was never told. I have for many years endeavored to tell it, but I have always failed. "O, taste and see." This secret is the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit, an agent utterly unknown to the unbelieving world because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. It is his office to "shed abroad the love of God in our hearts," filling and flooding with joy unspeakable.

V. Hence this is a very joyful family, since each member has been born of the Spirit and is led of the Spirit. The fountain of joy is an artesian well springing up in their hearts. The peace which passes understanding runs forever, a river of sweet waters, through their souls.

" Like a river glorious
 Is God's perfect peace,
 Over all victorious
 In its bright increase :
 Perfect—yet it floweth
 Fuller every day ;
 Perfect—yet it groweth
 Deeper all the way."*

In the highest experiences of this joy all tormenting fear has been cast out; fear of death, for the believer has the victory in advance; fear of future ill, for he pillows his head upon the assurance "that all things work together for good to them that love God." Their fear of God has no servility. It is the filial fear, respect for the loving Father. Nor are his commandments grievous. The law of the Lord is our delight, my song—the decalogue set to music. The will of God is no longer a galling yoke upon the unwilling neck, but an inspiration of gladness in the heart.

" I love to kiss each print where Thou
 Hast set Thine unseen feet ;
 I cannot fear Thee, blessed Will,
 Thine empire is so sweet." †

No one outside of this family of regenerate souls has any ground for rejoicing, nor any right to be happy. The seeming happiness of the worldling is illusory, not real. It is as fleeting as the drunkard's revelry and is followed by the same depressing reaction; as evanescent as the fatal pleasure of the winning gambler. The felicities of the sons of God are as serene and lasting as God, their author. Under his moral government guilt can never be happy, world without end. Only the sinless angels above, and the spirits of the just made perfect,

* F. R. Havergal.

† Faber.

sojourning in the antechamber of heaven, and the forgiven sinner below, can be truly filled with joy. We sometimes think that the bliss of the pardoned is more ecstatic than the raptures of the unfallen in heaven, "the sworded seraphim and the helmed cherubim,"

"With all who chant God's name on high
And Holy, holy, holy, cry."

For none of these have ever tasted redeeming grace and dying love. Surpassing joy, to see the Son of God lay aside his diadem of glory and stoop from heaven to earth for me, and to have the Holy Spirit visit my guilty soul and apply the blood that washes away all my sin, while the thunderings and lightnings of Sinai cease and a voice from Calvary whispers, "Thy sins, which were many, are all freely forgiven!" This awakens a thrill of joy such as no angel has ever felt. But to be adopted into that glorious and ancient family, the nobility of the universe, the aristocracy of virtue, and to have my name enrolled, not in Burke's Peerage, but in the Lamb's book of life, the family record of heaven, is a joy beyond measure, eclipsing all former joys. But who can portray the still higher joy of the soul's espousals to Christ, the heavenly bridegroom? To be taken into his most intimate confidence, to walk in white, arm in arm with him, and to be called worthy—this is a joy beyond expression. It is not the African bond-maid suddenly emancipated and married to her white master, it is not the rag-picker wedded by Rothschild, glittering in his silks, resplendent with his diamonds, endowed with his millions, feasting on his plates of gold, and wearing his baronial title. It is infinitely more than any contrast that earthly society can

afford: it is a guilty wretch disowned of his father, awaiting execution for his capital crime, pardoned, led out of the convict's cell, enrobed in spotless array, with the ring of adoption glittering on his hand, led up the ivory steps of the throne of his reconciled Father and crowned amid the shoutings of myriads of loyal angels; it is the assurance of the Father's everlasting love.

“ O wonderful, O passing thought!
The love that God has had for me,
Spending on me no less a sum
Than the undivided Trinity.”*

I have spoken in parables, but I have failed to give an adequate representation of the bliss which attends the realization of Christian privilege when personally experienced in its fulness.

VI. But not the least valuable consideration connected with this family is its inheritance. Avaricious young men are eager to ingraft themselves into rich families for the sake of a princely heritage. Thus ambitious and greedy men married women of the Girard blood to be remembered in the will of the merchant millionaire of Philadelphia. After years of impatient waiting they assembled, with large expectations, at the opening of the will to gnash their teeth in the madness of being “cut off with a shilling.” But none of God's family will be disinherited or be put off with a pitiful mockery. The seal of his will has been broken. Listen while Peter reads: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inherit-

* Faber.

ance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you [all persevering believers], who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." It is undefiled. Many an earthly inheritance is polluted with extortion and fraud; it is stained with the tears of widows and orphans and crimson with innocent blood. Such heritages are freighted with the curse of God. But no stain of crime is on the heritage of one begotten of the Holy Spirit. No curse blasts it. It is also incorruptible. It cannot be wasted by use, eaten by moths, swept away by floods, consumed by fire, nor plundered by thieves. It is absolutely indestructible. God is the portion of his people, a satisfying and eternal portion. "I am their inheritance." Only when God falls into decrepitude and decay will the inheritance of his children come to an end. But this cannot be, for, as Peter continues to read the will, he comes to the words, "It fadeth not away." Ye who rejoice in the anticipated or possessed inheritances of your earthly parents, sit down and soberly cipher out by the use of longevity tables how many, or rather how few, years you are to enjoy your inherited riches. You and your possessions, your houses and lands, your bank stock, bonds and mortgages, will soon be separated forever. In an hour some unforeseen stroke against which you could not fend by insurance, like a Louisville cyclone or a Johnstown flood or a Chicago fire, may sweep away the treasures in which you trust who are not rich in faith and heirs of the eternal kingdom.

Reader, on which inheritance have you set your

heart, the fading or the fadeless? earth or heaven? time or eternity?

To assure the believer of this inheritance it has been handed over to one of the family as our representative, and is to-day held by him in trust for us. Jesus, our Elder Brother, has obtained the inheritance, and is holding it as our trustee. "If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." All questions of probate have been answered, and the estate is now awaiting distribution, when we, now under age, have attained our majority.

In the mean time we are not left without bond or title or proof of heirship. "In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise" (Eph. i. 13); not *by* the Spirit as some teach, making him the sealer, but *with* the Spirit, making him the seal and the Father the sealer, so that the conscious abiding of the Comforter in the heart is the seal which authenticates, appropriates and secures. The arrow-head on any article declares that it belongs to the Queen of England, for that is the seal of the British Crown. A piece of sealing-wax attached to a deed authenticates the signature and renders it valid. But what has God's seal to do with my inheritance? Hear the rest of the quotation "which [seal] is the earnest [pledge money paid in advance to bind the bargain] of our inheritance." How long? "Until the redemption of the purchased possession;" until our realization of the full heavenly reward promised by the indwelling Comforter called the Spirit of promise, not so much because he is promised in the Old Testament, but because in the New Testament he is

promising the glorification of both soul and body. Since the earnest money was always paid in the same kind of coin in which the full wages would be paid, we have an intimation of the nature of the joys of heaven. We shall drink from the River of Life which flows from the throne of the Father and the Son—the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son. We who have the abiding Comforter need not die to know what heaven is. Have you this earnest, this slice of heaven, in your soul? Are you sealed with the Holy Ghost? Is the evidence of your sonship bright and clear? It is not God's will that any of his children should live in doubt with respect to an interest so vast. Assurance is every Christian's privilege. He that believeth hath the witness in himself. Assurance of present salvation belongs to us as much as to the primitive Christians. There is, as centuries roll by, no tapering off of the graces of the Spirit, although there was a designed withdrawal of the extraordinary and miraculous gifts of the Spirit. We have no anathemas for those Christians who cannot to-day read the seal of the Spirit on their hearts, the pledge of an eternal inheritance. We are not here to throw stones at such people, but to tell them that by their lack of appropriating faith they are excluding themselves from unspeakable joy. I do not say that they are shutting themselves out of heaven, for many have groped along in doubt and fear all through their earthly life, unrelieved till God in condescension to some unusual upreaching of faith unveiled his face to them on their dying beds. Many call this dying grace. They might have had it as living grace fifty years before if they had claimed the heritage

of faith. Of what we have said on this point this is the sum: The Father uses no other seal but the presence of the Holy Ghost in Pentecostal fulness. He is the seal of both the Father and the Son.

VII. But the most astonishing characteristic of this family remains to be named. It is a royal family. The earthly members are princes in exile. Their kingly lineaments are all concealed. They are incognito. Their royal glory is eclipsed. A cloud rests upon them here, a cloud of reproach, vilification and often persecution. But the time is coming when the righteous shall shine forth in the kingdom of their Father. The exiles are to be called home to the palace, their royal blood is to be acknowledged. They are to be enthroned and crowned. "He that overcometh shall sit down with me in my throne, as I have overcome and am set down with my Father in his throne."

This is the tallest promise in the Holy Scriptures. It is like an Eiffel Tower. When I in my imagination try to climb to its top my head swims, so dizzy is the height. In the person of the glorified Jesus the God-man, we, his kinsmen, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, shall be inconceivably exalted. The elevation of a brother reflects honor upon the whole family. But there is an honor above this; it is the enthronement of all the family, not as Napoleon scourged all Europe to make thrones vacant for his plebeian Corsican brothers. The throne of the Son of God is large enough for all the heroes of an overcoming faith. The thought staggers me, that I, an inhabitant of that speck of matter which men call earth, am to sit beside Jesus on his throne, an

anointed king. The glorification of Jesus is both the pledge and the pattern of our future glorification. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called [constituted] the sons of God. And such we are." Thus reads the critical Greek text as translated by the Revision. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he [or it] shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Study the description of the transfigured Jesus with his face shining as the sun and his raiment white as the light (Matt. xvii. 2; Rev. i. 14-16). John was one of the three favored mortals permitted to gaze upon the transfigured Christ, and it made such an impression upon him that he carried it ever afterwards, a dazzling photograph upon the tablet of his memory. But upon the isle of Patmos a being appeared to him all resplendent and glorious, and John thought he recognized the Lord Jesus with whom he was so well acquainted. For had he not reclined on his bosom? Yes, it is Jesus, there can be no mistake, it is the same glorious form which I saw on the mount when the bright cloud overshadowed him and a voice sounded from the most excellent glory, "This is my well-beloved son." Down falls John upon his knees to worship, when this brilliant form forbids him, "I am of thy fellow servants, the prophets." A mortal man who once wrestled with temptation as we do now, so radiant with glory as to be mistaken by John for the Lord Jesus, the Lord of glory. Thus shall you and I be when our resurrection bodies "shall be like his glorious body." The old Roman patricians, after the first-born, put to death their younger offspring, and the mod-

ern English disinherit them, in order to aggrandize the titled heir. But the family born of the Holy Spirit is unlike the rich and royal families of this world, in the fact that its Head desires not to diminish but to multiply its members, having for them an inexhaustible inheritance. Sordid, scheming and selfish men study to form marriage alliances for themselves or for their children where the dividend is large and the divisor small, in order to secure the greater inheritance. But the estate of our Heavenly Father is so immense, exhaustless and absolutely infinite, that the divisor cannot be so large as to diminish the portion of any heir.

“The more that come with free good will,
Will make the feast the better still.”

CHAPTER IV.

BEHOLDING AND SHARING CHRIST'S GLORY.*

MY hearers may have become weary of their pastor's reiterated admiration of the Gospel of John, its fathomless depths, its lofty heights, its precious recorded utterances of his Master, as refreshing as cooling waters to a thirsty soul. To convince you that I am not allowing my sensibilities to overshadow my intellect and warp my judgment into an exaggerated appreciation of that which is only ordinary in its quality, I quote the words of that great American statesman and jurist, Daniel Webster, before whose eloquence senates bowed, judges wept and juries were swayed, a man who was not accused of that excessive religious enthusiasm which men call fanaticism. Near the beginning of his seventieth year, writing to a young friend who had expressed admiration for the poetry of the Holy Scriptures, he said: "Ah, my friend, the poetry of Isaiah, Job and Habakkuk is beautiful indeed; but when you have lived as I have, sixty-nine years, you will give more for the fourteenth and seventeenth chapters of John's Gospel, or for one of the epistles, than for all the poetry of the Bible. I have read it through many times. I now make a practice of going through it once a year. It is a book of all others for law-

*"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."—*John xvii. 24.*

yers as well as divines; and I pity the man who cannot find in it a rich supply of thought and rules of conduct."

I have quoted these words not because their author had perfectly enthroned the law of Christ over his heart and life, but because he of all Americans must be acknowledged an expert in literature, capable of appreciating moral sublimity. This quotation should also convince our young people of the literary value of the Bible in a liberal education fitting for the highest usefulness of the present life as well as being an infallible directory to life everlasting. Moreover, it should have great weight in determining the Johannean authorship of the Fourth Gospel. It is as great a natural and psychological impossibility for one who was not a companion of Jesus Christ and not a listener to his words to invent those extended addresses of Christ to his disciples and to his Father found in this Gospel as it would for a stone mason to construct the Milky Way, because we find in them those deeper spiritual verities relating to the divine person and mission of the Logos, the Son of God, which neither men nor angels could invent, much less an impostor in the second century writing in the name of the beloved disciple. John's Gospel is unassailable and the Bible as a whole is an impregnable rock. The Book of books has not been outgrown by the astonishing strides of human progress. It will never belong to the world's antiquarian libraries, those cemeteries of myriads of dead books whose authors, once ambitious for immortal fame, have passed into eternal oblivion.

Our text is a part of the high-priestly prayer of Jesus. It is its tenderest strain, revealing the human heart of

the Son of God which he has carried with him "into the heavens," a heart magnetic with human sympathy and love. It always touches my heart; it dips a bucket into the deep fountain of my tears. Whenever I read this text it raises in me a flood of mingled emotions—astonishment at the condescending love of Christ for me, then love responsive to his self-sacrificing love, followed by an adoring gratitude to my divine benefactor. It answers the question: What are the feelings of the Son of God crowned King of kings, sitting on his Father's throne and swaying his sceptre of universal empire? Have I, an atom in the vast whole of the universe, escaped his special notice? Have I faded from his recognition, forgotten by him who is surrounded by "the helmed cherubim, the sworded seraphim," thrones, dominions, angels and arch-angels? In his exaltation has he dropped me out of his regard, me so distant while he is surrounded by majestic orders of spiritual intelligences so near, me so low in the scale of moral being in contrast with those who stand so high? What chance has one marred by depravity from his very birth and disfigured by sins whose scars are indelible blemishes, even after forgiveness, rendering him repulsive to the love of the sinless one who hateth iniquity? The text assures me of his continual regard for me, despite the hideous traces of my past sins. They are my card of invitation to be present at his public coronation and to share the glory of that hour which will stretch away into the countless ages of eternity. Be it ever borne in mind that this prayer is only a specimen of that intercession which our High Priest above is ever silently presenting to his Father. That we might know

the contents of that supplication which is poured out behind the drapery of the skies and beyond the hearing of ears of clay, Jesus rehearsed in the presence of his disciples that prayer which is to be the burden of his desire from the day of his ascension to the day of his descent to judge the quick and the dead. In this prayer Jesus remembers me. How do I know? In two ways: He prayed not only for those who had believed his words, but for many others then unborn. Hear him: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." Including as he does believers in all future ages "he counts me in the whosoever." But perhaps I am not one of those given by the Father to the Son as intimated in the text. I know that he prays for me and invites me to share his glory if I can convince myself that I am of the number of those who have been given by the Father to the Son. Who are they? There are two answers: first, that of the predestinarian, that a definite number which cannot be increased nor diminished have been unconditionally elected to eternal life and their names are written in the secret will of God which he keeps locked up in his own bosom, a register on which no other eye can look till the day of judgment. But since the God whom we Arminians worship is no respecter of persons we cannot accept this exposition. Our second and better answer is that God has through the atonement bestowed upon all men the gracious ability to repent and perseveringly believe on his Son. As many as use this gracious ability and freely come to Christ by repentance and faith are said to be given to him by the Father. The first answer magnifies

God's sovereignty, assuming that he can do so irrational an act as to make a choice without any reason. We are told that there is no arbitrary sovereignty in a choice which is dictated by reason. If we accept this doctrine, we must accept a limited atonement, irresistible grace, bound will, and the doctrine once in grace always in grace, or the final perseverance of the saints. These five points of Calvinism I can find neither in my reason, my conscience nor my Bible. It turns man into a machine and God into a despot. The practical effect of this doctrine is distressing to contemplate. It leaves the believer in suspense respecting the gravest question, "Am I saved?" He can never consistently say, "Yes," since he is uncertain whether his name is on the secret register of the elect. Hence this doctrine hinders saving-faith, obstructs the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins and a clear assurance of acceptance with God. But I find from the time of Pentecost all along through the New Testament that Christians are brimful and running over with joy, conscious of pardon, regeneration and sanctification. They have not only knowledge of forgiveness and knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ, but they use a stronger word and speak of a full, certain, thorough, exact and perfect knowledge of spiritual realities. This experimental knowledge is in the Greek word *epignosis* frequently used by Paul and Peter after Pentecost, that great spiritual eye-opener. It is the office of the Holy Spirit to cry in the believer's heart, "Abba, Father!" inspiring an assurance of adoption. The first means by which the Father gives men to the Son is the law which is our schoolmaster, or rather the child-

leader, to bring us to Christ. In patrician families among the Romans a trusty slave was charged with the duties of a *paidagogos*, who took the child by the hand and led him to school and placed him in the care of the teacher. From this custom Paul borrows the metaphor, "The law is our child-leader." The second agency by which a soul is given to Christ is the convicting Spirit, who applies the law and awakens a sense of guilt and the wrath of God. He then reveals the mercy of God as administered through the atoning death of his Son. This heavenly monitor points the sinner first to mount Sinai to awaken a sense of need, and then to mount Calvary for the supply of that need. All whose wills assume the attitude of obedience toward God and trust in his Son as both Saviour and Lord are given to Christ by the Father, who does not drag them but rather draws them with an attraction persuasive, but not by an irresistible and necessitating power overriding free agency. Hence the provision for the conditional salvation of all men having been made, the question who will make their election sure by repentance toward God and faith in his Son is determined by each individual will, says the Arminian interpreter of the Bible. The Calvinist declares that God determines who shall be saved. This doctrine necessarily implies that God also determines who shall be damned. Every coin has two faces, the obverse and the reverse. The reverse face of election is reprobation. The same misinterpreted scripture texts alleged in proof of the unconditional election of some prove the unconditional reprobation of the rest of mankind. This impeaches the moral attributes of God.

Those who freely receive Christ receive from him the privilege of becoming sons of God. These are led by the Spirit of God as his gift to the Son.

It is important to note that this high-priestly prayer was made only a few days before Jesus would ascend from the sepulchre to the throne of the universe. In his forecast of that hour he saw there would be one drawback to his supreme happiness, one void which all the hosts of heaven casting their crowns at his feet could not fill. The angels and archangels, the seraphim and cherubim cannot on that coronation day compensate for the absence of his human spiritual kindred who have suffered with him on the earth. They must be glorified with him. The redeemed ones, formerly the objects of his compassion, but now the objects of his complacent love and delight, must be near him, not on distant thrones made vacant by the fall of Lucifer and his rebellious host, but close to his side. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." This tallest promise in God's book is a monument to the love of Christ to believers too high for my poor intellect to climb. The very thought makes my head swim. Whenever I read this promise I am inclined to say "O blessed Master, this honor is too great for me." It is indeed a "weight of glory" so heavy as almost to stagger my faith. Is there not some various reading of the manuscripts or some error in the English version? Are not these words a gloss, a marginal pencilling of some enthusiastic monk of the Middle Ages, which has accidentally been copied by some honest transcriber? Did not the correct reading

omit the words "he shall sit on my throne" and have instead "he shall kiss my feet"? I ransack my library and search all the critical editions of the Greek testament and the Variorum Bible and find no various reading or rendering. I will no longer doubt, but will accept with tears of joy this greatest promise ever sounded in the ears of mortals, or ever written in human language. There is no hint in the Bible that any other order of spiritual intelligences are invited to share the throne of universal empire. This honor is reserved for the royal family, his human disciples, alone. Nevertheless there is a wonderful fitness and congruity in this consummation of their honor and happiness. It is appropriate that the blood relatives should share the dignity and glory when one of the family is inaugurated as a supreme ruler. The mothers of two at least of our recent Presidents, Garfield and McKinley, were with them when their sons were inducted into the highest office on the earth. Brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, cousins and more distant kindred, fellow soldiers and schoolmates are not out of place as favored spectators in such a scene. Jesus Christ is a real man, not a semblance, a phantom, but a perfect man having a human soul and a material body. He is my brother, bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. His glorification has refined and sublimated his body, not destroyed it. Son of man he was born; son of man he died; son of man he arose and ascended; son of man he will come in his glory to raise the dead, both the just and the unjust. Paul is careful to state to the astonished Athenians on Mars Hill that God will judge the world by a man, "that man whom he hath

ordained." A man will forever sway the sceptre of universal dominion.

Thus far I have alleged that this amazing exaltation of Christ's disciples was to perfect the bliss of our adorable Redeemer. But there is another reason. It is congruous with normal humanity, which has an original susceptibility to partake of the divine nature. This capacity, lost by sin, and restored by appropriating the benefits of the redemption, is now to reach the climax for which it was originally designed. Man is a photograph of God. He has faculties responsive to those in his Creator, personality implying reason, freedom, a moral sense and spirituality fitting him to be a habitation of God through the Holy Spirit. Hugh Miller, after tracing the successive eras of animal life through the geological periods up to the creation—not evolution—of man, raises the question whether after another geological convulsion the Creator will not introduce an order of beings superior to man, like man, a spirit acting through a material organism. The great scientist answers his own question negatively, because this would introduce an order of beings superior to the Son of man, the God-man, which would be derogatory to his dignity.

There is still another reason why Christ on the throne desires his earthly disciples to be in the innermost circle of all the various orders of being who worship the Lamb. He wishes to exhibit them as the fruit of his redemptive work, the purchase of his agonies, the specimens of the transforming and purifying efficacy of his blood and samples of the beautifying and adorning work of his agent, the Holy Spirit. The absence from heaven of

the personal presence of the Son of God during his more than thirty years' residence on earth may have been to the angels a mystery impenetrable though they desired to look into it. Hence saved souls washed in the blood of the Lamb, the fruit of his mysterious mission to the earth, become a conspicuous object lesson in the wisdom and love of God. Paul intimates that the church of God on the earth, composed of men and women regenerated and sanctified, are silently proclaiming to "the principalities and powers in heavenly places the manifold wisdom of God." According to the Revision this divine attribute is made known through the church to these heavenly intelligences.* If this is true while the church is still on the earth, how much more will the presence of the blood-washed and white-robed saints in heaven, so near as to be capable of a close inspection, have an educational influence on all who gaze upon them and hear them sing the new song, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Well does John say, "We know not what we shall be." We know not what an enlarged capacity for receiving God shall be unfolded within us; what a receptivity of love; what a faculty of spiritual knowledge; what an intimacy with him who is altogether lovely. We know not what illustrations of the moral attributes of God we shall be to all the angelic hosts; what new revelations of his wisdom, love and mercy, we who have come up out of appalling defilements, will be to those who have not been polluted by sin. Seraphs will

* Eph. iii, 10, R.V.

gaze upon us with wonder. Possibly we shall be the only redeemed sinners with whom they will ever come in contact, the only choir singing the new song, "Unto him who hath washed us in his blood and made us kings and priests." As scientists cross oceans and traverse continents to find out new species of plants and animals, so may inquiring intelligences gather from distant worlds to study the unique phenomenon of saved sinners, a great company in white robes surrounding the throne of the Lamb.

But we shall be more than spectators of his glory. This open vision will change us into his perfect likeness.

"Soul and body shall his glorious image wear."

To behold is to be transformed. We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. To behold is to partake. "But we all, with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory." Even in this life he who most steadily contemplates the character of the sinless Christ is the most perfectly delivered from sinful propensities. We become assimilated to the objects of our steadfast thought. As a man thinketh in his heart so is he. He cannot steadily think of Jesus and of impurity at the same time. Hence looking unto Jesus is the conquering attitude of the soul. This is the reason why faith in Christ is victory over the world. Faith is the sixth sense which makes the invisible more real and more influential than the world of shadows in which we are moving. A practical inference is this: that whatever increases faith increases holiness, and whatever ob-

scures the soul's vision of Christ weakens the motive of sanctification. "And every one that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

We now come to a part of our text which shows a peculiarity of style found in the language of Jesus and strongly reflected in the writings of his most intimate disciple, from whose Gospel our text is taken. In John especially there is very little orderly and explicit unfolding of one proposition from another. Frequently there is a premise omitted in his haste to reach his conclusion. The intelligent reader will observe that this is what in logic is called an enthymeme, the suppressed proposition being carried along in the mind. Let us supply this unexpressed proposition. We get our clew to it in the last clause of the text, "for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." The missing link which connects this love with the glory of the Son is this, "To be loved from eternity by my Father is the greatest glory." This is the major premise. The minor premise is, "I have had my Father's love from eternity." Then follows the conclusion, "Therefore he glorified me before the world was." This glory he wishes his disciples to see and to share. Here is a man who recollects what existed in his own experience before the corner-stone of the universe was laid. The great fact which this premundane memory discloses in proof that the highest glory has been bestowed on him is the fact of God's love. Here is the true glory of men, of angels, of the highest created being, even of the Son of God himself, to be the object of God's complacent love and delight. It is because of a wrong conception of what true glory is that sin came

into the world. Sin is missing the mark. The aim at anything different from the divine approval and love is that radical mistake which the Greeks called "*hamartia*," sin. That there is something better than God's love, or superior to that holy character which he delights in, is the ever-recurring mistake in this fallen world, whether it be human applause, greed of money, gratification of bodily appetites and lusts, or any other form of selfishness. All these apples of Sodom, however beautiful to the eye, will invariably be found to be ashes to the taste. The natural man lives, moves and has his being in illusions. He is chasing a mirage to slake his parched lips at its mocking fountains; he is hastening to the end of the rainbow to find a pot of gold. The end always has been and always will be bitter disappointment. The human soul is so constructed that no creature of God, nothing but the love of God can satisfy its cravings. It has one infinite dimension—its desires—and the shoreless, fathomless love of the Infinite Creator alone can fill it. To be the object of his love is the highest glory of men and of archangels. To believe this with such a faith as sways the conduct and brings the will into obedience to God's commands is to be a Christian indeed. To disbelieve this, which is the sum and substance of God's revelation of himself in the face of Jesus Christ, is to make God a liar. This is the compendium and seed of all sins. The discredited testimony is the declaration of God that eternal well-being is in his Son. He who has formed a vital union with him by obedient faith has this true happiness. He who has not the Son of God as the object of his supreme love, and is trying to slake his

thirst at other fountains, has not the real life, genuine and eternal blessedness, "but the wrath of God abideth on him." The full meaning of these words no one will know until he hears the dreadful words of the final Judge, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." This is the end of every substitute for God's love. This is what Paul calls coming short of His glory and approving love. This failure is not a pardonable defect. It is a positive rejection of God's love and must incur his wrath. Why does Jesus desire the society of his disciples in heaven? I fear that you may have received the impression that it is solely for the completion of his bliss. It is more for our sake than his own gratification. The ruling passion of Jesus was always to be ministering to the happiness of others. At Jacob's well he forgot his own weariness and hunger in pointing a sinful, thirsty soul to the well of water springing up unto everlasting life. On the last day of his life, when the shadows of death were gathering around him and he foresaw the morrow's bloody cross confronting him, he offers a long prayer in which the petition for himself is very brief; the great burden of intercession is for others. On the cross he prays for his enemies. After his resurrection the well-being of this fallen world was uppermost in his mind. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, beginning at Jerusalem." Give my murderers the first chance. Our text being a prelude to his intercession at the right hand of the Father, is a rift in the clouds through which we can see Jesus not sitting idly down amid the hallelujahs of the angelic hosts, contemplating his own glory. He is looking

down to this world, to the fields where his saints toil, to the factories where they labor, to the mines where they delve, to the marts where they trade, to the kitchens where they swelter, to the ships in which they plough the seas, to the sick-beds where they languish, to the closets where they pray, to the churches where they worship, to the senates where they strive for righteous legislation, to the Sunday schools where they patiently sow the gospel seed, to the mission fields where they plant the cross and chase away superstition. For all these friends and colaborers he pours out his ceaseless prayer, whether they dwell in Europe, Asia, Africa or the islands of the sea, that they may be victorious over sin and at last be with him that they may behold his glory. He remembers that they chose him when others despised and rejected him, that they saw his divine beauty when the world saw no comeliness in him. To the Father he says, "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them." "In these are the object of my mission and the purpose of my death accomplished. I have through my mediation and self-sacrifice lifted up these willing souls from the low plane where thy complacent love could not rest upon them to share with me thy wondrous and unfathomable love. Thou, O Father, wilt forever love them for my sake."

"Let it in our souls be seen,
Thy unbounded love to men.
Show in us how good Thou art,
Stamp Thy image on our heart.
Call us out Thy witnesses,
Bid us all Thy life express,
All the happiness above,
All the height of Christian love."

True love is honored and gratified in seeing its object honored. The true mother's happiness culminates when she sees the highest honors bestowed upon her son. We live in the objects of our love.

The longer I live in the experience of the blessedness of the Christian life the more I am convinced of the naturalness of the bliss of heaven. By this I mean that it is not adventitious, the result of any artificial process, or of any change in place, or new environment, or of the arbitrary will of God, but the outgrowth of causes within our own hearts purified and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The essential element of heaven must be in the spirit when it quits its house of clay. It must carry its fountain with it, an artesian well of love to our adorable Lord Jesus, undying and inexhaustible. Therefore how vain are the dreams of myriads of nominal Christians that they are on the way to heaven, although the old life of self is in full vigor, never having consented to be nailed to the cross. They imagine that they are candidates for everlasting joy above, while they are here below refusing to open the door of their hearts to the author of all spiritual joy, the Holy Spirit, and are indulging in pleasures which repel the blessed Comforter. Good opinions about Christ will never inspire love. The will must bow to his authority as Lord, and the reason must submit to him as an infallible teacher of truth, yea, the truth itself, and faith must cast away every other reliance and trust in him alone. Men may admire the character of Christ æsthetically as they do a picture in water-colors or a statue in marble. But there is no love and no salvation in æsthetics. Write it down in your diary,

your daybook, your ledger, on the walls of your shop and house, write it everywhere in indelible ink, that love to Jesus Christ cannot exist severed from obedience. There can be no substitute for love in heaven any more than there can be in wedlock. Suppose some unfaithful multi-millionaire should say to his wife, "Take this check for a million dollars in gold and be happy without my love—another woman has my heart." Could that wife be happy? If you are curious to see a hell above ground go to that palatial mansion where lives, or rather stays, a marriage of convenience, an American pocketbook wedded to a European title. Heaven never dwells beneath that roof. If there can be on earth no felicity without love, be sure there can be none in heaven. I once asked a young woman whether she loved Jesus Christ who died for her. She hesitatingly answered "Y-e-s; that is, I love all noble and beautiful qualities, all the moralities, purity, justice, truthfulness, benevolence, temperance; is not this just the same as loving Christ? My answer was this, "Go home and tell your mother when she asks for your love, 'Mother, I can't say that I love you, but I love all the good things I see in you, industry, economy, honesty, self-sacrifice. Is not that just the same as loving you?' " Would not such an answer break your mother's heart? Jesus Christ is not a personified abstraction, a mere bundle of qualities. He is a divine person with human affections, with all their hungerings for the grateful, responsive love of those for whom he has poured out a wealth of love and sacrifice. He cannot be satisfied without our hearts. We may devise ornate forms of worship in costly temples, but if our

hearts are not throbbing with love to Christ our worship will be a gilded abomination. All true worship must be the spontaneous outgushing of grateful love. Listen to that "Gloria" which floats down from the skies: "Unto him who loveth us and loosed us from our sins by his blood, . . . to him be the glory and the dominion forever" (Rev. i. 5, R. V.). Only those who are delivered from bondage to sin can unite in that hymn. That deliverance must take place in this life. The new song must be learned here. Jesus said to the Jews, "Ye shall seek me and shall die in your sins; whither I go, ye cannot come." This plainly declares that there is no loosing from sins after we pass out of the present life. The distinction between believers and unbelievers extends beyond the grave into eternal ages. Believers will be eternally with Christ as invited friends. Unbelievers will be eternally separated from him by a self-imposed disqualification to enjoy his holy presence.

While Jesus longs for the coming of his brethren, they are longing to depart, as did Paul, "and to be with Christ; which is very far better" (R. V.), or "far, far better" (President Timothy Dwight). The magnet is in heaven, but its drawing is felt wherever there is a heart touched by that loadstone of love divine. The favorite song of that heart is this:

"My soul's full of glory inspiring my tongue:
Could I meet with the angels, I'd sing them a song;
I'd sing of my Jesus and tell of his charms,
And beg them to bear me to his loving arms."

It was of such a soul that Robert Hall once said, "If there should not be room enough in heaven, God would turn an archangel out."

CHAPTER V.

THE CALL TO PREACH THE GOSPEL.*

THERE is a sense in which every Christian, whether old or young, male or female, is called to preach the gospel. The first impulse of every regenerated soul is to run and tell the good news to others in the same family or neighborhood, shop or school. Andrew findeth Peter, and Philip, Nathaniel. On such informal but effective preaching, as on the wings of love and gladness, is the gospel of Christ to spread through all the world. Woe to that church which from month to month hears not the voice of the young convert in its assemblies. Its lease of life is short. God has no use for a sterile gospel. All may not be called to expound God's word or to define doctrines; but all are called to preach by example and testimony. Even the mutes are not excluded from this privilege and duty, for they can communicate with the slate and pencil, or with the dumb alphabet, and can all be persuasive by holy living. The relation of experience is the most convincing preaching. A little girl of eight years came from her chamber to her mother, radiant with joy, and said, "Mother, God has pardoned my sins and given me a new heart; may I run across the street and tell the old cobbler?" "It will do no good, my child, for he is a confirmed and outspoken infidel," said the mother. "But it will do me good to tell him, and it may do him

* "Preach the preaching that I bid thee."—*Jonah ii. 2.*

good, too; may I not go?" "Yes, if your heart is so much set on it." She went and told in artless simplicity of her sense of sin and guilt, of her repentant tears and prayers, of her trust in Jesus Christ who died to become her Saviour, of the light and joy which sprang up in her heart, of the feeling of love towards God, and of a voice sounding within saying, "Father, Father;" and whenever she thought of God he seemed no more like a policeman to arrest her, but a person more loving and tender than her mother. Before she finished her account of her joyful conversion her solitary hearer was in tears, which did not cease to flow until they were wiped away by the hand of divine mercy writing forgiveness on his believing heart. When Paul rose to the summit of his eloquence, whether as a prisoner before Felix or Festus, or addressing the riotous Hebrews in their temple, he presented no elaborate chain of reasoning, but narrated in unadorned style his own experience of the transforming power which arrested him and, when he was obedient to the heavenly vision, made a new man of him when he had still in his pocket a commission to arrest and handcuff and drag to Jerusalem all the Hebrew disciples of Jesus found in Damascus. Testifying of personal conscious salvation through faith is a kind of effective preaching to which all believers are called. But it is evident from the analogy of the specially called and inspired prophet among the Jews, and from the plain declaration in the New Testament, that the propagation and defence of the gospel are entrusted to a class whose only business it shall be to spread the gospel through the world, to explain its principles, enforce its duties and apply its saving truths from age to age down to the end of the world. "It hath

pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel shall live of the gospel." This requires a class of men who shall have no other occupation. The apostle Paul gave directions respecting their qualifications, ordination and work. It is everywhere assumed in the New Testament that the preacher is to be a man called of God to one work, being set apart from secular employments, except in peculiar cases where, after the example of Paul, labor with the hands is resorted to until converts can be raised up and trained to support their preacher. Paul was usually preaching the gospel "in regions beyond" all established churches where a demand for pecuniary support would obstruct his access to the pagans by awakening the suspicion that he was actuated by mercenary motives and not by self-sacrificing love.

Reason also demands that Christianity should have a class devoted exclusively to its advocacy. In all departments of human effort division of labor is requisite to the best results. Every calling needs a preparation, a period for the attainment of skill and of adjustment of the workman to his work by the dexterities of muscle and of mind. He who combines several trades is proverbially master of none. Success waits on singleness. There is surely enough in the deliverance of souls from sin and in their pastoral care to employ all of a man's energies through all his life.

" 'Tis not a work of small import
The pastor's care demands ;
Enough to fill an angel's heart,
It filled the Saviour's hands."

We are not pleading for a priesthood,—Christianity has but one Priest,—but for a pastorate devoted exclusively to the proclamation of saving truth and the care, or cure, of souls. “Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations, . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you.”

Here this important question arises, Who are to constitute this class? Is it left to be determined by inclination and sense of fitness, as ordinary secular vocations are chosen? Or is the church to make the selection? Neither. No government would long exist which divests itself of the right to appoint its own agents to execute its will. The President of the United States selects all officers in the civil and military service. Jesus Christ, the head of the church, appoints his own heralds to proclaim the conditions of salvation, his own pastors to feed and guide and guard his flock. For prudential reasons the church may license and ordain. But he is not a true preacher of Christ’s kingdom who has not been ordained by the imposition of a mightier hand. This vocation is from on high. It is the Holy Spirit which says, “Go preach.” He also imparts the most essential qualification, “the anointing which abideth and teacheth.” He endows and equips for effective service. The next question is, How is the call made known? “There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.” The Holy Spirit speaks in divers manners now as he did in times past. Various are the ways in which our risen Saviour and Lord at the right hand of God can make known his will to those whom he selects for the establishment and universal spread of his king-

dom. We do not live in the age of miracles. Hence it is not reasonable to expect a supernatural call to preach. A voice from the sky addressed to the bodily ear and distributed to myriads through modern telephonic receivers might greatly assist in arriving at certainty in this important matter. But in religion as in nature God uses no labor-saving machines to save effort on the part of men who desire to know his will. Labor, whether of the hand or the mind, is still a blessing in disguise. Effort is development in the spiritual life. "Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go away and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." This is God's ordinary way of revealing himself to inquiring souls. When he pardons a penitent he does not hang out in the heavens a scroll with these letters of fire blazoned thereon, "Thy sons are forgiven," but he promotes the spiritual development of the convert by requiring him to turn his ear heavenward and to listen intently for a still, small voice, crying in his heart "Abba, Father," a voice which is to be corroborated by inferential proofs drawn from the marks of regeneration manifest in himself exactly tallying with the Holy Scriptures. So it usually is with the call of the Holy Spirit to the Christian ministry. At first it comes to the new-born soul, not in a voice of thunder, but in a gentle whisper. It must not be neglected because it is faint and feeble. It must be heeded and tested with prayer and patience, that it may be known whether it is the voice of God's Spirit or of our own suggestion. For in our times when the sacred office is honored it is possible that it may be

sought as a stepping stone for social advancement or as means for a livelihood through the promptings of selfishness. Hence the need of great caution and self-examination under the illumination of the Spirit. Of all misplaced men he who becomes a herald of Christ before he is sent is most to be pitied. He not only "goes a warfare at his own charges," but he goes into battle without the Captain of his salvation to meet certain defeat. On the other hand a more frequent mistake is made by those who disregard the Spirit's call because it is not sufficiently loud and distinct. They invariably suffer spiritual loss, and frequently they meet with disappointment and failure in the secular business or profession to which they have turned aside. They supposed that a genuine call of the Spirit would, like the trumpet of Sinai, "wax louder and louder." The gentle call would have increased in clearness and positiveness if its first intimations had been received in the spirit of perfect obedience. It is the duty of every youthful Christian to listen to every intimation of duty and to give it a prayerful and earnest hearing. Then will the voice of the Spirit calling you to preach become more and more distinct as you climb the mount of devotion and get nearer and nearer to the most excellent glory. In other words, if God is calling you to preach, you will find that the more spiritually minded you are, the more distinct is the Holy Spirit's call. Thus you may be assured that you are called to this glorious work, this highest honor among men on the earth. Strong desire alone is not sufficient proof of heaven's call, since desire may not be born from above, but from beneath, as we have intimated. Yet we are thus com-

manded, "Covet earnestly the best gifts." That this includes the office of the ministry of the gospel we are assured by the same inspired apostle, "Covet to prophesy," or preach (1 Cor. xii. 31 and xiv. 39). "He that desireth the office of a bishop [*i. e.*, elder or pastor] desireth a good *work*"—not "a good thing." We have quoted these scriptures to refute the mischievous error widely prevalent that no one should desire to preach and that it is modest to hold back and refuse to go till God thrusts you out; that you are to refrain from preaching till he hangs a heavy woe like a millstone about your neck, or shakes you over hell fire. The advice is frequently given, "Don't preach unless you cannot help it." This advice is well meant, but it seems to savor of obstinacy. The attitude of the prophet Isaiah is preferable: "I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me." With perfect willingness to go, and possibly with strong desire, he was waiting for his divine commission. A model attitude of mind is this. It is more in accordance with the example of Jesus Christ, who evinced the spirit of service to others, than the position of resistance up to the point of yielding as the only escape from the perdition of ungodly men. A reluctant assent to the divine call under the pressure of fear of punishment, after the style of Jonah, has never seemed to be a commendable method of settling this question. God has nowhere rebuked an expressed consciousness of unfitness, if attended by a desire to obey as soon as the will of God is made known. Isaiah had the good sense to confess that his lack of qualification was a heart not yet entirely

sanctified. For this is the inner sense of his statement, "I am a man of unclean lips." Language is the index of the heart. He confessed his need of heart purity, and immediately received it, and also received that assurance which always accompanies this grace, whether mediated by "the Holy Spirit shining on his own work" or by a seraph warbling in his ear these delightful words, "Lo, thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged." There was another difficulty in the way of Isaiah's mission, the unsanctified state of the Hebrew people: "I dwell among a people of impure lips." The seraph was not commissioned to lay his coal upon their lips also, because they were not in a state of earnest desire for purification. It was the mission of Isaiah to proclaim their sinfulness and to direct them to seek the fiery purification. Men are generally sanctified through the agency of men. Isaiah was not forward, he did not blow his own trumpet. The announcement that an agent was wanted was enough to awaken desire in his heart glowing with pure love. The very fact that the vineyard of the Lord is lying waste, that the fence between it and the world is broken down, and that laborers are wanted to build it up again, should prompt every converted soul to seek that thorough cleansing which will prompt him gladly to volunteer, saying, "Here am I; send me." Let us suppose that there were two brothers who were prodigals in the land of want; that one returned and is met by the father's kiss, with ring and robe and festive banquet. Let us further suppose that amid the banquet expressing the father's rejoicing over the return of one of his lost sons, he should with tremulous voice say re-

specting the unrepentant son, "Whom shall I send to that land of wretchedness and starvation?" and the returned son, sitting at the feast in the best robe, should make no response because he had not been called by name, what would be the inference respecting his character? Would it not be that he was an ungrateful wretch, more worthy of a place in the swine's pasture with his sinning brother than in the old homestead with the forgiving father? The absence of the direct appeal to the brother who had returned is purposely designed to afford him a chance to volunteer in the gladness of his heart. Thus our Father in heaven, in the presence of all true believers, who are truly returned prodigals, says, "Whom shall I send" to your lost brother feeding on husks? God loves volunteers. He accepts conscripts. It is better by far to preach under the anointing than under the "woe unto me" (1 Cor. ix. 16). It is God's prerogative to reject or to elect; it is the privilege of every converted soul to offer himself or herself for the ministry of the Word. The gift of persuasive address no candid man can limit to his own sex after listening to such a woman as our translated Frances E. Willard, the apostle of Christian temperance and purity to the whole world.

Our contention is that every disciple of Christ, male or female, should covet the Christian ministry and in this attitude of mind sit down to examine the question of a personal call. Thus Christian parents in prayer and consecration should offer their sons and daughters to the Head of the church for the best possible service in the establishment of his universal kingdom. Should one in every Christian family be accepted the world would not

be overstocked with ministers of various kinds, pastors, evangelists, teachers and deaconesses proclaiming saving truth to all nations, peoples and tribes. Such is the present disproportion between the harvest and the laborers. Timothy was well prepared to be the successor to St. Paul in the care of the churches, because his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois had diligently instructed him in Christian truth and dedicated him to the ministry of the gospel. Thousands have been trained in the theological seminary of a pious home. Bishop Simpson says that when an eminent preacher is needed the Lord first calls some praying mother, some Hannah to train her Samuel for the service of his holy temple. Others who have toiled all their lives in small churches in obscure places, unknown to fame, and others who have become world-renowned preachers, have come into the Christian ministry through the gateway of a mother's faith in God and careful spiritual training of her offspring. It may not be an unpardonable infraction of the canons of sacred rhetoric for the writer of these lines to give this public expression of his gratitude to God for leading him into this sacred vocation through such a portal. In many instances the stars which are supposed to belong to the minister's crown rightfully belong to his faithful mother, some Monica wrestling with God for the conversion of her wayward Augustine, or some Susannah Wesley closeted weekly with each of her children in prayer and spiritual counsel. It is no wonder that from the nest which she builded and brooded in the humble Epworth manse there flew upward two eaglets till they were seen first by all England, then by all the world;

the one "the greatest ecclesiastical organizer of a thousand years," and the other the writer of hymns for all the coming generations. If there were more of this offering children to God in the closet instead of sacrificing to the Moloch of fashion or of mammon, there would be fewer downfalls in the slippery paths of youth, and no scarcity of reapers in the ever-widening harvest field of the church of Christ.

The atmosphere of the Christian home has much to do with the question of ministerial supply. Is mammon your real household divinity in the absence of a Christian altar at which you daily minister as the priest of your family? Would it be strange if your imitative, sharp-sighted son should grow up a worshipper of the almighty dollar instead of a self-denying herald of Christ. Is the preacher of the gospel often spoken of with uncharitable criticism? Is his support treated, in the presence of your children, as so much money given to a beggar? These things will deafen them to the Spirit's call to the proclamation of the glorious gospel of the Son of God. This office was never designed to be a lucrative employment. This would defeat its high purpose. It would attract the worldly and the self-seeking. It is a law of the spiritual kingdom that the greatest good is always done at the greatest sacrifice. The spirit of sacrifice is rarely found in the children of wealth. Millionaires have rapidly multiplied in our country, but who has ever seen one of their sons climbing the pulpit stairs? In saying this let no one suspect that we have sympathy with the doctrine that the wolf howling at the minister's door will make him spiritually minded and that unpaid grocer's bills are

a means of grace. We have a superlative contempt for that mean form of avarice which clothes itself in a saintly garb and adds farm to farm and thousand to thousand till the purse becomes plethoric and the soul becomes lean, and then goes to church and prays, "Lord, make our preacher humble; we will keep him poor." There is a class of Christians who imagine that the faithful pastor must preach because a fearful woe is hanging over his head. They think they ought to be commended for furnishing him with an audience before whom he may do the penance of preaching in order to escape the woe. We are quite sure that a weightier woe is suspended over that covetousness which is idolatry. The truth is that the Head of the church has ordained that a competency should be, not given, but paid to his ordained servants as their well-earned earthly wages, a necessary earnest of the exceedingly great reward awaiting his faithful messenger in heaven. "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God care for oxen? Or saith he it altogether for your sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written; that he that plougheth may plough in hope." This is the Oriental way of saying that since God in the true spirit of modern laws against cruelty to animals has shielded the dumb ox against that refinement of aggravation which puts a basket over the mouth of the patient and hungry animal to prevent his tasting the grain that he all day treads, how much more interested will he be to provide for the proper care of his own trusted messengers traversing all lands to tell barbarian, Scythian, bond and free the good news of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. He who

has a genius for accumulating money and has the stewardship of his Lord's money is just as accountable as he who is the recipient of spiritual gifts and ministerial callings. Gilbert Haven, in 1840 in Boston, had as great a mercantile talent as his fellow clerk in the same store, Eben Jordan. Jordan died the king of the greatest department store in his city where he piled up millions of gold; Haven, listening to the voice of the Spirit, turned his back on the wealth that was beckoning him, took upon himself the vow of lifelong poverty as a Methodist preacher, and after faithful service to God and man, especially the man downtrodden and oppressed, went triumphant to his reward. One left his treasure, the other went to his crown and throne above the stars. I was one of the invited inmates of the chamber where this good man met, not his fate, but his angelic escort to the skies. There were not many silver nails in his coffin, but he carried in his hands more money that passes current beyond the grave, than Cræsus, Jay Gould, Astor and Vanderbilt ever saw. And yet Haven had the only two things which all these money kings had through all their lives—his food and clothes. He was well fed and well clothed while obeying the command, "Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, nor for your body, what ye shall put on."

O ye Christian young men, if Christ calls you to preach his gospel anywhere do not hesitate to obey with gladness, esteeming it the highest honor to stand by the side of our Lord Jesus and assist him to reap the harvest of the world. The question who will provide for your old age is not prompted by faith. The sparrow

Feeder will surely provide for his faithful servants. The disabled preacher who is supported by his church after years of service is no beneficiary. To deny this would be to insult every veteran who hobbles through our streets on his wooden leg on his way to the pension office. Socrates, the city missionary of Athens, told the judges who sentenced him to drink the hemlock poison, that justice demanded that one who had rendered so long and so signal service in elevating the moral tone of Athens ought to be boarded the remainder of his life at public cost in the Prytaneum. Such is the valid claim of every faithful preacher in the days of his physical weakness.

But other questions arise. Is not a lack of literary qualification a proof that I am not called? No. You are called to prepare. Jesus did not begin to preach till he was thirty years old. Why should a stripling of eighteen years, immature in body and mind, rush into so great responsibilities? Wait till you are fully equipped and by drill in the camp have learned the manual of arms. To secure this preparation for your successful career as an officer in Christ's army put forth every effort and make every sacrifice. This is what Christ meant when he said, "He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one." The call to preach is usually given to the young in order that they may amply prepare for their life-work. Let no one defeat this purpose and attempt to fly through the heavens with the trumpet of the gospel at his lips before his wings are sufficiently grown to sustain his flight. This highly intellectual age demands sense as well as sound in the pulpit. The

preacher should keep ahead of his people in two things, piety and intelligence.

But another question arises: How much weight must I attach to the opinion of kindred and friends in determining the question of a call to preach? Pay less attention to their negative than to their affirmative advice, because a prophet is generally without honor in his own house. We are apt to underestimate those with whom we have been familiar from infancy. The application of Bishop Ames for a license to preach was voted down, and the vote was reversed by the arrival of a belated negro local preacher, who was a member of the Quarterly Conference. The author of this essay had a similar experience. His nearest neighbor across the street, who had known him from childhood, freely expressed his opinion that no civilized people would ever endure to hear him preach, and that his only hope for an audience would be in some tribe of wild Indians on the western frontier.

We remark again that it is a good indication of a call to preach when he who hears the whisperings of the Holy Spirit is found filling up his present sphere of influence as a Sunday-school teacher, class leader or exhorter with earnest Christian effort. Faithfulness in little things is a stepping-stone to higher responsibilities. This is the divine order: "Because thou hast been faithful over a few things I will make thee ruler over many." Thus thought President Lincoln, who promoted an earnest and thoroughly efficient colonel, Ulysses S. Grant, to be first a brigadier, then a major-general and finally the lieutenant-general of all the armies in the American Civil War.

The Republic indorsed the President's estimate by elevating him to the presidency. If a man has not piety enough to keep him active in his present field of Christian service, it is a sign that he has either backslidden since God called him, or that he has not called him to a higher position. For such the pulpit is. The humblest pulpit is higher than the dome of any state house in our country, yea, higher than the Federal Capitol itself. "He that winneth souls is wise. They that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as stars for ever and ever." Robert Hall once said that if two angels were sent down from heaven, one to sweep the streets of London and the other to be its lord mayor, they would not debate on the way the question, Which is the greater honor? All men are to be equally honored who equally fulfil their duty, whether to rock a cradle or to command the army at Gettysburg. But to do as the God-man did when he preached up and down Galilee and Judea seems to be the most exalted occupation to which mortals can aspire. "I paint for immortality" was the reply of an artist who was asked why he lingered so long over one picture. The preacher who sways souls from sin to holiness preaches for eternity. His theme is the cross of Christ, the central point of human history. Scientific men may sneer at such a preacher as narrow because he confines himself to one theme, Christ crucified, not considering that this theme touches all human interests. It gives the amplest scope to mental, moral and spiritual development. The preacher may apply elevating and transforming truth to every state of society and to every subject.

of human thought. In God's ancient temple the layman could enter no farther than the court of the Jews, but the high priest could enter every apartment. The preacher is God's high priest in the temple of Christian truth to apply truth to all human transactions from the king on the throne to the beggar on the dunghill.

The demand is becoming imperative for earnest preachers to enter the doors providentially opened to so-called American imperialism, the islands of the sea suddenly placed by the God of nations under the flag of our liberal and progressive Republic. Doors to millions of souls bolted for centuries have been unexpectedly opened to the American churches especially, since the political exigency demands that our flag shall float, in protection, if not in control, over the vast populous islands conquered by our arms. There are times when the call of the Holy Spirit is marvellously reënforced by the call of Divine Providence. Commerce is studying Spanish. Why should not Methodism?

CHAPTER VI.

ST. PAUL'S ONLY THEME.*

THE character and career of St. Paul are an inspiration to every believer in Christ and a model to every one of his ministers. That character will never cease to be admired by all who are capable of emotions of moral sublimity. It will be a dark day for the Christian church when this heroic apostolic example will have no imitators. He declared that after a course of bloody persecution he obtained mercy that he might stand forth as a conspicuous specimen of the wonderful power and condescending mercy of God, and as a pattern of all long-suffering to them who should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. We are justified in saying that Saul found pardoning grace that his course of labors and sufferings might be presented to every successive generation of Christian heralds as a model of all ministerial fidelity and devotion to his divine Master. His heroism is seen not only in his persistent surmounting of obstacles and dauntless courage to face foes thirsting for his blood, but also in the offensive doctrine to which he always gave prominence. He exalts and magnifies the most unpalatable truth of the gospel. He lifts up the bloody cross, awakening the anger of the Jew and the disgust of the Greek. To the one it was a stumbling-block and to the

*“ For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.” — 1 Cor. ii. 2.

other foolishness. The Jew's worldly ideal of the Messiah was rudely shocked by the hammer that nailed the Nazarene to the tree. Even to this day he will not bow the knee to Jesus Christ because he says, in the words of a Hebrew college classmate, "I cannot worship a dead God." The cultured Greek, whose exquisite taste has given law to art, has his modern successors who are disgusted with a theology that has the blood of atonement as a cardinal element. Every audience before whom Paul "reasoned" was composed of Jews and Greeks whose prejudices were harshly assaulted, whose tastes were grossly offended by the very mention of the shameful cross as the instrument of blessing to mankind.

"For we must strive to recollect what the cross was. We have wrought it in gold and wreathed it with flowers, and worn it as an ornament, and placed it at the top of all human symbolisms, until we have transfigured it. It had none of these associations originally. It was the meanest of all the engines of torture. The guillotine has something respectable in it, as it was used in the decapitation of princes as well as of robbers. The gal- lows is not so mean as the cross; for, when there was slavery among us, and a master and his slave were convicted of a capital crime, they perished on the same scaffold. But the cross was reserved for the lowest and vilest malefactors. It added deepest ignominy to death—Tacitus called crucifixion the torture of slaves."

Paul was constantly under a strong temptation to please men by concealing the cross and by exalting other facts in the history of Christ. For he is a very wide topic, affording a vast variety of themes. Paul could

have preached many sermons without alluding to Christ's ignominious, judicial death. His inventive and fertile mind could easily have filled up his longest term of service in one place, three years, dwelling without repetition on other topics than the crucifixion and its relation to human salvation. He might have preached on the mediatorial office of the Son of God in the physical realm, by whom the world's were made, and by whom they are upheld, and in whom all things consist. How easy for Paul's judicial mind to discourse of the Son of God as the governor of the world, proving that his shoulder upholds the kingdom, and that he is head over all things unto his church. How large the theme of messianic prophecy! How many sermons on the text, "Unto him give all the prophets witness"! How charming and fertile the theme of the unique and wonderful character, a sinless soul mingling unstained with a world of sinners, wearing the robe of spotless purity amid earth's pollutions; each radiant virtue constituting the theme of a discourse,—his humility, his meekness, his philanthropy, his forgiving spirit, his zeal and diligence in his Father's work, the wonderful symmetry of his character, so unlike any creation of man's imagination as to prove him divine. How rarely did Paul in his addresses dwell upon the miracles of Jesus, a large subject almost entirely neglected. He names only the miracle of miracles, the resurrection of Christ. The legal training of St. Paul might have found a large field for its exercise in amplifying each of the wonderful utterances of the sermon on the mount, emphasizing and illustrating every specific moral obligation. What proofs of

Christ's Godhood might have been educed from his sole judgment of the whole human race, adjudging changeless and eternal destinies!

Paul knew how to become all things to all men that he might win some. Why then is he not politic and conciliatory in the selection of the theme of his preaching? There must be some good reason. This is found in the fact that the cross is the centre of the Christian system. To have ignored it would have been to pluck the roots from the tree with the expectation that it would grow and withstand the tornado, or to dig out the corner-stone and look to see the temple withstand the earthquake.

Paul might thus have conciliated a few bitter Hebrew enemies of Christ, or he might have gained the favor of a few proud philosophers, but he would have torn out the heart of Christianity and would have preached another gospel. If he had shunned preaching salvation through the blood of Christ he would have robbed Christianity of its distinctive doctrine, on which rest both justification from the guilt of sin and sanctification from its pollution, and he would have made Jesus a favorite on the platform of the sceptics and agnostics of his day. To Jesus as a mere ethical teacher they would have no more objection than they have to Confucius, Buddha or Zoroaster; and his gospel would have become as impotent to save as are their religions. Jesus the expounder of the moral law on the mount of beatitudes provokes no great opposition in the proud sinner. But Jesus the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world arouses the hostility of the self-righteous, because it lays their pride in the dust to be saved through the sacrifice of another.

How contemptuous and blasphemous the words of a former professed teacher of Christianity in Boston, that "orthodox people are depending for salvation on the blood of a crucified Jew, the son of a peasant mother and a peasant sire." Paul magnifies Christ's death, because as an atonement for sin it is the foundation of all the vital doctrines of the gospel. Here are displayed God's love, man's worth, and the nature and cure of sin. Let us consider the last first.

I. The misnamed Christian Scientists and the so-called liberal theologians teach that sin is not a reality but an illusion of miseducated minds; that it is a weakness to be outgrown by further development. We are told that sin is an incidental misstep of an infant toddling from the cradle to his mother's knee—an incident or accident in the unfolding of immature faculties. It is very confidently asserted that there is no such thing in the universe as absolute evil; that moral evil, or sin, is only another form of good,—good in the process of making, as a bitter medicine is not an evil of itself if it promotes health. We are gravely assured that the fall of Adam was the longest stride in human progress yet made by our race. This, in brief, is what has been aptly styled "bitter-sweet theology;" that sin is bitter in its experience but salutary in its final results, a relative evil antecedent to a positive good in its ultimate end and purpose. Hence "all is well that ends well." At the bottom of this doctrine lies the pantheistic denial of the radical and eternal distinction between right and wrong; that the testimony of conscience to such a distinction is illusory. It is asserted that the foreboding of fiery in-

dignation and consuming wrath which haunt the guilty man is a superstition. This view of sin to which some are schooling themselves is an opiate to the conscience, disastrous to the individual and ruinous to society, because it removes every safeguard to virtue which exists in the fear of punishment—a cardinal restraint from sin. Should the belief become universal that sin, in the long run, is as profitable as holiness, crime would run riot through the whole world. The bridle would be thrown down upon the neck of lust, and every good man would be tempted to regret a life of self-denying piety and to exclaim, "In vain have I washed my hands in innocence." The world would become a pandemonium where successful vice would triumph evermore. "Evil would stand on the neck of good and rule the world alone."

Let us now bring our study of the nature of sin to the cross, the only place where a true view of it can be obtained. Who is he who hangs thereon bowing his head in death? It is none other than the Son of God, who dwelt in his bosom and shared his glory before the world was. By him, "the image of the invisible God, were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in the earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions; all things were created by him and for him."* Equal in power and glory with the Father, he says, "I and my Father are one." "He who hath seen me hath seen the Father." This person of infinite dignity is nailed to the cross, voluntarily laying down his life as a ransom for many. The cost of redemption is the meas-

*Col. 1. 16.

ure of the turpitude of sin. Jesus died to antagonize sin, to neutralize its baneful effects and to arrest its consequences in such a manner as to afford no encouragement to sin, but rather to raise up the strongest safeguard against it. If Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man, it proves that in every man there is some fatal plague spot which must be removed, which nothing short of the death of the Son of God could effect. I need not tell you that this plague is sin which embitters and blights every human soul, casting an eternal eclipse upon its future existence. Before Jesus was born it was said, "He shall save his people from their sins." He began to preach and his theme was repentance of sin. He visits John the Baptist and he hears himself designated as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." He heals the paralytic, but his omniscient eye sees deeper than the paralysis of the body the sin of the soul, which he hastens to forgive before he utters the omnipotent word, "Arise, take up thy bed and walk." From the top of Olivet he looks down upon Jerusalem and weeps over her sins. On the cross he prays, not Father, deliver me, but Father, forgive the sins of my murderers. The whole scheme of revelation in both Testaments has distinct reference to sin. The great problem with which omnipotence wrestled was how to annihilate sin without annihilating the sinner. Justice said: "Let them share the same fate." Mercy cried: "Let me devise a ransom, though it be the most precious thing in the universe, even the only begotten of the Father. Let his death atone for the sins of the human race

with whose nature he has forever united himself. Let him satisfy the demands of the moral Governor and the Protector of law, and at the same time melt the obduracy of sinners and sway them to a penitent acceptance of Christ as both Saviour and Lord." The chasm between sinners and God is bridged by an atonement satisfactory with God and influential with man. We may not be able to state correctly the philosophy of the atonement on its Godward side, showing in what way he is affected by the death of his Son. But the saving efficacy of the atonement does not depend on our perfect philosophy, but on that faith which inspires love, imparts spiritual life, overcomes the world, and purifies the heart. The Father is grossly misrepresented when he is represented as a pitiless and vengeful Shylock demanding his pound of flesh, while his Son is the sole embodiment of mercy. The Father originated the atonement and himself suffered in the gift of his well-beloved Son beyond all possible conception by men or angels. Suffering is the highest proof of love. To say that the gift of his Son to the manger and the cross did not wring the heart of the Father with the keenest anguish, is to strip him of every proof of love to a world of sinners. Professor Fairbairn asserts that it is a great error to teach that God is incapable of suffering.

The self-sacrifice of both the Father and the Son in providing for human redemption pours a light of double intensity upon the awful nature of sin. Not so distinctly are we taught that the Holy Spirit suffers in his part of the scheme of redemption. But in the application of it by convicting the world of sin, he must be

deeply grieved with every individual who rejects his mission and hardens himself in sin. The three Persons of the Trinity being interested in the elimination of sin are pained by its existence in any human character.

“ With joy the Father doth approve
The fruit of his eternal love ;
The Son looks down with joy and sees
The purchase of his agonies ;
The Spirit takes delight to view
The contrite souls he forms anew ;
While saints and angels join to sing
The growing empire of their King.”

Thus the cross of Christ symbolizes the unutterable pain throbbing in the bosom of the triune God. Hence sin is no trifle, no mere misstep easily corrected. It is not another form of good, a medicine, bitter indeed but profitable because it secures health. We reject the so-called “bitter-sweet theology” which regards sin as only a relative evil, a good in the process of making. It is an evil unmitigated, absolute and eternal in its consequences, unless cancelled by the voluntary acceptance of the atonement. The terribleness of the disease is seen in the sufferings of the Physician to find the only remedy. Would you see the cost of that remedy, gaze upon the thorny path of the Son of God from the manger to the garden, from the garden to the cross, from the cross to the tomb, every weary, bleeding footstep to find a cure for sin. Think you that your sins are unworthy your serious regard? Sit down and ponder them beneath the cross of Christ and you will discover their deep significance. Your eyes will be anointed to see the divine

image in you disfigured by the hideousness of sin. You will see in strong outlines the likeness of Satan imprinted on your immortal spirit soon to be made eternally unchangeable by that decisive event which we call death. Could men be induced to study sin in the light of Calvary there would be an end to the flippant talk about its insignificance, and there would be an earnest inquiry for the remedy. It is said that five thoughtful men were once asked for the best cure of sin. The first said, "Meditation on death." This may be beneficial to restrain from sin, but it cannot remedy sin already committed. The second said, "Contemplation of the day of judgment." This would have the same defect. The third said, "Meditation on hell." This might be morally healthful in deterring from sin. The fourth prescribed "The contemplation of heaven." This might awaken hope, but it might not be a hope which maketh not ashamed, because it could not blot out the record of past sins and regenerate "by shedding abroad the love of God in the heart by the Holy Ghost." The fifth man gave the correct answer, "Meditation on the cross of Christ." This is saving because it has in it the person and work of the Redeemer and Saviour. It looks towards both the past and the future. Looking unto Jesus is the conquering attitude of the soul. It cancels past sin. It subdues sin within; it overcomes sin without. It secures the new creation and implants the aspiration after perfect conformity to the image of the Son of God through entire sanctification by the indwelling Spirit and that perfect love which is the full heritage of the believer.

The story of Calvary pondered by a sinner drives him

to his knees in penitent abhorrence of sin. We do not know of a place on earth in which Christ crucified should be more plainly and earnestly preached than in agnostic Boston, where men are taught to look for a cure of sin in their own good works; where many, ignoring Christ, go about to establish their own righteousness. The failure of such a scheme of salvation is now and then honestly confessed by its own advocates. While writing this sermon my attention is called to the following candid concession by a writer in the *Liberal Christian*: "Had sin been duly understood and dealt with by the last generation of Unitarian sermonizers, we should not have had the swing over into naturalism which has cost us so serious a loss of faith and power. The pulpit would not have become so easily confounded with the lecturer's desk, and preaching been placed beside other forms of literary entertainment." This is the confession of a preacher who accounts the blood of Christ of no more importance than that of any martyr for the truth. In rejecting the atonement, he threw away the only fact, by which sin could be "duly understood and dealt with," the sounding line by which its depths can be fathomed and the only measure of its enormity. It has been said that

"Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees,"

but there is another object which he gazes upon with greater terror, the Lamb of God, the offering for sin, shedding his blood freely for the cure of sin. In a European cathedral there is in the chancel a painting of a

cross. A ladder leans against it, and a rope dangling from the crosspiece intimates that the body has just been taken down. Beyond a hillock in the rear are seen the heads of four men who are evidently carrying the dead Christ to Joseph's new tomb. But the most wonderful part of the picture, and that which shows the intelligence of the painter, is a rill of blood running down the hill from the cross and a serpent running away in affright from that crimson stream. Christ "through death destroys him who has the power of death, that is, the devil." Gazing on this picture, may those preachers who have treated sin as a trifle rectify their mistake on their visit to that open tomb which demonstrates the supreme deity of the Son of God, whose blood cleanses from all sin.

"The cleansing stream I see, I see;
I plunge and oh! it cleanses me."

II. In Christ crucified we find the highest expression of God's love to sinful men. The most comprehensive sentence in the universe is comprised in three monosyllables, "God is love." Nature could not reveal this wonderful truth. Men of the greatest wisdom and insight could not infer it from the physical world or from human history. There is too much suffering in the world to justify such an inference. It must be revealed by the Spirit of God, who searches the depths of his being. The Spirit inspired John to write the words "God is love," the demonstration of which he had contemplated at Golgotha.

Love is the only weapon that can conquer the re-

bellious will and transform the soul from sin to holiness. And divine love does this only when it awakens responsive love in the sinner's breast. If love alone could save sinners, every prodigal son who has a mother would be drawn immediately from his husks to his home a reformed man. As a parent's love alone cannot save the dissolute son or the fallen daughter, so God's love alone, though deep as hell and wide as the world, can save no soul from the guilt and love of sin. But love that awakens love in return is a magnet that draws men from the lowest depths near the very gates of perdition up to the highest heaven. The sinner whom love cannot save God cannot save, for salvation is absolutely impossible without responsive love, the first throb of which is the first pulsation of spiritual life. He is born again, born from above, for, behold, he loveth.

He who has so hardened himself in sin as to lose the capacity to be inspired with love responsive to the love of God revealed on Calvary must perish. For God has no way of regenerating the sinner except by awakening in him love to himself. If love revealed in the greatest possible sacrifice cannot awaken love to God, nothing can enkindle this sacred flame. It is certain that omnipotence cannot change the heart of stone to a heart of flesh. Power cannot constrain love. Not the thunderbolt but the cross is the symbol of salvation. What a relief did Christianity experience when she shook off the dreadful doctrine of salvation through sovereign power and irresistible grace with a sledge hammer breaking down the door of the impenitent heart!

Herein is the secret of the rapid spread of the gospel

going forth as an angel flying over all the world, not with a sword in her hand, but with a trumpet at her lips proclaiming God's love. Deny the vicarious atonement and we have an utterly impotent gospel. The churches which have tried this experiment have lost the light and warmth of evangelical truth, and have felt the chill, the frost, the death of mere naturalism. But wherever Christ crucified is preached as the Redeemer of the entire human race without one exception, and the Saviour of everyone who believes and receives the Holy Spirit, there is a quickening power which raises the dead to life and enkindles the fire of a quenchless zeal. Hence the cross of Christ becomes a live coal, which has touched myriads of dumb lips and made them eloquent to preach Christ crucified to all the world. A pentecostal experience is the inspiration, the mighty motive power of the great missionary enterprises of the nineteenth century.

III. Liberalists assert that the Epistles, especially those of Paul, present an ideal and not the historical Christ of the four Gospels; that salvation through his blood is a human addition to the system of truth left by Jesus, the outline of which is found in the sermon on the mount. But in the first Gospel Jesus announces the germ of all Pauline teachings, "The Son of man came to give his life a ransom for many." The whole oak is in this acorn. If we turn to John's Gospel we shall find numerous hints of the doctrine of the atonement. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit."* "The bread which

* John xii. 24.

I give is my flesh, for the life of the world. Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have not life in yourselves.”*

The crucifixion is not a fancy but a stubborn and ugly fact which a person given to idealizing a historical character so rich as that of Jesus of Nazareth would have certainly thrown far into the background of his picture or totally suppressed. Hence we argue that the very phrase, “and him crucified,” was designed by Paul to emphasize the literal genuineness of the Christ whom he preached, not a mythical creation, but a veritable person, who lived in Palestine, wrought miracles, uttered parables, preached sermons, died, arose and ascended, and proved that he had reached the throne by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete of promise. There is not a doctrine in the Epistles which is not germinally in the Gospels. If Jesus had fully developed the doctrine of justification by faith grounded on the atonement in his own blood, he would have laid too great a burden upon their faith. Hence he wisely reserved it, saying, “I have many things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now.” He might have added, “After I have gone away, these things can then be unfolded to you.” After his blood had been shed, it was natural that the doctrinal relations and implications of this fact should be clearly set forth. For this purpose Paul, filled with Hebrew lore, an excellent Greek scholar and a logician of the first rank, was called to the authoritative exposition of Christian truth as educed from the completed facts of the gospel. Jesus did promise “the Paraclete, whom I will send, shall teach you all things.” Whether

* John vi. 51, 53.

this promise includes a supernatural communication of facts to Paul or not is immaterial, so long as there were eyewitnesses to those facts who were accessible to Paul. But all evangelical scholars agree that the theological inductions from those facts were made through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Hence we may confidently deny that the apostles in unfolding Christian truth after Pentecost presented to the world an imaginary or unhistorical Christ. It is the very same Jesus as "was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world and received up into glory."

IV. In the light of the cross of Christ we clearly see the inevitable failure of all moral reforms, all attempts to antagonize and conquer sin independent of those redemptive influences which flow from the sacrificial element in the atonement made by the Son of God. The great purpose of his death was to destroy the works of the devil. Human depravity is a work of the devil. In his deadly conflict with the usurping prince of this world, Jesus welcomes all as allies who will fight beneath his banner and wield his weapons. What is his banner but the crimsoned cross? what his chosen weapon but his death, through which "he destroys him that hath the power of death"? This is the all-conquering sword which the Captain of our salvation girds upon his own thigh when he rides forth in majesty to subdue his enemies. He who fights any form of sin without the weapon of the cross of Christ is doomed to a humiliating defeat. Pride has been called the primal sin, and selfishness has been styled the radical sin of our fallen race.

From these twin sins all others spring. No hand ever plucked them out of the soul but the pierced hand of Jesus Christ. How true to both nature and grace is this stanza of Isaac Watts:

“ When I survey the wondrous cross
 On which the Prince of glory died,
 My richest gain I count but loss,
 And pour contempt on all my pride.”

Concupiscence and enslaving artificial appetites such as the alcoholic and narcotic, which drag their victims into the depths of ruin and shut them up in the prison of despair, can be effectually overcome only by the blood of Jesus Christ. By this we mean to say, that faith in evangelical truth centred in the forgiveness of sin based on the atonement, and including the inspiration of spiritual life through the regenerating and sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, made accessible to the believer in Christ crucified, is the only power in the universe which can conquer Satan and deliver the captives that he holds in fetters.

Philosophy may wonder, despise and perish while scornfully rejecting the only purgatory for sin—“The blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin.” This is the whole gospel in a single sentence, containing the head and front of all its offence against the pride of fallen man and its alleged collision with human reason.

It follows that Christ crucified is the test of every effort to save the individual and to regenerate society. Does it draw its inspiration from the cross, and is the cross the centre of the truths which are applied and enforced? Then it is of God. Roman Catholic legends

often embody some important truth. It is said of St. Martin of Tours that once, while meditating in his cell, there appeared a form radiant with beauty, crowned with a jewelled diadem, with a countenance glorious and persuasive, and a manner so austere that it seemed to require homage and love. This form said, "I am Christ; worship me." After St. Martin had looked long in silence, he gazed upon the hands and said: "Where is the print of the nails?" The vision suddenly vanished, and St. Martin was left alone, assured that he had met the tempter.

Are we Protestants not invited to bow the knee to some Christ of our own imagination, a Christ without the nail-print, whom it is easy to serve because his service does not require self-crucifixion?

Beware, my beloved, of every form of so-called Christianity out of which the element of self-sacrifice has been dropped. For there are false Christs in many beautiful forms in modern times. A perfect orthodoxy may enrobe a phantom Christ. "We may," in the words of John Wesley, "be as orthodox as the devil and as wicked. For the devils believe and tremble and are devils still." Yea, the modern evangelical who rests in a mere intellectual assent to the truth may not even tremble before the object of his faith. Thus he may prove that his piety is inferior to that of the demons themselves.

How many are worshipping the false Christ of splendid ritualism, resting in symbols forgetful of the thing signified, content with water baptism with no aspiration after the baptism of the Spirit. They are satisfied with

the wine, the emblem of the blood, without experiencing the joy of the Holy Ghost of which it is also an emblem. They may be advocates of the individual cup with no individual appropriation of the blood of Christ to the soul's spiritual need. The ritualistic Christ may always be known by his uncharitable exclusiveness. He limits his grace to those who have a certain external mark made by tactual succession, a myth of myths which no man on earth can prove to be real, or which would be of no value if it were real. "He is a Jew which is one inwardly." Others again worship an ethical Christ, advancing no farther than the sermon on the mount; they never reach Mount Calvary. They are legalists. They insist on a righteousness without the basis of regeneration, a righteousness which is independent of grace and a substitute for the new birth. It is one thing to admire the beauty of Christ's moral character, and quite another to submit to him as Lord by an all-surrendering trust and an intense desire to be conformed to the image of Christ by being crucified with him.

It will be spiritually healthful always to remember that there is no salvation in a fancied Christ. Only the real Christ can save sinners. Jesus more than hints that many people will forget this truth and lose their souls in consequence. Hear him: "Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? Then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity."*

In conclusion we remark that our text is the best touch-

*Matt. vii. 21, 22.

stone of the subject-matter of preaching in our time and in all times. An aged Methodist minister, a doctor of divinity, whose preaching had been eminently evangelistic and fruitful of conversions, after several years of retirement from the pulpit made to me the following statement: "For several years I have been an earnest listener to the preaching of my younger brethren. If a man should believe what some of them say, he would be no better, and if he should disbelieve it all, he would be no worse."

My beloved ministerial brother, if this is a description of your preaching, you will be far from having boldness in the day of judgment. That great day will prove that the Christian ministry misused brings the heaviest condemnation. There are only two pulpit themes, Christ or self. Many begin with Christ, but unconsciously switch off to self. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."*

*1 Cor x. 12.

CHAPTER VII.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD.*

It is not my purpose to amplify the negative part of this scripture, which denies that the kingdom of God consists in external ordinances, in eating and drinking in scrupulous conformity to ceremonial requirements. I shall dwell wholly on the positive statement of the contents of genuine Christianity. There is a sense in which God has three kingdoms. The first two constitute the platform or pedestal on which the third is erected. First, God reigns over the material world by the mechanical necessity of physical laws. In this kingdom there is no freedom. The subjects, whether floating atoms or blazing suns, bow to the law of necessity. To this kingdom our bodies belong. The laws of gravitation and of vital chemistry are ceaselessly at work in them, whether we will or not, whether we wake or sleep. In the second place, God presides over a moral government requiring obedience to the universal law of moral obligation. God did not give us the privilege of choosing whether or not we would be in this kingdom. We are in it by no vote or consent of ours. The moral law is imbedded in our very constitution. We can escape it only by escaping two beings, God and ourselves. We may disobey and suffer penalty; we may obey and enjoy the reward. But on the basis of these two kingdoms stands another. No

*“ For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”—*Rom. xiv. 17.*

one is in it of necessity, but everyone enters freely. The law of this kingdom is love of righteousness. All who love righteousness love God, its perfect embodiment, and belong to this kingdom. Hence it is purely spiritual with an ethical basis. It was founded by the Father. When some method of making the wicked righteous was needed, he devised the scheme of the atonement. Hence he is no impersonation of mercilessness holding an iron sceptre, as some falsely assert, but a tender Father devising the ransom of his banished ones. "God so loved the world," says the divine record. The atonement is a river of love rising in the heart of the Father, flowing through the self-sacrifice of the Son and emptying itself on the earth in the gift of the Holy Ghost to restore to human souls the lost image of God, righteousness and true holiness. The Son of God is the administrator of this kingdom. He is head over all things to his church. "My kingdom is not of this world." From the residence of a majority of its subjects it is called the kingdom of heaven. The census of that kingdom would be so great that the number on the earth are to the number in heaven as a handful of sand is to a continent, or as the planets of our system are to the milky way powdered with stars. We have said that the fundamental qualification for this kingdom is righteousness. This may exist with little peace and less joy. A righteous man may be disturbed by fears and distressed by doubts. Many a righteous soul has inward unrest because of the constant warfare with hereditary proneness to sin. "But," says one, "is not peace always attendant upon righteousness as its natural fruit?" It is the natural fruit of perfect

righteousness. But many do not advance into this land of peace,

“Where dwells the Lord our Righteousness,
And keeps his own in perfect peace,
And everlasting rest.”

Hence the pertinency of the exhortation as correctly rendered in the Revised Version, “Being justified by faith, let us have peace with God through Jesus Christ.” Peace is to be sought by slaying all her enemies.

That righteousness may exist without conscious assurance of acceptance and peace and without even a knowledge of the historical Christ, is no new and strange doctrine, as may be seen in the introduction of Peter’s sermon at Cæsarea: “Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with him.” Cornelius was in a state of acceptance as a servant, in doubt and fear without the Spirit of adoption, because he was ignorant of the giver, Jesus Christ. Says Paul: “When the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law are a law unto themselves, which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness.”

On this ground the pagans need no probation after death. They who by living up to their best light have put on the elements of Christ’s character have the essential Christ, though ignorant of the historical Christ.

Jesus, in that most sublimely awful passage which ever fell from his lips, represents the decisions of the day of judgment as turning not on the treatment of the historical Christ, but on the treatment of his representatives,

the hungry, the thirsty, the sick, the naked, the homeless child, the prisoner. Every one has a chance to become acquainted with the essential Christ and to reject or to assume and manifest his spirit. What a throng of good Samaritans, of humble peacemakers, of humane men and tender-hearted women in the humble walks of life, whose names the trump of fame never sounded, will be surprised to hear that they have ministered unto Jesus Christ! They lived in fear of losing heaven and died in doubt of their destiny.

Righteousness is conformity to the law of God; holiness is conformity to his nature. Righteousness, if possible without a knowledge of Christ, as in the case of pious pagans living up to their best light, affords little peace and less joy because of grave uncertainty and painful doubt. It is a scheme of justification by works and not by faith in the personal Christ. Repeated failures lead the thoughtful moralist to utter the despairing cry, "O, wretched man that I am." He is like a man attempting to cross the gulf of perdition walking on a single hair stretched from mountain top to mountain top. Having no balancing-pole, he is constantly in unstable equilibrium, and full of fear lest at every step he may lose his balance and irrecoverably fall into the yawning chasm. He cannot cancel one sin by meritorious works. He can find no day in which he can do overwork and thus compensate for past sin. The law claims the full revenue of his powers every moment. But the righteousness which results from faith in Christ has grounds for both peace and joy in various degrees. The justified person is required to keep the whole law and

to be perfectly holy. To such is given the command, "Be ye yourselves holy in all manner of living, for I am holy."* Every soul is required to make a complete consecration to Christ and to turn away from every known sin. In the lower stages of Christian experience this involves a painful struggle and frequent failures. This is because duty has not been transformed into delight by the inspiration of perfect love.

We may compare the kingdom of God to a three-storied temple founded on Christ, the corner stone. The first story is a basement partly underground, the region of shadow and darkness, the cellar-kitchen of this palace, where servants toil in fear and hirelings work for wages. As servants, they are faithful, conscientious and true to their Master's interests. They are not drones, nor gluttons, nor drunkards, nor stewards wasting their Master's goods. Their service is voluntary. They have chosen it in preference to any other. Yet they are not joyful, but rather fearful that they shall fail to please their Master and so lose their wages. For they toil with an eye to the reward, and every day after twelve o'clock they often look over their shoulders to see whether the sun is not setting, so that they may quit for the day and draw their pay. While they believe that they are serving the best of masters, they sigh when they contrast their condition with that of his acknowledged sons and daughters in the parlors above. They are tempted to be sad and envious, not cheerful and songful. In this state of mind there is danger of discouragement and abandonment of the service. For it is natural for us to escape from an irksome employment. The pre-

*1 Pet. i. 15, R. V.

dominant motive of their service is fear, not love, and there is no magnetism in fear to attract and hold them steadfast. We forgot to say that this lower story is righteousness. It has always had a very numerous population. The Old Testament saints nearly all dwelt here. Here John the Baptist toiled. Here live to-day a large number of legal, not evangelical, Christians. They are under the law. Here are many good Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians and Protestants generally. All unconsciously they make obedience to the law the ground of their justification, while they have in their hands the New Testament, which declares that by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified, for by the law is the knowledge of sin, not deliverance from its guilt and power. It is an irksome, uphill business this earning salvation. It is always attended by a discouraging sense of failure. The sincere and devout portion of the vast Roman Catholic church here dwell under the yoke of religious bondage, both priests and people dying in gloom illumined with a single ray of hope that they may escape hell and get into purgatory, a figment of pagan mythology utterly unknown to revelation. I am so charitable as to believe that the truly pious among them will find the gate of heaven open at their coming, and that they will be saved on the same terms as any other image-worshipping pagans, through the spirit of faith and the purpose of righteousness. By this we mean the disposition to embrace Christ, the object of faith, were he properly presented to their faith, and the desire to keep the moral law were it clearly revealed to them without the chaff of

traditional errors. Here again are God-fearing Mohammedans, who follow their best light, a few ethical rays from our Bible struggling through the dense fog of the errors of Islam. Here are two other classes of honest and prayerful Unitarians, those Jews who, through miseducation, rather than from badness of heart, have their eyes blindfolded to the beauty of Christ, the true Messiah, and those self-styled liberal Christians who in sincerity worship the Father, but cannot call Jesus Lord because they have not the Holy Spirit; over whose eyes cataracts have grown so that they cannot see the Central Sun in the heavens of Christian theology, the divinity of the Son of God. So far as these classes, blinded by prejudices of education and misled by blind religious guides, follow that path of righteous living revealed by the light which faintly comes to them through clouds of error, so far they may be accepted of God through the mediation of his Son, "though," as John Wesley says, "they know him not." They cannot be classed among the wilful rejecters of Christ. They may be saved as servants, though they have not lived as sons. They have always dwelt among the bondmen and have been actuated by servile motives. If they have ever heard of Jesus Christ, the great emancipator who makes "free indeed," through some misconception of their privilege or of his power they have failed to appropriate his proclamation of liberty. The difficulty with those who serve God in the legal spirit is that their acts of obedience are viewed as *duty*, a word not found in the Bible in the sense commonly ascribed to that term. Acts of duty are consciously performed. These are they who

are legally right because they honor law. But they do not freely and spontaneously love the Lawgiver. They are like boys learning to write by painfully imitating the teacher's copy. Their action is constrained and not spontaneous and free. In the legal stage of religious experience we are thinking only of the law and its rewards and punishments. People who abstain from crime under the pressure of this motive are worthy of some commendation, for they are better citizens than those who disregard all the sanctions of law. But we reserve our highest commendation for those citizens who because of their love for their fellow-men spontaneously fulfil all the requirements of law, unconsciously obeying its precepts and refraining from its prohibitions. They help the cripple who falls in the street; they feed the hungry; they refrain from theft, adultery and murder because of the feeling of philanthropy and love of virtue, and not because of any law human or divine.

It is possible to advance so far in the Christian life as to be free from the law as an impulse to right living because we have found a better motive, love toward God and man. When this new motive is enthroned and servility to law is eliminated, the transition is from bondage to liberty.

But a broad staircase leads up into the apartment of peace; while the Lord of this castle is constantly inviting those below to ascend, to exchange the place of servants for that of sons. For he is willing to adopt the whole crowd into his family, but only now and then one has the good sense to believe in the sincerity of the offer and

to accept it, to doff the servants' livery and to don the many-colored robe of sonship and heirship. This room is spacious and sunny and resonant with songs. Yet its occupants do more work than the servants downstairs. But they do not work for wages, but from love to their adopted Father. They are sons; they belong to the royal family; the whole estate is theirs. This gives a new character to their labor, lifting it infinitely above the drudgery of wage-service. When the hired man marries the daughter of his employer he doesn't play the gentleman at leisure and cease working, but he works all the harder because he now is a member of the firm. This takes all the irksomeness out of his toil and bedecks it with roses. "And because ye are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." The filial feeling is suddenly breathed into the soul. Fear of a servile kind which brings torment is removed. Fear of death disappears and the fear of future ill. Child-like trust in the newly-found Father mostly banishes fear and enthrones peace. The habit of faith becomes fixed, love lubricates all acts of obedience and stern duty is dissolved in love. Service ceases to be a task and love knows no burdens. The beneficent law of habit now comes in to afford an additional safeguard to the gift of peace. Paul says of Christ, "He is our peace." And Jesus says to his disciples in every age, "My peace I give unto you." Hence it is the rightful heritage of every believer. It is described as the "peace of God" because He is its source and origin. It is the deep tranquillity of soul resting wholly upon God in contrast with the unrest and anxiety engendered by a

self-centred and worldly spirit. It is said by the apostle to "pass all understanding."* More literally, it transcends every mind, every attempt of the strongest intellect to realize its qualities and to describe it as "keeping guard over our hearts and thoughts in Christ Jesus," *i. e.*, so long as we retain faith, the vital link of union with the Prince of Peace. What power has he to calm the troubled spirit! He can say to its warring passions, its cringing fears, its clamorous desires as he said to the winds and waves of the sea of Galilee, "Peace, be still," and there will be a heavenly calm in that soul. Brethren beloved, I know whereof I affirm. The once stormy Galilean sea within me has heard that voice divine and a blessed calm has ensued. Jesus is the great Peacemaker in tempest-tossed souls.

" Jesus protects ; my fears begone :
 What can the Rock of Ages move ?
 Safe in thy arms I lay me down,
 Thine everlasting arms of love."

This peace is genuine and no sham. Jesus called it "my peace" in contrast with the world's hollow peace. The Oriental salutation, Salaam, salaam, Peace, peace, like all compliments, had degenerated into an empty and insincere form. But the salaam of Jesus is sky-born, the first instalment of that everlasting rest that awaits all the children of God. This undisturbed repose of the soul we may have in this life. How blessed it would be if every regenerated soul were panting after this rest!

" O that I might at once go up,
 No more on this side Jordan stop,
 But now the land possess.

* * * * *

*Phil. iv. 7.

There dwells the Lord our righteousness,
And keeps his own in perfect peace
And everlasting rest."

Jesus intimated the superiority of his peace to that of the world. His peace inheres in the soul filled with the Holy Spirit. The world's peace is determined by outward things and is as changeable as external conditions.

The English discoverer, Drake, and his men from the top of the Isthmus of Panama saw below them westward a placid sea so fair and still that they called it the Pacific Ocean. It was a calm day and the sea appeared smoother because of the height from which it was seen. It is easy to profess to enjoy peace on fine days "when we are high above all trouble; but our test must be when we are in the midst of the waters, when the waves thereof roar and are troubled. Is it Pacific Ocean then; or do we find as may be those early adventurers did, that it was too hastily named?"

Every Christian needs this heavenly peace. Seek him who is our peace. Cry after peace as the almost frantic Greek poet amid the ceaseless wars which desolated the states of Greece breaks out in prayer to the goddess of peace, "Irene, Irene, descend from heaven upon our discords and wretchedness." Thus pray for the descent of the peace of Christ to heal the troubled heart.

But great as is the blessedness of peace, Paul intimates that the kingdom of God affords a richer banquet. We have three degrees of beatitude set before us, rising like a climax: righteousness is good, peace is better and joy in the Holy Ghost is best of all, the crowning grace which God has to bestow on believers in his adorable Son. It

is the link which unites us with God. It is the first instalment of heaven paid on earth in advance. This is more than the joy which is the natural sequence of right doing. The approval of conscience is the lowest degree of the joy of righteousness. If the act be not merely right but beneficent, if we have by sacrifice benefited some person, the joy rises in quality and intensity. Hence the generous deeds of the unregenerate are to them a source of felicity. This arises from the very constitution of human nature. Happiness and virtue are not divergent but parallel lines. We are as moral beings so constituted that joy must follow the exercise of benevolence. This joy is natural. But the joy of the Holy Ghost is supernatural. It is handed down direct from the Giver of all good gifts through the agency of the Holy Spirit. It flows not in the channels of nature, but is a fruit of the Spirit. Paul intends to discriminate between the natural joy of rectitude and this heavenly joy in Christian experience by styling it the joy of the Holy Ghost. It attends his residence in the soul. For there is a mystery next the three-fold personality in the unity of the divine nature, the two-fold personality of the believer, the human interpenetrated by the divine personality inhabiting it as his temple. This miracle of the fulness of the Spirit was first manifested in Adam in Eden when the breath of God conveyed not merely animal and intellectual life, but spiritual life resulting from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Sin dissolved this mysterious union and the heavenly personage withdrew from his polluted sanctuary. From being filled with joy pervading every capacity, Adam became desolate indeed.

The supremely blessed became supremely wretched. To be sundered from God, the fountain of bliss, is hell. When sin entered the soul of Adam that deep celestial spring ceased to send up its refreshing waters, and he became the subject of intense thirst. His posterity born in his fallen image share also his tormenting thirst. They all flew from spring to spring of sensual pleasure, but still they thirsted till Jesus stood up in this spiritual Sahara and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink." The satisfying nature and the inexhaustible abundance of the water of life are intimated in the fact that out of the believer shall flow, not drops as from a spile, not brooks which dry up in the summer's heat, but rivers, Amazons and Mississippis of living water. Then John, in a blessed parenthesis, for which I mean to thank him when I shake hands with him in heaven, strips off the imagery and tells us in plain words that Jesus is describing the joy of the Holy Spirit, who was not yet given in pentecostal fulness. To this fountain Jesus sets a perpetual finger-point in his last words in the Bible, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come, . . . and take the water of life freely."

It is thought by some that Jesus teaches the woman at the well the impossibility of losing our relish for this water, and hence the impossibility of a total and final apostasy. This doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints, the best annotators do not find in this utterance of Christ. Says Bengel, "Truly that water, as far as it depends on itself, has in it an everlasting virtue; and when thirst returns, the defect is on the part of the man, not of the water." This is clearly seen in the Greek,

generally, in the New Testament. Where believing is spoken of as the condition of salvation the tense indicates continuity and not a single act. "If any man thirst, let him be constantly coming unto me and be always drinking. Out of him who perseveringly believes in me shall flow rivers of living waters."*

The peace of Christ and the joy in the Holy Ghost depend on persistent, appropriating faith. The perpetual fulness of the Spirit resulting from this kind of faith is the condition of fulness of joy. The joy inspired by the Spirit is unique. It is totally unlike natural gladness such as arises in worldly men when their corn and wine are increased. Hence it is indescribable. A simple emotion cannot be defined. You may talk forever of the peculiar emotion of the young mother who feels the first pulsation of maternal love, when her first-born child is laid in her bosom. The feeling must be forever unknown except to those who have had such an experience. It is so with every kind of emotion. We can describe it only by stating under what circumstances it arises. If you have never been in those circumstances the person who speaks of such an emotion speaks to you in an unknown tongue. The joy of the Holy Ghost is to an unbeliever as vague and meaningless as the colors of the rainbow described to one born blind. The world is not rushing to obtain this joy, because it is to them perfectly unreal. Why should they not reject the effect when they disbelieve in the cause, the Holy Spirit, "whom the world cannot receive because they see him not" with their bodily eyes, all the organ of vision they have, in the absence of the eye of faith. The demand is sometimes

* John vii. 37, 38.

made that the Christian should explain his spiritual joy in terms understood by unregenerate minds. The demand is as impossible and as unphilosophical as the description of the taste of oranges would be to a Laplander who never saw this tropical fruit. The joy of the Holy Ghost must always be attested by its possessor in language which is an unknown tongue to the unregenerate. They can have the testimony translated to their spiritual intuition only by visiting the house of the Interpreter as did Bunyan's pilgrim. The glorious dreamer in Bedford jail was on intimate terms with this interpreter whose office it is to take of the things of Christ and to declare them to believers whose souls are open upward to receive the personal Paraclete. The joy inspired by his indwelling is intense, "unutterable and full of glory," the highest in degree and the purest in kind which the human soul can experience in this world or in the world to come. For the bliss of heaven comes from union with God, and the Holy Spirit in us effects that union. That the joy of heaven is a continuation of the "joy of the Holy Ghost" experienced on the earth is implied in the wonderful words of Christ to the Samaritan woman, "But the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Verily, verily I say unto you, He that heareth, *i. e.*, continually obeyeth my word, and perseveringly believeth on him that sent me hath present and eternal well-being. His joy will be as lasting as his obedient trust, and it will be of the same kind in both worlds. The same truth is expressed in the earnest of the Spirit. The Spirit enjoyed here is a pledge of our full heavenly reward. But it is customary to pay

the full wages in the coin with which the earnest, the money paid down to bind the bargain, was paid. This is the spirit of adoption, the first instalment of heaven. No Christian need die to have the secret of heavenly bliss divulged to him. If he claims his full heritage in Christ he has a slice of heaven for his daily rations while journeying to heaven. And this is the best surety of heaven. That was a wise woman whom I once heard in love-feast testifying thus, "I am carrying heaven with me on the way so as to be sure that I shall have it at the end of the journey." In the experience of the inward joy of the abiding Comforter the jubilant shout is often necessary as a safety-valve. But those whose sense of propriety is so extreme as to tie down the safety-valve find relief in the apostolic injunction, "Is any merry? Let him sing psalms." * The revisers do not limit the singer to the Hebrew psalms: "Is any cheerful, let him sing praise." Singing and making melody with the heart to the Lord is the natural expression of the heart filled with the Spirit. †

Many modern Christians become so highly cultivated and refined in their taste as to rebuke the spontaneous hymn breaking out in the pews, independent of the chorister's tuning fork or the organist's keynote, and to take offence at the amen or hallelujah in the congregation not printed in the ritual. They deem such freedom unbecoming the dignity and solemnity of Christian worship. It is possible that the Spirit, who dwells only where there is liberty, departs from those assemblies which attempt to imprison him in stiff forms. He desires to develop individualities by bestowing different gifts sev-

* James v. 13.

† Eph. v. 19.

erally on whomsoever he will. Dr. Stalker says that the prophets addressed only nations, but Jesus Christ discovered the individual. This latest discovery it is the office of the Holy Spirit to create anew, preserving all original traits so far as they are innocent. Men are not at their best when pruned of all personal peculiarities. Grace is not a die which makes all souls alike like dollars dropping from the mint. There is the same variety in the new creation as there was in the original creation. There should be the same variety in the expression of Christian experience. Let not the quiet find fault with the exultant. Let all the people praise the Lord, each in his own natural way.

The notion is widely prevalent that an emotional religion must be fitful and unstable. It is true that feeling excited by appeals to the sensibilities only, without any inculcation of truth upon the intellect, is to be deprecated. This results in a Christian character described by Christ as the stony-ground hearer that hears the word, and anon with joy receives it, but having no root in himself he endures only for a while. The failure is not to be ascribed to the joy, but to the lack of deep moral convictions resulting from a reception of Christian truth used by the Holy Spirit as a subsoil ploughshare breaking up the fallow ground of the heart as a preparation for a spiritual life which will grow more and more robust as persecutions and tribulations increase. Scholarly men are apt to think that feeling stands on a lower plane than the understanding and that it is not consistent with large thinking powers. Hence comes the error which spoils so much preaching—aiming at the head instead

of the heart. It is thought that he who addresses the emotions and melts his hearers to tears is not so great as the master of syllogisms who welds a flawless chain of argument. Hence the tendency of the schools is to repress feeling and to intensify the dry intellect; whereas few people reason while all feel. All popular preaching takes the line of the sensibilities. The great orators of the ages have been emotional men. Study the sermons of Whitefield, Spurgeon, Beecher and Simpson and you will find them all mastering men's wills through appeals to feeling based on truth clearly presented to the intellect. Christianity addresses the whole man. Such fundamentals as the atonement, the day of judgment, heaven and hell, are adapted to awaken a torrent of emotion so strong as to move the will to right action. Sinai trumpets its alarm to fear, while Calvary tenderly speaks to gratitude and hope. The preacher has a message which can satisfy the strongest intellect and yet sway men of low degree, the illiterate, the barbarian, the savage. The intellectual dwarf, "who thinks the moon no larger than his father's shield," can believe in Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners, and be quickened into spiritual life, be filled with the joy of the Holy Ghost and be lifted to an immeasurably wider horizon of thought.* Again how true is the scripture, "The joy of the Lord is your strength." How many Christians miss the secret of spiritual power. They are weak to resist temptation, and lack power to draw others to Christ.

*"All true spiritual life must widen the soul; the more we live with Jesus, the more impossible will it be for any of us to be narrow. Our littleness takes refuge with God, and his greatness makes its abode with us; we offer him our hearts barren of sympathy and deficient in affection, and presently we find the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost that is given to us."—*J. Rendel Harris.*

There is much friction to overcome in themselves. The oil-can is as necessary to the continuous motion of the train as is the piston-rod, for without oiling the machinery would soon be destroyed. Christian joy is to the believer both impulse and lubrication. It is not work that kills, but worry. There is much less danger that a joyful Christian minister will wear out by his excessive labor than that a dry, unanointed, emotionless preacher will be used up by the friction of his unoiled machinery. The joy of the Holy Ghost neutralizes physical pain, cheers in sickness, comforts in penury, lightens every burden and makes Christian labor fruitful. The joy of the Holy Spirit lifts the soul above the most depressing circumstances. Three days after the battle of Gettysburg a wounded and dying officer was found in a stable into which he had crawled, shouting happy. Without food, without water to quench his thirst intensified by his loss of blood and by the heat of July; without human companionship, with the prospect of dying alone without the means of sending his farewell message to the loved ones at home, he testified that so great was his Christian joy the days spent in that stable were the happiest of his whole earthly life. It was the presence of the Holy Ghost in their hearts which enabled Christians in apostolic times, and Methodists in the "black country" in England, whose houses were plundered and furniture carried off by persecuting mobs in the days of Wesley, to take joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing that they had their own selves for a better possession (Heb. x. 34, R. V., margin) here in the present life.

We may therefore, in view of the three stages of Christian experience, regard the kingdom of heaven as a three-storied temple founded on the corner-stone Jesus Christ. The lower story embraces all in every nation who fear God and work righteousness but, like Cornelius, are so encompassed with the doubts and fears of their legal service as to be void of the peace given by assurance. These are mostly those who are in the early stage of Christian experience, in which the witness of the Spirit is intermittent, a ray of sunshine through the rifted clouds, followed by days and weeks of a sky completely overcast. There are also found here those who have the spirit of faith and the purpose of righteousness, whose attitude toward the unknown Saviour is that of readiness to accept him and his law of life as soon as he may be presented. These are servants of God but not yet sons. They are safe because they are on the rock "though they know him not" (Wesley). Yet they are exposed to great discouragements because of the joylessness of their service. For it is human to leave an irksome course of life. Moreover, those who dwell in this lowest department are nearer to the inviting fields of worldly pleasure whose perfumes regale the senses and deaden their feeble spiritual life.

But a broad staircase leads up from this room to the apartment of peace, and the Lord of the temple is constantly inviting the dwellers below to ascend, and some are daily urging their way upward from the place of servants into the place of sons, the place of peace. Here also dwell Gratitude and her sister, Hope. Doubt and fear and fierce temptation, although they sometimes

steal into this room, do not abide there. There is too much sunshine for these bats and owls, birds of darkness, and too much jubilant music warbling from the lips of these sons of God.

“ Lord, how secure and blest are they
Who feel the joys of pardoned sin!
Should storms of wrath shake earth and sea,
Their minds have heaven and peace within.”

Yet there is an apartment still higher up in this temple of the Lord to which a pleasant and gentle voice invites the sons and daughters in the parlor below. This upper room is reached not by a staircase but by an elevator. It is the apartment of the abiding Comforter. Joy fills and floods it. Here dwell a quartet of noble sisters, Love, Purity, Gladness and Assurance. From their countenances a solar light is diffused through all the room. Sorrow cannot dwell in their presence. The blessed Paraclete pours upon each head the oil of gladness. Here is the fountain from which he who perseveringly drinks will thirst no more to all eternity. He will find this water within himself a self-sustained fountain springing up to everlasting life. Here Jesus spreads his richest banquet and his banner over the feast is love.

“ Blest Saviour, what delicious fare!
How sweet thine entertainments are!”

Here every morning the occupants find manna showered from heaven, for there is no roof to this apartment save the serene and bright blue sky wherein the sun of righteousness ceaselessly shines all the year.

The dwellers here have a clear view of the upper world, a land of promise more glorious than burst upon

the vision of Moses on Pisgah. His was full of foes; theirs is full of friends. His was to be conquered by bloodshed; theirs is already purchased by the blood of sprinkling.

Through the clear, Italian atmosphere the morning bells of the new Jerusalem are ringing. This is the natural place to be translated from, and some are every hour stepping into Elijah's chariot and going up with a shout through the open portals of that beautiful city. Translations may take place from the lower stories, but this is not the natural order. It is the divine will that every inhabitant of this temple should get as near as possible to heaven before his translation. Progress is the law of his kingdom. Hence the inhabitants of the roofless apartment where joy abides are generally mature in years. Yet some youths following undeviatingly the leading of the Holy Spirit have found themselves suddenly lifted to the lofty tableland of purity and joy where a long and happy life awaits them before their translation to their eternal mansion. Thrice and four times blessed are they who in life's morning mount up to this blessed altitude of Christian experience and spend all their future years in this pure and bracing atmosphere above the storms and clouds.

How many will this apartment of the Lord's temple contain? Should all the tenants of the lower stories ascend to-day they would find ample room.

“ There's a wideness in God's mercy
Like the wideness of the sea.”

To every believer did Christ give his gracious command,

“Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.” To restrict this promise of fulness of joy to only a few of the many who pray is to destroy all ground of faith for anyone. Fulness of joy was not designed to be a rare and exceptional Christian experience. Ever since the day of Pentecost Satan has been busy in all Christian lands spreading the wicked lie that only a few favorites of God, one in a thousand or a million, can be victorious over sin and permanently dwell on the sun-lit summits of assurance and fulness of joy. Alas, the majority of Christians believe this falsehood and dwell ever on the lowlands of doubt and depravity, and ascribe their wretched state to their constitution or their circumstances, in other words, to their Creator and not to their own failure to claim their full heritage in Christ. The promise of fulness of joy is to all believers to-day and to-morrow and forever, absolutely without exception. It is the business of your preacher to drive this lie out of both pulpit and pew where it has dwelt for ages, and to get men to believe Christ’s glorious truth instead. It is encouraging to know that the truth is steadily mastering and exterminating the lie. Many are panting after a complete conformity to the image of the Son of God, crying, “Nearer, my God, to thee.” Many in all the evangelical churches are claiming an experimental demonstration that the Holy Spirit can sanctify wholly and preserve blameless. Many are believing it as a doctrine and attesting it by a joyful experience. When this becomes general in Protestant churches their oneness in spirit will be complete and the prayer of our Saviour will be answered, “That they may be perfected in one.” The

chief obstacle to Christian unity hitherto has been a lack of love to the common Master.

In conclusion we would utter this caution, Let no one throw away his Christian experience because it is not joyful. This is what the adversary of your soul desires. Are you a servant of God, fearing him and working righteousness? Thank God and ask him to adopt you as a son. Are you adopted and have the witness of the Spirit now and then? Ask for the abiding witness. Are your peace and joy interrupted and variable? Ask in faith for the indwelling Paraclete in the plenitude of his grace. Take large views of God's mercy and benevolent purpose toward you in this life.

Let Paul's cumulative phrases in the ascription at the end of his wonderfully comprehensive prayer inspire you to ask for large things, even to be filled with all the fullness of God: "Now unto him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us." This power is the personal Holy Spirit, the fountain of supreme joy through the inspiration of supreme love. Get an enlarged view of God's love as the ground of a larger faith. To this end study not only the Bible but the Christian poets. Let this spark from C. Wesley's glowing fire enkindle your soul:

"O Love, thou bottomless abyss,
My sins are swallowed up in thee!
Covered is my unrighteousness,
Nor spot of guilt remains on me,
While Jesus' blood, through earth and skies,
Mercy, free, boundless mercy, cries."

What a tonic to weak faith is Whittier's apostrophe to divine love:

“Immortal love! forever full,
 Forever flowing, free;
 Forever whole, forever shared,
 A never ebbing sea.”

I never read Faber without a conscious uplift of soul toward God and a stronger grip of faith:

“There's not a craving in the mind
 Thou dost not meet and still;
 There's not a wish the heart can have
 Which Thou dost not fulfil.

“O little heart of mine! shall pain
 Or sorrow make thee moan,
 When all this God is all for thee,
 A Father all thine own.”

When I present my strongest reason why my petition should be granted, I quote an argument from Paul which has always prevailed and always will prevail while Jesus intercedes: “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” After so great a self-sacrifice for me what gift necessary to the highest benefit of that sacrifice to me will he withhold?

When I ask for the gift of the Holy Spirit in his fulness I never fail to quote that promise which has been fitly styled “the dawn of Pentecost,” “If ye being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much

more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

Where consecration is complete and faith is unwavering and desire for the fulness of the Spirit in all his offices overtops all other desires he never fails to come and bring his all-cleansing power and the joy that is unspeakable and full of glory.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DAY-STAR IN THE HEART.*

2 Peter i. 16-19.

WE have not quoted this passage of the Scriptures for the purpose of specially antagonizing the mythical theory of the Christian miracles advocated by a recent destructive German critic, David Frederic Strauss. Yet it is worthy of remark that Peter distinctly denies this theory in his declaration, "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables," or to translate the Greek word literally, "myths." We are not here to-day to construct an extended defence of the genuineness of the four Gospels. On this topic there are erudite, elaborate and exhaustive treatises accessible to you all. Nevertheless, we stand before you in the character of a Christian apologist, as you may infer from the scripture selected as the basis of our lecture.

It is a painful fact that with several classes of men the gospel of our blessed Lord Jesus is practically regarded as a myth. To those who, in utter disregard of the moral precepts of Christianity, wallow in sensual vices, Jesus of Nazareth is a vague and shadowy unreality, and not an authorized expounder of the moral law and its tremendous sanctions. Hence his teachings fail to sway their conduct, beautify their characters

* Preached in the chapel of Harvard College on Sunday evening, May 18, 1873, before President Eliot, the faculties and students of Cambridge University, at the request of Dr. A. P. Peabody, in a series of sermons by representatives of various denominations.

and guide their lives. There are others, faultless in moral character, who walk in spiritual darkness, uncertain respecting all religious truth. These, through intellectual pride, disdain a revelation which addresses faith and does not ground itself solely on evidence addressed to the reason. They assert that they would accept the gospel and square their lives by its precepts if it could be rationally demonstrated. For the benefit of both of these classes, and of those who manifest a chilling apathy and a culpable indifference to all spiritual truth as beyond their certain knowledge, we stand up to-day to lift our torch for the illumination of their dark path.

Our errand to you this hour which you have kindly loaned to me is not to demonstrate to you that Jesus Christ truthfully reveals the Father to a race of sinners, for whom he died, and for whom he now pleads as the divine Mediator in his glorified humanity at the right hand of God, but to show you how you may, each for himself, make this demonstration, and henceforth plant your feet upon the immutable rock of absolute assurance of the truth of Christ, so that you will hereafter have no more scepticism respecting his gospel than you now have about the Copernican theory of the solar system, or the beauty of the solar spectrum seen in the rainbow.

It is commonly asserted by Christian apologists that the demand for the demonstrative proof of Christianity is unreasonable,—that such proof belongs to mathematics only and is wholly repugnant to the nature of the gospel, which proceeds from beginning to end on purely

moral evidence, and that only a high probability, amounting to a moral certainty, can possibly be reached. But it is the purpose of this discourse to show that the gospel, beginning with probable evidences, leads the candid inquirer onward and upward till it plants his feet on the granite summit of assurance as undoubted as the axioms of mathematics. It is the business of the hour to show how fallible men on earth, encompassed by infirmities and bewildered by false lights, may nevertheless know the truth of Jesus Christ as certainly as they know the truth of the multiplication table. This is just what St. Peter has done in our text. He begins with the lowest species of evidence and rises step by step, till he reaches the culminating point,—the meridian splendor of a satisfactory and joyful certitude.

The lowest evidence is that addressed to the senses. In all ages men have hungered for sensible manifestations of God; they have craved ocular and tangible proof of his existence. They have wished to hear him with their ears and see him with their eyes. Hence, image worship among pagans and paganized Christians is not surprising. It is the natural result of this desire to apply the senses to religious truth. In the dispensations preparatory to Christianity, God often condescended to meet this desire of our unspiritual and sense-dominated nature by assuming a visible form of man or angel in his communications with his chosen people. The eye and the ear of Peter were addressed on the Mount of Transfiguration, when, as an eyewitness of Christ's majesty, he heard such a voice to him from the excellent glory, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

This supernatural manifestation may stand for all the miracles in the Old and New Testaments, certifying religious truth to the senses of the human race. We are not of the class of those who so magnify their own moral judgments and exalt their own spiritual insight as to look down with contempt upon the miraculous proofs of religion. It is customary with such persons to degrade the Christian miracles and to diminish their force by classifying them with the marvels and prodigies of the Greek and Roman mythologies as grounds of faith in the truth of the religion. The enormous fallacy in this classification is this, that the mythologies produce the prodigies and marvels, while the miracles of Christ underlie the gospel as its corner stone. The prodigies depend for existence on the pagan religion, while Christianity depends on its miracles as its supernatural basis.

Christianity is unique in this particular: it is the only religion which reposes on the supernatural for its corner stone. The purpose of miracles is to call attention to the scheme of truth, and to produce an intellectual conviction of its divine origin. We are certain that miracles never directly regenerated any spectator, but they have induced an intellectual assent to those facts and truths of Christianity, which is the indispensable initiatory step towards spiritual reformation. No person can be born again except by the agency of the Holy Spirit. This is attained only through faith in Jesus Christ. This faith is impossible to one who denies the historical basis of the Gospels. Therefore, there can be no regeneration without an historical and

supernatural Christ. Wherever he is denied, the spiritual transfiguration of the soul spoken of by Jesus to Nicodemus is effectually precluded.

St. Peter advances from the sensible evidences of Christian truth to the intellectual,—from miracles addressed to the senses of a few spectators to the written word addressed to the minds of all men of all generations. “We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed.” We here rise a step and come to the purely logical proofs, in which there is no mixture of the senses. Prophecy is a miracle of knowledge, as the raising of the dead is a miracle of power. The exact fulfilment of events minutely predicted centuries before, furnishes the premises for a logical inference that God must have been the author of the prophecy. When Jesus Christ came into the world his entire biography, comprising his character, works, teachings, violent death, resurrection and ascension, was already legibly written in the Hebrew Scriptures, and had been for centuries, so that the best proof of his Messiahship could be attained by following his injunction, “Search the Scriptures; for they are they that testify of me.”

It is this multitude of recorded testimonies, addressed to the reason, which makes the prophetic word a surer proof of the Messiahship of Jesus than any single isolated testimony addressed to the senses, though it be the voice of the Father sounding out from the most excellent glory. Every seer foresaw Christ, every prophet foretold him. “Unto me do all the prophets bear witness.” We fear that not a little of modern scepticism

respecting the claims of Jesus Christ arises from a superficial study of that long line of harbingers who heralded his advent in terms so definite that they can be applied to no other person. Sagacious minds may detect tendencies and predict therefrom general results, as the keen vision of the first Napoleon saw only two alternatives for European politics, "Cossack or republican." But how different is this from presenting in advance all the wonderful events in the checkered career of his recently deceased nephew, Napoleon III, from prison to power, from empire to exile.

When Jesus, after his resurrection, would convince the two journeying disciples of his divine sonship and of his resurrection, he turned to the more sure Word, and "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself," prefacing his exposition with these words of rebuke, as appropriate to modern unbelief as to the weak faith of the disciples, "O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not the Messiah to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory?" To discard the Old Testament when sitting down to a study of the New, is like the folly of burning up the key before you break the seal to read a letter written in cipher containing intelligence of inestimable value. Though Jesus Christ is not a letter written in cipher, but a sun rising on a world of spiritual night, and shining by his own light, yet many, neglecting the prophets, — the morning stars, those heralds of the dawn, — imagine that all is still Egyptian darkness outside of their closed blinds and curtained windows.

But this evidence, important though it be, is the stepping-stone to higher and more satisfactory proofs, even to that promised demonstration at which every sincere and persevering inquirer will arrive. St. Peter exhorts us to give earnest heed "to the more sure word of prophecy, as to a candle shining in a filthy place, till the day dawn and the day-star arise in our hearts." What is this day-star within? What is this new evidence whose splendors eclipse all the preceding proofs, as the sunshine pales the candle dimly burning in a murky atmosphere? It is no outward event, such as the second coming of Christ, or the shaft of death emancipating the spirit from the clay; but it is a subjective change, a light within, a star arising in our hearts. It is the *divine* coming into immediate contact with the human,—the Holy Spirit directly revealing Christ to the consciousness, illuminating our spiritual intuitions and calling them into perfect exercise for the first time. For *all* our intuitions, whether natural or spiritual, are blind till the appropriate conditions of their direct and open vision occur.

The abstract conception of space does not arise in the mind till the eye has gazed upon extended objects in space; the notion of right and wrong starts up only in the society of human beings in whom rights inhere. A hermit, from infancy to manhood, can have no notion of moral distinctions, as is shown in the case of the several wolf-reared men found in India. Each class of intuitive notions springs up only under its appropriate conditions. Hence the power of spiritual perception lies dormant till the illumination of the Holy Spirit affords the prop-

er conditions. Then Christ is manifest to the soul as the dispenser of forgiveness and the revealer of immortality. Jesus ceases to be a mere image of the representative faculty, a mere concept of the imagination derived from the Gospels through the memory, and he becomes a real and personal friend, with whom the soul holds mysterious yet delightful communion. Spiritual truth becomes a solid reality, and material things become shadowy and unreal in contrast.

Assurance of sonship to God and heirship to the rewards of immortal life take the place of former doubt and darkness. Well may this be so, "for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." But how do they know it? By an inference of the logical faculty? By an exercise of natural intuitions? No. "Because ye are the sons of God, he hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." "He that believeth hath the witness in himself." "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." In all the Christian ages there have been multitudes endowed with this power of spiritual intuition, or rather multitudes in whom this paralyzed power has been revived by the illumination of the Holy Spirit; for clear, spiritual perception is the natural and normal state of unfallen man. Sin shuts out the light, and spiritual perception ceases till, through faith in Christ, the Spirit is restored and the joy of spiritual vision.

This is the privilege of all who have perfect faith in Jesus Christ. In such the Spirit of truth, who might be denominated the Spirit of reality, because he makes

real to the believer's consciousness that which before was vague and unreal, — this Spirit of truth, the promised Comforter, *abides* perpetually and is the medium of uninterrupted and full spiritual knowledge. Hence they are said to *know* God, to *know* the love of Christ, which passes all knowledge, — all comprehension by the mere intellectual powers, — to *know* the Comforter, for he shall be in you. The same spiritual apprehension lays hold of immortality. For we know, “that if this earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” “*I know* whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him until that day.” This quotation from St. Paul throws light upon the genesis of this wonderful kind of knowledge. It proceeds upon the maxim of Anselm, *Credo ut intelligam*, “I believe in order that I may know.” As Professor Morse had faith in the electric telegraph before he had knowledge of it, so must we have faith in Christ before we can know him as our personal Saviour. But St. Paul's faith converted into certain knowledge (*epignosis*) through experience lays the foundation for a higher trust, to eventuate in higher knowledge, so that he is persuaded from his past experience that all his deposit with Christ will be sacredly kept. Thus the maxim of Abelard is verified, *Intelligo ut credam*, “I know, in order that I may believe.” Thus faith begets knowledge, and knowledge in turn begets faith, while the winged soul mounts up this Jacob's ladder from earth to heaven. It is the testimony of all whose hearts are consciously the temple of

Christ through the Spirit, that they grasp spiritual truth with a certitude excluding all doubt, just as the reason or faculty of natural intuition apprehends the first truths in mathematics.

It has pleased God not to give this knowledge at the beginning of the search, but to reveal it in the process. "Then shall ye know, if ye follow on to know the Lord." In order to test us in this state of probation, the heavenly maiden, Truth, first appears enrobed in the guise of probable evidence. If we persist in following her till we lay hold of her, we shall be surprised to find her apparelled in the faultless white linen of demonstrative proof. We have intimated that this elevation of faith into perfect knowledge takes place only in advanced Christian experience. Hence St. Paul, in Ephesians iv. 12, 13, shows that the Christian ministry is designed for this very end,—the perfecting of the saints, till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of Christ,—not two unities, but one, in the identity of faith and knowledge,—“unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” The faith with which the Christian life begins is to be merged into knowledge, and that, too, in the present life, for it is to be succeeded by the following results: “that we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine.”

Hence our Saviour says, “If any man *wills* to do his will, he shall *know* of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself.” There is something for you to do before gospel truth will burst full-orbed upon you, before faith will change into knowledge. You

must adjust your will to the divine will. You must cease to exalt your will as the sovereign law of your being, and you must accept God's will as your only rule of action. This gives the soul a new position, a heliocentric standpoint, where, standing in the sun, like the angel in the Apocalypse, the splendid harmonies of spiritual truth burst upon the rapt vision. To change the figure, evangelical faith in Jesus Christ removes you from the outside of the temple of truth to the interior, where you find the walls adorned with masterpieces of statuary and painting, and the windows, which to the external view were meaningless and blank, are filled with beauty and life. In the mellow radiance which streams through them, lo, the form of the Babe of Bethlehem, the image of the Man of Nazareth, the vision of the cross, the agonized visage of the crucified Son of man, and the resplendent form of our risen Lord appear.

To the worshipper within, the radiant Christ is in every window, where the spectators passing in the street saw on the unillumined glass no form, no comeliness, no beauty that they should desire him. Here we see the glaring absurdity of sceptics, who refuse to assume that point of view where the highest proof is seen; who refuse to enter the temple of Christian truth by a personal submission to Christ, and yet continue to cavil and to object to the gospel and to reject its author. Their criticisms on the defects of Christianity, especially its lack of evidence, are as much to be respected as the criticisms of a group of Sioux Indians standing on Arlington Heights and gazing on the Federal Capitol,

and declaring that its internal architecture is unfitted for the purposes of legislation, and that the historical paintings which grace the rotunda are not in accord with the laws of æsthetics.

How beautifully and tersely has the wise Pascal expressed the thought which we are endeavoring to elucidate, and the duty which we would enforce. "The things of this world must be *known* in order to be loved, and Jesus Christ must be *loved* in order to be known." Says St. John, "He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love." Christianity is an experimental science. It challenges you to try it. It says, "Test me, prove me." It says to every person, "O taste and see that the Lord is good." To the scornful caviller who asks, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" it replies, "Come and see." But if he refuse to come, he is most assuredly under obligation to accept the testimony of those who have gone and seen and are convinced of the divineness of the gospel. To multitudes in all the Christian ages Jesus has verified his promise, "To him that hath my commandments and keepeth them, I will manifest myself." It hath pleased God to reveal his Son in them, in their inmost consciousness, disclosing his love and his power to save from all doubt and fear and sin.

What are men who claim to be honest and candid sceptics doing with this vast amount of testimony? It will not do to impeach these witnesses by stigmatizing them as a herd of fanatics, enthusiasts, mystics, quietists, pietists or Methodists, for among them are to be found the soundest, coolest, clearest, most discriminat-

ing intellects, — Chrysostom, Augustine, Pascal, Calvin, Fénelon, Luther, Baxter, Bunyan, Wilberforce, Wesley, Fletcher, President Edwards, Payson, and hosts of men and women equally competent to testify on this vital point. Not only is the volume of this testimony vast, but its character is unimpeachable; it falls from the lips of saintly men, who attest their sincerity by toils, sacrifices and martyrdoms, while heralding through all the world the glad evangel which the Holy Spirit has uttered within their hearts.

On what natural principles is the career of Saul of Tarsus to be explained, — his sudden and marvellous transformation and his heroic life of sacrifice and suffering, running the gauntlet through perils, prisons and stripes, to lay his head on Nero's bloody block, with the swan song on his lips, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; and henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of life, which the Lord will give to me in that day"? Such lives as those of Paul, Madame Guyon, Eliot, Brainerd, Whitefield and others eminent for service and suffering, cannot be explained on the ordinary motives of human action. They had a God-given message to communicate, and they were aflame with zeal to proclaim it to all. It was their own personal experience of the knowledge of forgiveness, of justification by faith, of the reality of the communion of the Holy Ghost, and of the efficacy of the blood of Christ to cleanse from all sin.

This was the secret spring of their heroic actions, and this accordance of the life with the lip ought to convince the most incredulous. Is it candor, or is it a culpable

bias against the truth, which receives the concurrent testimony of twelve independent witnesses to a fact addressing itself to their outward senses, and rejects unhesitatingly the testimony of the same twelve witnesses to a fact cognized by their inward perceptions? Will not Jesus, in the day when he will sit as judge of the world, upbraid such persons for their "unbelief and *hardness of heart*,"—the moral cause of their scepticism,—"because they believed not them which had seen him [with the eye of faith] after he was risen."

It is no trifling sin to reject Christian testimony. It betokens a wicked aversion to the truth. Hence there is no such thing as honest scepticism about Christ in the case of a man who owns a New Testament and is able to read, and is surrounded by witnesses whose lips and lives attest the divineness of the gospel. At some time in his life he has wilfully neglected the truth and inclined to error; at some time he has turned away from the light and welcomed darkness, because his deeds were evil.

The truths of the gospel are adapted to produce conviction in every unbiased mind, as infallibly as the truths of geometry are adapted to gain the assent of universal reason. Infidelity springs from moral and not from intellectual causes. "The fool hath said in his heart, no God;" or optatively, "May there be no God." The reason for this wish is contained in the next verse, "Corrupt are they and have done abominable works." On the other hand, let there be heartfelt penitence for sin, and a surrender of the will to God, and a fearless, unquestioning following of the truth

wherever it may lead, and that soul, however dark and sceptical when it begins its search, will be led by the divine Guide, the Holy Spirit, to Christ, the light of the world and the life of men.

Not long since an infidel was induced to pray. Determined that his petition should not advance beyond his faith or his unfaith, he knelt down and cried, "O God, if there be a God, save my soul, if I have a soul." This short prayer and shorter creed were the first step in a pathway that shone more and more unto the perfect day; for the day dawned, and the day-star arose in his benighted soul. Let every unbeliever go and do likewise. God is no respecter of persons. "In the day that thou searchest after me with thy whole heart, I will be found of thee." Pray for light. Pray. There are hinges in thy knees, and words in thy tongue, and spiritual want in thy heart. Thus light will arise upon thy darkness. Then follow every ray of light which falls upon thy path. There is no other key to thy unbelief, no other stepping-stone out of the slough of despond.

We have been on our guard against applying to Christian believers on earth the refulgent light, the assurance and certainty enjoyed by the glorified in heaven. There are objects which, so long as we abide in these fleshly tabernacles, we shall see through a glass darkly; but the existence of God and our personal relation to his law and immortal life are not in that category. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." This relates to

the manifestation of God to believers while in the present life. For the next verse asserts this fact, "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit."* Here, in this office of the Spirit, we find the reason for the strange announcement of Jesus that it was expedient for him to go away in order that the Comforter might come,—expedient that the great miracle-worker should withdraw in order that a higher kind of evidence might be enjoyed,—inward spiritual illumination, in the light of which even Jesus, the divine Logos, whom the disciples had seen and heard, might be manifested to them in his higher nature and mediatorial office. The Comforter "shall testify of me." "He shall glorify me." "He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you."

Thus we have set before you the gradation of the Christian evidences, the sensible, the intellectual and the experimental,—a staircase leading from uncertainty to full assurance, and wide enough for the whole human family to ascend abreast.

Here we find the law of progress running through the gospel: 1st. The outward evidence of miracles. 2d. The purging of the film from the inward eye by the agency of the Holy Spirit, and the manifestation of the Son of God to the anointed vision. Hence we who live in the dispensation of the Spirit may enjoy a higher certainty of Christian truth than the generation who gazed upon the miracles of Christ.

In this lecture it will be noted that we have widely deviated from Sir William Hamilton, who asserts that the existence of God and kindred primary theological truths are not objects of immediate knowledge, or, as

* 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.

he puts it, are "not facts afforded in the consciousness," but as being matters of inference from other facts, they belong to ontology, metaphysics proper, or to inferential and not to empirical psychology.

All this is true of minds devoid of spiritual illumination, as St. Paul says, "But 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."* But in marked contrast with the natural man, the apostle asserts that "We [all believers in Christ] have received the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things freely given to us of God. Which things we speak, comparing spiritual things with spiritual," or rather, "explaining spiritual things to spiritual men."

Hence the wide difference between the doctrines of this lecture and those of the intuitional deists of India, of the society called the Brahma Somaj, and of the advocates of the absolute religion, the American transcendentalists, both of whom claim that in the human soul there is by nature all truth necessary to the unfolding of the spiritual life, and therefore an objective revelation is a superfluity; whereas we teach, that by faith in this revelation the soul climbs up to that summit where, before the anointed eye, the landscape of spiritual truth, in all its entrancing beauty, is unfolded.

" Rejoicing now in earnest hope,
I stand, and from the mountain top
View all the land below.
Rivers of milk and honey rise,
And all the trees of Paradise
In endless plenty grow.

* 1 Cor. ii. 14.

“ A land of corn and wine and oil,
Favored with God’s peculiar smile,
With every blessing blest.
There dwells the Lord our Righteousness
And keeps his own in perfect peace
And everlasting rest.”

We have not gone beyond the sermon on the mount, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” Inward purity is requisite for spiritual vision. This is the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration and sanctification, and is wrought in him who apprehends Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour by appropriating faith. This faith is only possible to one truly penitent for past sins, and who consecrates his entire being to God and His service. It consists of the assent of the intellect to the truth, the consent of the will to the law of Christ, the law of love, and the movement of the affections, yea, of the whole being, toward him in unwavering trust.

The dogmatic elements of the faith that saves are very few: 1st. I am a lost sinner. 2d. Jesus is the only Saviour, able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him.

Since Methodism is really no narrow sect, but what Chalmers styled “Christianity in earnest,” we shall not be blamed for divulging the open secret of the early success of that spiritual uprising, which has quickened the pulse of our common Christianity throughout the world. Listen, and I will disclose that secret, for we have not taken out a patent right, and do not intend to. The secret of American Methodism is not in its doctrines. Arminius had lived and fought his great bat-

tle with Calvinism, and died ninety-four years before Wesley was born. In theology, Wesley simply adhered to the Arminian section of the Church of England. Nor is that secret to be found in the unique ecclesiasticism which this spiritual movement took on. The spirit existed before it embodied itself in a form. What is the essential characteristic of that spirit?

A young man of thirty-three, a presbyter of the Church of England, a fellow of Lincoln College and a Greek lecturer at Oxford, in 1736 went to the colony of Georgia as a missionary. Stepping on the shore at Savannah, one of the first men he met was the Moravian elder, August Gottlieb Spangenberg. Wesley asked his advice how to act in his new sphere of labor. Spangenberg replied, "My brother, I must first ask you one or two questions. Have you the witness within yourself? Does the Spirit of God bear witness with your spirit that you are a child of God?" Wesley was surprised at such questions. They were new to him. He was at a loss how to answer. The Moravian continued, "Do you know Jesus Christ?" This was easier, and the Oxford priest replied, "I know he is the Saviour of the world." "True," said Spangenberg, "but do you know he has saved *you*?" This question is the seed-germ of Methodism. For two years it lay germinating in the heart of Wesley as a mystery. "Do you know that Jesus Christ saves you?" Then in an evening Moravian meeting in Aldergate Street, London, while a person was reading that faith alone justifies, in the preface to Luther's Epistle to the Romans, Wesley experienced an amazing change. "I felt my heart

strangely warmed, and an assurance was given me that Christ had taken away my sins, even mine. And I then *testified* openly to all there what I now first felt in my heart."

Here is the secret. An *assurance* of sins forgiven and an open testimony before all. In other words, it is the rising of the day-star in the heart, and the opening of the mouth in confession. It is the immediate contact of the Holy Spirit with the human soul, affording a certainty beyond a doubt of pardon and adoption into the family of God.

This doctrine, written in all the evangelical creeds of Protestant Christendom, but lying dead and inoperative, or taught as the privilege of a select few, Wesley published to the vicious and neglected masses of colliers, sailors, soldiers, operatives and peasants; flying like the angel of the Apocalypse, over England, Scotland and Ireland, preaching Jesus a living, present and conscious Saviour, in forty-four thousand sermons.

This great privilege of the direct witness of the Spirit I gladly proclaim to you. You may each ever have within your own bosom a satisfactory and joyful assurance that Christ Jesus is your personal, present and perfect Saviour. The path to that blessed experience is not made by proud philosophy, but by humble faith. "Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?"

In conclusion let your preacher say to the glory of the great Master, that he has not brought to you a mere theory. With him it is a Scriptural doctrine, solidified by experience into adamantine fact. He is a *witness* for

Christ as well as an advocate. He has, like St. Paul, testified unto you the gospel of the grace of God. In his own search after truth, he has borne the lamp of the prophetic Word through the dark place, and given heed to that lamp till the day, the blessed day, has dawned, and the day-star of intuitive certainty has arisen in his heart, heralding the sunrise of that glorious state in which we shall see as we are seen; when all the mysteries of the future world will be unveiled and immediately manifested to our clarified spiritual intuitions. To lead some darkened soul, bewildered by the sophistries of modern unbelief, into the perfect day of Christian assurance, is the purpose of these thoughts and the prayer of him who has uttered them.

CHAPTER IX.

THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE.*

THESE are the words of Peter, who was admirably adapted to be the spokesman of the Twelve. The promptness, frankness and pertinency of his replies must have been gratifying to the Master. The occasion was one on which there arose a great secession from Jesus of many who had been attracted to him by curiosity, craving for the loaves and fishes, and other low motives. A demagogue bidding for adherents, or an impostor eager to attach a crowd of followers would not have been so impolitic as to repel the throng of his partisans by distasteful doctrines and difficult requirements. This did Jesus. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you,"—words purposely uttered not only to test the faith of the multitude and to sift them of their chaff, but also to emphasize the necessity of so appropriating him as to make him the source of spiritual life. For our religious opinions are as much a part of our probation as our actions. Opinions are the roots of character. Perplexed with doctrinal paradoxes and apparent absurdities, vexed that they could not measure the sublime proportions of gospel truth with the foot-rule of reason, nor contain the shoreless ocean of divine knowledge in the gill cup of their finite intellect, they went away from Christ and walked no more with him forever. As

* "Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."—*John vi. 68.*

he saw the crowd coldly turning their backs upon their benefactor and best friend and going their returnless way, each to follow his own illusion, each to chase his own bubble, and all to perish at last miserably in their sins, a shade of sadness darkened his countenance, and with a momentary fear lest his remaining disciples might be infected with this fatal apostasy, he turns, perhaps with tearful eyes and voice tremulous with deep emotion, saying, "Ye will not go away too, will you?" Appropriate indeed was Peter's negative response, more emphatic from its interrogatory form, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

These words, in the first place, represent the instinctive longing for immortality of all thoughtful souls. In this regard we have all had the same experience. When we have seen the grave receive the treasures of our heart, and have surveyed the horizon of the present life narrowing more and more closely about us, we have felt an irrepressible desire for a life beyond the tomb. This yearning of soul the savage evinces when he lies down in death with his pipe and tomahawk, bow and arrows by his side — the needed implements of his future pleasures and pursuits. The pagan sage gives proof of the same craving for a better life, when he carefully weaves together myths, fables and traditions, to make a raft of hope, upon which his spirit may mount and survive the coming shipwreck of death. True is it that in some this outreaching for immortal life is almost imperceptible. They have so besotted themselves that they are careless of their souls' to-morrow, provided they are well supplied with husks for to-day.

But these are no exceptions. They have their lucid moments. There are rifts in the clouds of their deep spiritual darkness through which their thoughts run on to the future, and when as from a mount of vision they catch a glimpse of immortality—a view quickly eclipsed by the leaden thunder-cloud of fear. Even the forebodings of the wicked, springing up in the mysterious depths of consciousness, disclose secret intimations of a future life. Few men unaided of revelation can demonstrate their immortality by logical propositions addressed to the intellect, but all can feel the yearning after it in their own nature as the plant vegetating in darkness instinctively turns its pale, pining face toward the unseen sun in the heavens.

Secondly, Peter gives distinct expression to that distrust of our self-guidance which we all feel with respect to the attainment of eternal life. In all minds which have not been spoiled by sophistry or puffed up by false philosophy and self-conceit, there is a spontaneous shrinking back from treading alone the unexplored continent of religious truth and a crying out for a guide. “Who will show us any good?” Socrates, pronounced by the Delphic Oracle the wisest man of his generation, to whom we shall again refer in the present discussion as the best representative of the entire heathen world, on the day of his death, sitting upon his bed in his prison, when about to enter upon his argument for the immortality of the soul, exhorted his friends “to supplicate the gods for help while we take hold of one another’s hands and enter this deep and rapid river.” Deep and rapid indeed is the river of theo-

logical inquiry without the aid of revelation. Who feels competent, without supernatural light, to give a satisfactory answer to that solemn question which arises in every sober mind :

“ Soon as from earth I go,
What will become of me? ”

Can any of us lay aside our Bibles, close our eyes to the life-giving words of Jesus, and then avow our ability to answer the cry of universal humanity :

“ Who can resolve the doubt
That tears my anxious breast, ”

by drawing aside the veil from that “land of deepest shade,” and pointing out its crystal rivers, its sunny vales, its fragrant groves, and giving to each eager soul a title deed to some choice spot for a future home? We know that a school of theological teachers has recently sprung up who magnify man’s religious instincts. These teach that revelation is a superfluity ; that every man has within himself all resources for the discovery of essential religious truth ; that the Bible has been rendered obsolete by the progress of the race in theological science ; that every soul is thrown upon its own spiritual instincts and impulses for guidance. As certain authors publish books entitled “Every Man His Own Lawyer,” “Every One His Own Physician,” so those professed religious teachers would have every one his own revelation, every one his own inspiration ; or as others devise traps for the simple called “French Without a Master, in Six Lessons,” “Latin Without a Master, in Four Lessons,” so these apostles of the

new dispensation of "the absolute religion" would deceive their fellow-men with the finely sounding advertisement, "Religion Without Master, in No Lessons."

Let us institute some tests of the religion of nature. What headway does the human soul make in following its own light? How does it solve the religious problems which baffled the skill of all the centuries before Jesus Christ came? How is future happiness to be secured? The religionist answers, By living righteously, doing good to man and loving God. But to find his answer he has committed a stupendous plagiarism on the Bible. He has gone to it to awaken his religious instincts at this great centre of light and life, and then, like all thieves, he denies and decries the source of his plundered treasure. If the human soul has no need of going outside of itself to answer all religious questions satisfactorily, if it has no occasion for using the self-distrustful words of Peter, "To whom shall we go?" the best way of testing the question is to examine those who have never seen the inspired Word, just as we would test the brilliancy of some new lighting material by carrying the lamp out of the sunlight into the darkness. Go away with me for a moment out of the resplendence of revelation in to the darkness of heathenism, and see how wisely, how purely men live. Here is a whole nation offering worship to an ox, an onion, a lizard. Egypt was at that time the most cultivated nation on the earth. The religious instincts of another people offer human slaughter for praise, rear pyramids of skulls to secure the divine favor, toss infants to crocodiles and burn widows on

huge funeral piles, and grind to powder the flesh and bones of living men beneath its bloody Juggernauts. The ancient Babylonians religiously required every virgin to surrender in Phallic worship that which is of greater value than all the gold and diamonds in South Africa; while the Thugs of India actually waylay and murder as acts of religious duty. Dimly indeed burns the flame of spiritual instinct, and widely do they wander who follow its flickering and uncertain light.

Death is a just ordeal of a religious system. How does the religion of spiritual instinct enable men to die? We are told that Theodore Parker, the great advocate of the absolute religion, as he styled it, lay down in Florence upon his dying couch in impenetrable gloom which his cold, barren and Christless theology had no power to dissipate. They who have advanced no farther than the religion of nature universally die without triumph. Said Socrates, that greatest pagan moralist, before alluded to, as the hour for drinking the hemlock approached, "The swan as it sees its end approaching, begins its most melodious song, and floating down the river charmed by its own music, meets death with dignity and composure. Man," said the dying philosopher, "should die with as much cheerfulness as the bird." "But," replied one of his disciples, uttering the feelings of the whole heathen world, "death is a terror to us. It unmans us and fills us with dreadful fears. We cannot die thus. We have no swan's song with which to float down the river of life into the boundless sea of eternity." "Go, then," said that wisest pagan, with a sagacity amounting al-

most to divine inspiration, "travel through all lands, spare no toil, no expense, that ye may find the song which can charm away the fear of death." But those poor pagan Greeks, amid the splendors of that era of literature and art, sought in vain for the swan's song of victory over the fear of death. But four hundred years afterward the wondering shepherds caught from the glad angels a part of that song. Behold, we bring you glad tidings of great joy: to-day is born a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. But the full song was first taught to mortals when Jesus opened his lips at Lazarus's tomb, saying, "I am the resurrection and the life," and only a few years afterward there floated from the grated window of a prison in Rome the music of this complete and triumphant swan's song: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight. . . . Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness!" Through all the centuries of the Christian church the triumphant deaths of millions with this song upon their tongues have attested the divinity of the gospel, "O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory." At last Charles Wesley, in a moment of more than poetic inspiration, put the swan's song of the believer into a sacred lyric fit for a seraphic lyre:

" Jesus, the name that *charms our fears*,
 That bids our sorrows cease;
 'Tis music in the sinner's ears,
 'Tis life, and health, and peace."

Such a test the pantheism of the Hindoo Brahmin or the American agnostic can never endure.

At another vital point do all systems of natural religion fail utterly in affording to the guilty soul the assurance of forgiveness. Here is a practical test. Does my religion save me now from the guilt, the pollution and the dominion of sin? Go and question nature until you are gray. Her lips will ever be dumb. Though Bishop Butler may find in the constitution and course of nature some faint analogies which may confirm the doctrine of forgiveness when it has been once revealed, there is not in the whole range of nature sufficient light for the discovery and demonstration of this cardinal evangelical truth.

The analogies of suffering invariably treading upon the heels of violated natural law with no provision in nature to arrest the penal consequences, strongly incline men to believe that punishment must inevitably, without an exception, follow the transgression of moral law. Hence paganism teaches that the penalty follows the sin as surely as the cart-wheel rolls in the footsteps of the ox. Socrates was so impressed with the cardinal doctrine of natural religion, that God is just, that he doubted whether God could pardon sin. The semi-paganism of the liberalists and free-religionists teaches the absolute impossibility of the pardon of sin. In their estimation it would be plucking down the pillars of God's throne and subverting the moral order of the universe. But turn to Christianity and you find that not only forgiveness through faith in the atoning Saviour, but also the *knowledge* of forgiven sin, is its grand and glorious peculiarity. From the day the apostles went forth preaching to guilty men the knowledge of the for-

giveness of sins till this hour, there have not been absent from the earth witnesses to the truth of this doctrine. Millions have crossed the flood, and millions are crossing now who can say, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Our text demonstrates that a craving for authority in respect to religious questions is natural to the human soul and that Christianity is more than a system of abstract truth addressed to the reason,—it is a series of facts to be apprehended by faith. We hunger for certainty in matters of such vital interest and of such personal importance. The interests are of too great a magnitude to permit us to rest at ease without a clear knowledge of our relations to eternity, and without all possible safeguards about our future well-being. Uncertainty brings suspense and fear. How natural the inquiry, is there no person who knows how to answer our religious inquiries, whose word is of sufficient weight to give to our anxious souls the confidence and security of certainty? How reasonable, if such a person should appear on earth and display undoubted credentials, unrolling his commission written by the finger of God and enstamped with heaven's broad seal of miracles, that all mankind should hail him with joy, and hasten to sit at his feet, to drink in his words, and to submit to his guidance, laying their hands in his, saying, Lead thou me, O thou unerring guide, for I am blind. What a value in one word coming down out of heaven direct, distinct and authoritative on a question of immediate personal interest to us all—an interest so broad that it sweeps in the whole of the endless future of the soul.

See the perplexed Grecian moralist in his cell at Athens groping for light on the destiny of man, and finding no clear and steady blaze flaming up from that heap of subtle reasonings, fables and traditions which Socrates piled up to illumine his own passage to the tomb and to cheer his lingering, weeping and inconsolable friends. How he cried out for a *theios logos*, a divine word, to shoot its steady radiance athwart their darkness, and to give the rest of assurance to their weary spirits. Such a divine Logos have we, who is the true light coming into the world enlightening every man. He hath brought life and immortality to light. He did not originate the doctrine, but he established it on the basis of his own authority. No wonder that Peter refused to abandon this light. Peter, who had left his fishing nets to go spell-bound after Jesus, Peter who had beheld the miracles wrought by his word, who had listened entranced to his revelation of things unseen, and who had gazed upon the transcendent glory and majesty of his Master transfigured on the mount. This thirst for authority cannot be suppressed. It is ineradicable in the human soul. If men are deprived of the infallible word they must be provided with an infallible substitute. Hence Rome sways the rod of spiritual power over millions because she professes to speak with authority. Even sceptics themselves, who contemn the authority of Jesus as derogatory to the dignity of true manhood, distrusting the authority of reason, unconsciously lean upon one another. Voltaire, Paine, Parker and Ingersoll, each in his respective age does all the thinking, and the crowd of sceptics of feebler wing or weaker brain follow cra-

venly in their track. Thus our boasted freethinkers think in the chains of a fallible human authority. Said a puzzled liberalist when asked to reconcile the conflict between Jesus Christ's pretensions and his moral excellence, "I must visit Theodore and ask him how he gets along with this difficulty."

In my pastoral experience I once met an old infidel whom I invited to Christ. He attempted to sustain his irreligion by argument, but failing to do so by reason of old age and the habit which steals away the brains, he left the room in rage, but soon returned with the file of an obscure atheistic newspaper in his arms, which he handed me, saying, "There is something which will demonstrate that Christianity is false."

Again our text gives expression to the desire of man for a book revelation. We are told that it is derogatory to the Infinite One to shut up his truth in the form of a book; that the great God would never attempt to compress his infinitude of wisdom by inspiring a book which shall be a fixed standard of truth, to which a word is never to be added during all the generations of men down to the last syllable of recorded time. We have heard this outcry of rationalism against what it has contemptuously styled "a book revelation," as belittling the majesty of God, tying His hands and sealing His lips. As his objection is chiefly to the form which divine truth shall take, let us listen to the voice of universal humanity. Into what form do the various false religions of the world crystallize? The form of books. What is the ultimate authority decisive of all the controversies of the polytheists? Books. Though these books are

filled with fables, cunningly devised, they preach one truth, that religious instructions in the form of a book are a want of the human soul. When I see multitudes of people eating chaff and husks, the inference is legitimate that they were created with an appetite for food, and that there is somewhere in the world a supply of suitable nutriment correlated to this appetite — a supply which these wretched persons have failed to find, and hence they are appeasing their hunger with worthless substitutes. Thus when I see two hundred millions of Hindoos reverently studying their Shaster and their Vedas, and two hundred and fifty millions of Chinese religiously treasuring up their sacred books, the words of Confucius, and one hundred and fifty millions of Mussulmans devoutly repeating the Koran, the words of Mohammed, I cannot resist the inference that mankind have an instinctive and ineradicable appetency for a book revelation of religious truth, and that the Creator of this craving has provided an appropriate supply of spiritual food. That supply is the Bible. Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God. To supply the perishing millions of chaff-eaters, Jesus came down from heaven, saying, "I am the bread of life." This bread satisfies the hungry soul. The words of Jesus reported by the Evangelists feed our famishing spiritual natures. We cannot be content with the doubtful inferences of natural religion and with the suspected traditions of paganism. We crave words, clear, distinct, authentic, the changeless symbols of immutable truth—words which we may study, and impress upon our memory, and hide

in our hearts, "that we may not sin against God's law,"—words which we may hang over the tombs of our friends as a lamp of hope to dispel the gloom of death by their foretokenings of the daybreak of the resurrection,—words which we may bind as life-preservers about our souls when we wade into the swellings of Jordan and begin to lose our foothold upon these mortal shores. How empty the consolations of reason in a dying chamber! How tame the utterances of the best philosophy when chiselled upon a tombstone!

Go with me to Mt. Auburn cemetery, beneath the shadow of Harvard College, where the inspiration of the Gospels is held the same in kind as that of Homer and Shakespeare. Here sleep the élite of Boston, the centre of American free thought. This monument on the left marks the resting-place of Spurzheim, the phrenologist; here on the right is the mausoleum of Channing, the philanthropist, who could not bow the knee to Jesus Christ in supreme worship. All around us are masterpieces of monumental sculpture. Draw near and read the sentiments inscribed on these beautiful marbles. How few of the epigrammatic verses of Seneca sparkle there; how few of the "divine peradventures" of Plato; how many of the utterances of Jesus. Thus the highest culture and the freest scepticism in the shadow of death do unconscious homage to Jesus.

Go with me now through the graveyard of Salt Lake City where slumber thousands who were deluded by the American false prophet. None are the words inscribed here from the book of Mormon; abundant are the words from the Old and the New Testaments—an unconscious

repudiation of the spurious scripture, and attestation to the truth of the genuine. Thus human ignorance, superstition and error, in the gloom of the charnel house, cry out after the oracles of God, a book revelation containing the words of eternal life. We might further speak of the necessity of revelation to furnish a pure object of worship and love through the contemplation and adoration of which, souls defiled and deformed by sin may be transfigured into angelic purity and loveliness. We have not time further to elaborate this point.

In the course of this discussion we have found the words of Simon Peter but the echo of the voice of humanity seeking after immortal life while distrusting its own self-guidance thereto. We have seen the religion of nature tested by the pressing wants of sinful man — the forgiveness of sin, and victory over the king of terrors. We have heard through all the earth the cry for authority in religious inculcations, and the unappeasable hunger for a written standard of religious truth. In the light of this discussion we discover the chief missionary incentive.

We are not here to-day to plead for Christian missions in the interest of civilization. We do not adduce the motives of philanthropy to man as a being of the present world merely. Christianity is the grand civilizer; Christianity is the best benefactor of man, viewed as a mere inhabitant of this world, teaching the highest political wisdom to nations, and inciting to advancement in all the humane arts. But these considerations do not afford to the Christian world the chief motive to missionary effort and sacrifice. That motive is found in the fact that

without a knowledge of Jesus the millions of the pagan world must sit in darkness, groaning under distressing superstitions, degraded by the vices inculcated by their religion, with no rainbow of hope arching his future. Although he may be saved by the historical Christ, even when he knows him not, if he has the spirit of faith and the purpose of righteousness, it must be confessed that there is very little in his education and environment to awaken that spirit and purpose.

Bad as is the pagan's creed, his character is generally much worse. The little light which pierces his darkness affords only a feeble motive to righteousness, yet enough to be the ground of his responsibility in the day of judgment. "So they are without excuse." Therefore "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness." Yet, thought Paul, these may be saved, and the divine instrument of their salvation is committed to my hands—Christ's gospel. Hence I am a debtor both to the Greeks and to the barbarians; both to the wise and to the unwise—terms comprehending a large parish, the whole pagan world.

This feeling of debt to all the Gentile nations was the spur which urged the apostle to press onward, that he might preach the gospel in the regions beyond. Paul was too honorable to take the benefit of the bankrupt act in view of the vast multitude of his creditors, as I fear many of our modern church members are inclined to do, appalled by the countless throng who cry to them for the bread of life, and tempted through covetousness to withhold their tithes from the missionary treasury.

We are debtors to every pagan on the earth. Our ascended Saviour wills that the uttermost parts of the earth shall inherit the riches of his salvation, and he has made us, Christians of the nineteenth century, us, members of the numerous, rich and influential Methodist Episcopal Church, the executors of that will. Shall we as individuals, shall we as a missionary church prove defaulting trustees, by refusing to communicate to all the heirs their share of the inheritance?

“ Shall we, whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high,
Shall we to men benighted
The lamp of life deny ? ”

Over the great subject of the evangelization of the heathen world the majority of the members of the church seems to be in a profound sleep. Here and there is one wakeful soul in the closet wrestling with God in prayer, and consecrating silver and gold to this great cause. Here and there one hears the cries of the pagan world, and says, “Here am I; send me. But the membership of the Methodist Episcopal Church have not shown yet that loyalty to Christ’s kingdom which they evinced to the national government in its hour of peril, when, in the language of President Lincoln, “She sent more soldiers to the field and more nurses to the hospitals than any other church.” We have during the past year failed to induce our membership to contribute the average of two cents weekly to missions at home and abroad, for less than this was requisite to raise the million and a half of dollars called for by the Missionary Board. When this duty of evangelization takes strong hold of

the conscience of the church, we shall hear our membership asking, not how little can I give and keep up appearances, but how much can I give, and how little will suffice for my own subsistence? Then every Christian mother will consecrate at least one of her children to the work of Christian missions—for even then the world would not be oversupplied with teachers and preachers. Then, like the Moravians, we shall have more converts in mission fields than we have church members at home; then thousands of our mammon-cursed churches, which imagine that they cannot adequately support their preacher, will support a missionary in India as well as their own pastor. We are not chimerical, but simply prophetic. May many of us live to see the fulfilment. To hasten the coming of that day we must put on the spirit of the primitive Christianity. We must vividly realize and believe in our inmost souls that the sinner unsaved through Jesus' blood, whether in New York or New Zealand, is on his way to hell fire. We must divest ourselves of the notion that the pagan is as well off while bowing to his vile and cruel gods as those who live in the resplendence of the New Testament. This notion cuts the sinews of effort, hushes the voice of prayer, dries up the streams of Christian beneficence, and sends a death-chill to the very heart of the church. It is because this baneful idea is leaking into the church from the subtle infidelity which pervades our literature that our thoughts have taken a controversial aspect somewhat unusual in a missionary address. If there be a quenchless missionary fire in the pulpit, there will be ceaseless streams from the pews to the missionary treasury.

Brethren, the only fuel with which that fire can be kept burning is a hearty faith in the word of God; especially in the truth that Jesus alone has the words of eternal life. For there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. A belief of this will send us into our closets with Carey, to weep over the map of the world, will set the ministry on fire with resistless eloquence, and will arouse the church to the grandeur of her calling in this day of great events.

CHAPTER X.

THE SONS OF GOD.*

MEN are not distinct individual creations like the angels, but a race descended from one human pair. There is a gulf between the human family and the most intelligent brutes which science cannot bridge or cross. Man has qualities which they have not — personality, reason, self-consciousness, moral perception and accountability, implying the Godlike attribute of freedom to create his own character, and determine his own eternal destiny. The crown of man's being, the most distinctive dissimilarity to the highest order of beasts, is his spiritual nature, that splendid dome of his being with skylights opening heavenward, wherein he may commune with God and become a temple for the habitation of the Father and the Son through the Spirit. When I open my Bible I find another distinction: "The spirit of the beast goeth downward, but the spirit of man goeth upward." Hugh Miller, the celebrated Scotch geologist, was accustomed to assert that men are the highest order which will ever tread the earth, because the Son of God, who shared the Father's glory before the world was, has permanently united himself with humanity. The Logos, who was with God and was God, became flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth, — "God only-begotten" (John i. 18; *R. V.*

* "To as many as received him gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." *John i. 12.*

margin). This stamps man as the climax of all material creations. For we cannot for a moment entertain the thought that God the Father will ever create a race on earth or elsewhere in his universe which will outrank his incarnate Son. This splendid inference of this Christian geologist crowns men with true nobility. Nevertheless there is a class of men who tower up in dignity above their race. Lofty as are the sons of Adam in the scale of being, the sons of the second Adam so far excel them as to be called by God priests and kings. They are as much above the children of fallen Adam as these are above the beasts of the field. They transcend them in moral and spiritual excellence. This in the estimation of God and the holy angels outweighs all other human perfections. The origin and peculiar attributes of these kings and priests unto God, which separate them from the sinning sons of fallen Adam by a gulf impassable to all the forces of nature, will constitute the theme of the present discourse. Let us now read our text again: "He came unto his own." Who were his own? Some say "the Jews." This is part of the truth. It was sad that one small nation should fail to receive its Messiah king; but this is not the extent of the disloyalty. Isaiah, looking down the ages through the telescope of prophecy seven hundred years before the event, sees a universal defection. "He is despised and rejected of men," Jews and Gentiles. Howsoever unlike in other respects all nations are agreed in saying "We will not have this man to rule over us." Had Jesus appeared in conquering Rome, in sensual Corinth, or in refined Athens, and preached the same doctrines from the same text, — "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is

at hand," — he would have met with the same repulse. Were he to appear in the centers of our boasted modern civilization, so called Christian in the census report, — Berlin, Paris, London, or New York, — and the question of enthroning him over their municipal, commercial, social, and personal life were determined by the Australian ballot, do you think he would stand the ghost of a chance to be elected lord mayor? It was humanity fallen and depraved which received not Jesus, the great Christmas gift of God to the world. Some of you may dispute this, and assert that Jesus opening his commission on Boston Common, or Central Park in New York, teaching his gospel accredited by the same miracles, would be warmly welcomed by all classes, the rich and the poor, the high and the low. Said an English lady to Carlyle, speaking of the wicked rejection of Christ by his countrymen: "I regret that he did not appear in our own times. How delighted would we all be to throw open our parlors to him, and listen to his divine precepts! Don't you think so, Mr. Carlyle?" He bluntly replied, "No, madam, I don't. I think that had he come very fashionably dressed, with plenty of money, and preached soft doctrines palatable to the higher orders, I might have had the honor of receiving from you a card of invitation, on the back of which would have been written 'To meet our Savior.' But if he had come uttering his precepts, 'cut off right hands and pluck out right eyes, or be cast into hell fire,' denouncing the Pharisees and associating with publicans and the lower classes, as he did, you would have treated him as the Jews did, and have cried out, 'Take him to Newgate and hang him.'" Carlyle was right.

If Jesus the invisible Savior is to-day dishonored by the unbelief of a majority in every land, Jesus in bodily form, preaching in our streets his requirement of love to himself above that to our fathers and mothers, and love toward abusive enemies, even perfect love like that of his Father in heaven, and, amid a selfish world, demanding self-denial and self-crucifixion, would he not be excluded from polite society as a disturber of the peace? His own, the most religious and moral people on the earth, members of the only true church, received him not, with here and there an exception. Then said he, "Since the race descended from Adam has discarded me, I as a new Adam will raise up a nobler seed. I will not destroy the unworthy race forthwith, as Jehovah proposed to Moses to destroy the unbelieving Israelites, and from him raise up another nation. No; I will not destroy, I will transform. I will show the superiority of my grace and wisdom by taking the very souls tainted with the deadly leprosy of sin, and restoring them to perfect health. The old race shall be the material out of which the new order shall be created. Beneath the ribs of death I will create life. Out of the blackness of sin I will bring the whiteness of holiness, in the case of as many as receive me." Hence by his mediation he procured for every sinner on earth the Holy Spirit, who would impart the gracious ability to repent and believe, to be regenerated and sanctified, and thus to become sons of God; that is, to regain their lost likeness to God. To render the universal provisions universally saving was impossible without an exercise of sovereignty destructive of freedom and repugnant to the nature of holiness which must always be freely chosen by "as

many as received him." A few were waiting to receive him. A few who saw and heard him had received from the Spirit anointed eyesight that they might recognize the Son of God walking the earth in the form of man. To them gave he the power, the right or privilege of becoming the sons of God — the New Testament prerogative, a new patent of nobility. Jesus was the Son of God by nature; angels and Adam had been called sons of God by creation. But now for the first time appear in the universe sons of God by transformation through redemption. We do not wonder that the Jews attempted to stone Jesus when he claimed the title, Son of God, which no individual in the Old Testament had dared to do except the King of Israel speaking for the nation which Jehovah had called his firstborn. "Jacob have I called my son." Individually sin had plucked the crown from their heads. Neither Enoch, who walked with God, nor Abraham, the father of believers, nor any one of the heroic prophets dared to call himself a Son of God. This dignity, this endearing relation, is the special gift of Christ to those who by faith crown him Lord of all. Till he came in the flesh good men were servants not sons (Gal. iii., 23 to iv., 7).

When a new race is to be created there is one from whom it is to be unfolded. The race of new creatures is mystically summed up in Jesus Christ as the entire human family were seminally comprised in Adam. Any radical change or break down in his nature is a downfall of his posterity. This damage from the sin of the progenitor did not entail guilt on his offspring. Out of this damaged material the second Adam will raise up the order of the sons of God. He is the first term and

model of the series. All the forces and appliances of his Gospel have one grand aim, that men "may be conformed to the image of God's Son, that he may be the firstborn among many brethren." In all evolution there must first be involution. You must put into the first term all that you expect to take out. This is what God has done in the gift of his Son. "It has pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell," all qualities divine and human requisite for the development of the new order. There is one word which exactly describes this office. It is the Greek word *archaegos*, unfortunately translated by three words in the passages where it occurs, — prince, captain, author. It signifies the originator, founder, leader, and first participator. If you desire spiritual life you will find it only in "the author of life" (Acts iii. 15); if you would have faith seek it in the author and perfecter of our faith" (Heb. xii. 2); if you would lay hold of "eternal salvation" you will find it only in its originator (Heb. ii. 10, and v. 9). You have in these four texts the conception of Jesus Christ as the Head of this new order of beings. There is a chasm which no human power can bridge between the humblest Son of God and the most eminent son of Adam as a natural man, because it is the gulf between spiritual life and spiritual death. Just as no man can change a particle of non-living matter into life, so no man can impart life to a soul dead in trespasses and sins. He needs the great originator of life. No fancied perfection in morals can quicken such a soul. The natural man, however cultured and free from vice, is still like fallen Adam. The child of God is like God. The difference is world-wide. A marked characteristic

of the true Christian, for which there can be no successful counterfeit nor compensation, is that he is "a partaker of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption of the world through lust." He has a nature like God's. He has love divine shed abroad in his heart, by the Holy Spirit given unto him. This is the principle of the new life. The first heart-throb of the new born soul is love to God and to all mankind. This is the decisive test, "he who loveth not his brother is not of God. For this is the message that we had from the beginning that we should love one another. We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." Love will manifest itself in service and sacrifice.

Holiness is another of the moral attributes of God. There is no tendency in his nature to sin. The sons of God reflect more or less perfectly his holiness as a burnished mirror reflects the sunbeams. In this respect the Christian is at his climax when he has been sanctified wholly and filled with the Spirit. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, even as he chose us . . . that we should be holy and without blemish before him in love."

But as if to end all controversy St. John sets up the infallible criterion. "He that is born of God is not committing sin. He that committeth sin is of the devil." Here is what Fletcher styles "The fence between the Lord's garden and the devil's common." No man can enter on a course of sin and retain his sonship. He may on the stress of sudden temptation commit a single sin, and through resort to the advocate with the Father

(1 John ii. 1) find forgiveness. He may enter on a returnless career of sin and be finally lost (Heb. vi. 4-8). But he cannot bind up these two contradictions, sin and sonship to God, in the same personality. Willful and persistent sin and the filial feeling Godward, or sonship to the holy Father, cannot be thus combined.

Do you say that this test makes the number of the children of God on earth very small and sadly shortens the communion rolls of all our churches? Be it so. It is best to find it out before the day of Judgment when "many will say" in vain, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name?" Of the sons of God, who will be like him when Christ shall be manifested, St. John says, "Every one that hath this hope *set* on him purifieth himself, even as he (Christ) is pure." The same inspired writer declares that they in whom "love is made perfect, will have boldness in the day of Judgment, because as he (Christ) is (to-day in heaven) so are we in this world." Supply the omitted major premise, "all who are in moral purity like the Son of God in this world, will have boldness in the Judgment Day, and we let the sunlight into St. John's logic. Then follow these propositions: "We are in this world pure as he is pure; therefore we will have boldness knowing that the Judge will not condemn fac-similes of himself." How the monstrous idea became so widely spread, that the children of God are constantly sinning, having the root of sin in their hearts, and its fruit in their daily conduct, as long as they live, I can explain only on the theory that Satan himself has become a Bible expositor and theological professor, going about pointing out all the perverted proof-texts which extenuate sin, and

teaching that there is no power in the blood of Jesus Christ to cleanse us from all sin this side of the grave.

Another moral attribute of God reflected in his sons is truth. They are lovers of truth. They dig for it as for hidden treasures. Says Jesus, "Every one that is of the truth" — eager to follow wherever she leads — "heareth me." This is because he is the incarnation of truth. "I am the truth." The devil is a liar from the beginning of his career as an apostate angel. No falsity in the long run ever wrought anything but ruin and wretchedness here and hereafter, world without end.

The great American showman used to say "People like to be humbugged." It is true that the multitude delight in fascinating delusions. This is Satan's great advantage in his contest with Christ for the eternal ruin of their souls. He is perpetually disguising sin and misrepresenting God's truth. Happy indeed are they who unmask moral evil in all its seductive forms, "who by reason of use (or habit) have their senses (mental perceptions) exercised to discern both good and evil." This the Bible calls "full age" or perfection to which it urges us to "press on" (*R. V.*). Hence the great business of the children of God who have been made free from Satan's destructive deceptions is, by instruction, warning, entreaty and testimony, to rescue from his snares those that are taken captive by him at his will. Most of them are so morally benumbed and insensible as to love their captivity, and even to hug their chains with insane pleasure. How great the contrast between their enslavement through Satan's devices and "the glorious liberty of the sons of God." The philosophy of faith in its relation to this "glorious liberty" can now be

clearly seen. God's intangible and invisible truth is the instrument with which the Lion of Judah breaks every chain. This truth cannot be grasped by our senses. It is above reason. It is made known only by Revelation, which is grasped and applied only by faith. Hence persevering faith is salvation. Persistent unbelief is damnation. Such is the nature of virtue that God himself cannot arbitrarily prevent these issues.

The sons of God in all essentials resemble their Leader, "the Lord from heaven." Note the points of likeness. Jesus was begotten of the Holy Ghost, the sons of God are born of the Spirit. He was circumcised in the flesh, they in the heart by the Holy Ghost producing entire sanctification, "the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the flesh" (*R. V.*). This removal of carnal mindedness, which is enmity against God, takes away the barrier against perfect love, the requirement of the first great command: "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart . . . to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live," *i.e.* have well-being. When he became a mature man he was baptized with water, and received the abiding Spirit and the testimony of his Father to his divine sonship. Thus do all adult believers at some time after the new birth receive the fulness of the Spirit permanently dwelling within, and constantly "crying, Abba, Father." They obey the mysterious command, "Tarry ye in the city until ye be endued with power from on high." As the second Adam was tempted, so do all who are in probation, being conformed to his image, dwell in the sphere of temptation within arrow shot of Satan. Jesus was crucified

till his human life was extinct. St. Paul speaks for all advanced believers when he says "I have been crucified with Christ, alive no longer am I, but alive is Christ in me" (Meyer). Do you stigmatize this as the language of a mystic? St. Paul was a mystic in the good sense of that word as exemplified in every age of the church by all those Pauline believers and Johannean disciples, who consciously commune with God through his Spirit dwelling in the temple of their hearts. As Jesus rose from the dead, so do all true Christians rise into newness of life, seeking the things which are above. As he ascended by a bodily translation, so shall all who love him feel the attraction of his person when he shall descend on his great white throne, as particles of iron move towards the magnet when it is brought near. "Then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air." As Jesus ascended to the throne of his Father, so will all who overcome sit with him on his throne as he overcame and sat down on his Father's throne.

These are some of the characteristics of the sons of God. - How broad the chasm between them and the most cultured and refined natural man, a stranger to the life-giving touch of the Holy Spirit! There are no words in human languages adequate to express this amazing difference. The nadir is not more remote from the zenith than death is from life. Only God can cross this chasm and carry a dead soul to the shores of life. Do you say that you see no such difference between the unregenerate and the regenerate, the children of the first Adam and the sons of the second Adam? This is because you look at externals only. Both have the

same bodily needs of food and raiment, rest and exercise. Both are subject to sickness and calamities, and are alike under the sentence, "Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return after a life of enforced labor, eating their bread in the sweat of their faces." The difference is not outward but inward. The one is loyal to God and obedient to his law, loving his adorable Son with whom he communes by faith through the Holy Spirit dwelling within as the Sanctifier. The other revolves around self as the center in the darkness of unbelief, refusing the great command, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," and ungrateful to him who died on the cross to redeem him. The one seeks in all his acts to glorify his heavenly Father, the other glorifies himself only. The one has his eye fixed on the world above, the other sees only this world. The one aspires after spiritual excellence, climbing the ladder whose top reaches the open door of heaven; the other, muck-rake in hand, is eagerly amassing perishable treasures, not a penny of which will he carry with him to his eternal existence. The one throbs through all the mystery of his being with the pulses of a deathless spiritual life; the other has no heart-throb of love to God, for he is spiritually dead, being utterly unconscious of those spiritual realities which fill the other with rapture.

The sons of God on earth are princes traveling incognito through a foreign land. Their kingly features are recognized by the angels above, but not by the vulgar and unbelieving children of men beneath, who have eyes only for pomp and show and the trappings of wealth. Even the Son of God himself, the Founder of this new

and glorious order, dwelt thirty-three years on the earth wrapped in the veil of humanity, and only a little handful out of the teeming millions of people had keenness of insight sufficient to pierce that veil and discover the God behind it. Him before whom seraphs cover their faces and archangels bow in adoring worship, unbelieving men spit upon and nailed to the cross. This shows how unbelief incapacitates for the appreciation of spiritual excellence, seeing no difference between those who love God and those who love him not. "Therefore the world knoweth us not because it knew him not."

Again, the spiritual life, the grand distinction of the sons of God is inscrutable. It is a hidden life. "Your life is hid with Christ in God." It is true that it puts forth external signs in works pure and good. Yet these may be counterfeited, misjudged, or ascribed to unworthy motives, to gain social standing, improve the worldly condition, or to fortify credit. Thousands in Christian communities may from worldly motives exhibit the same outward morality, and the same benevolence toward the needy as do Christians.

There is another consideration which makes it difficult in this life to discern clearly between him who serves God and him who does not serve him. There are many counterfeit Christians, children of the devil masquerading as children of God. It will always be possible this side of the Judgment Day "to steal the livery of heaven to serve the devil in."

All these considerations, together with the fact that many real Christians have some moral imperfections, and the very best of them have involuntary infirmities and defects, tend to conceal the real character of the

sons of God in this life, marching up to the open gate of heaven a race of kings, utterly unrecognized by men blinded by the glare of sinful pleasure.

But there is a glorious reverse of all this. As the despised Jesus will one day appear in glory and majesty, attended by all the holy angels, so will all the sons of God stand forth in their kingliness, a circle of glorified brothers with Jesus in the center. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father;" shine out as the sun from a cloud, their light here having been enfeebled and obscured by the causes spoken of above. "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever." There will then be a disclosure and coronation of the sons of God which will astonish a universe of spectators. "I reckon that the sufferings of this present life are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." This glory is now veiled by the mortal body enshrouding it, the spiritual resplendence will then stream through the enswathement of the glorified body. Towards this great event the eyes of cherubim and seraphim, angels and archangels, principalities and powers are now looking with intense desire. "For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth (with outstretched neck*) for the revealing of the sons of God," vindicated, acknowledged, and crowned. The whole world will then "discern between the righteous and the wicked; and they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, when I make up my jewels." Who are these thus ennobled? Their names are not found in Burke's

* See the Greek.

Heraldic Dictionary of the Peerage of the British Empire, but in the *Lamb's Book of Life*, "a book of remembrance written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name." They who have suffered with him will be glorified with him. "O Father, the glory which thou gavest me I have given them." "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not appear what we shall be. We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him." How will our glorified Leader look? St. John took his photograph on Patmos, which he has developed imperfectly but as perfectly as possible with the poor chemicals of words: "I saw in the midst of the golden candlesticks one like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about at the breasts with a golden girdle. And his head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto burnished brass, as if it had been refined in a furnace." How different is this from the dusty traveler who sat wearied by Jacob's well asking for a drink of water, or fainting beneath his cross on the road to Calvary. Just as great will be the contrast between the sons of God glorified in heaven and the sons of God toiling in obscurity on the earth, sometimes hunted as outlaws, often wearied, often discouraged, and always unappreciated and misunderstood by the world. What a glorious human brotherhood is this! Other brotherhoods may sympathize with me in trouble, watch with me in sickness, befriend me in a strange land, attend my funeral, and drop a sprig of evergreen into my grave. But here is a brotherhood which will love me in this world and go with me beyond the grave,

and cheer and bless me with their society through eternal ages. You can readily infer that I prefer this brotherhood to all others. It is not a secret society, though it has an incommunicable secret, — the white stone and a new name known to the receiver only. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned.

The discussion of the character of the sons of God pours a flood of light upon the Fatherhood of God, a misunderstood subject on which the false liberalism of modern times is built. In the New-Testament sense of that term, God is the Father of those, and only those, who receive his Son and believe in his name, who are born not of the flesh but of the Holy Spirit. The name Father, as applied to God, primarily denotes his relation to the only begotten Son through our union with him as the first term and head of a glorious series. He is the Father of all regenerated men. God is not our Father because he is our Creator and Preserver, for he is the Creator of the beasts, the birds, the fishes, and the reptiles, of which he is nowhere called their Father. To say that he is the Father of all men is to make God and the devil father of the same persons. For Christ addresses some thus: "Ye are of your father, the devil, because you do his works." St. John makes the same distinction: "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil; whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God;" *i.e.* he is not his son. God disowns him. He has cut himself off from God's family, and has adopted Satan as his father. The essential principle of sonship is love, first in the Only Begotten towards his Father, then in believers who by adoption are "joint heirs of

God through Christ." Had we any adequate appreciation of this unspeakable dignity, and the wonderful loving kindness which this name of Father imparts, the joy of heaven would fill the hearts of the children of God while passing through all the distresses and disappointments of this earthly vale of tears.

CHAPTER XI.

POWER FROM ON HIGH.*

WHAT the Spirit of inspiration teaches us to pray for we may without presumption assume is attainable in the present life. When Jesus on the cross prayed, "Father forgive them," pardon even for the murderers of the Son of God was within reach of their penitent faith. The prayer of the Psalmist, "cleanse me from my sin," after the petition for forgiveness and regeneration, "wash me thoroughly from my iniquity," authorizes every believer to pray in faith "create in me a clean heart, O God." The prayer of Paul for the Ephesians sanctions our entreaty for a blessing beyond perfect purity, even that we may "be strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner man." This brings us to our theme, the endowment of power. There is in this prayer (Eph. iii. 14-21) nothing negative desired, no work of destruction prayed for, no reference to guilt, and no intimation that the old man is still alive and warring against the reign of Christ. Every petition is for a positive gift reaching this climax, "that ye may be filled unto all the fullness of God." Paul supposes the Ephesians are dead unto sin, and now prays for the fullness of the divine life which Christ calls the more abundant life. Many become weak because they rest satisfied with a negative experience without putting

* "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you." *Acts i. 8.*

forth holy energies, the plenitude of the divine life. Our criticism of the churches of our day is that they are manifestly lacking in those positive qualities for which the apostle prays for the church in Ephesus. Christ strongly hints the possibility that his disciples may become like salt that has lost its savor. How may such salt be known? We answer, by its failure to preserve from corruption that perishable substance to which it has been applied without changing its form and name. What then shall we say respecting those churches numerous in members, venerable in age, and strong in social influence, around which communities are sinking in moral decay and spiritual death, and in many cases wallowing in gross vices? Are they not destitute of saving power? Power is known by its effects. The absence of the effects argues the absence of the cause, the power of the Holy Spirit in individuals, and their aggregate, the church. In discussing the endowment of power we cannot sunder it from its effects, and examine and define it in the abstract. All power has a spiritual origin. My muscular power by which I write these words originates not in my nervous system, nor in my brain, but in my spirit of which it is the organ. The forces in ceaseless activity about me, gravitation, heat, magnetism, and electricity, are not in the last analysis to be ascribed to matter, but to the Mind of its Creator, who, while he transcends matter, is in touch with every particle by his immanence. We are now in the region of mystery. But there are no greater mysteries in religion than in science, if we go down to the bottom of things and ask questions. For all beginnings are mysterious. If we reject Christianity because

of its mysteries, we have started on a road which leads to the subversion of all the sciences. We cannot tell how the might of the Spirit of God is imparted to the inner man of the believer in Christ. But this is the endowment of power for which Paul prays. It is something beyond mere intellectual power, the capacity of the mind to energize intensely and continuously. This is desirable. To attain it we found schools and universities. In the days of the apostles it was miraculously imparted under the names of the gift of wisdom, the gift of knowledge, the gift of tongues, and the gift of interpretation.

The power which Paul invokes upon the Ephesian church is the restoration of Conscience to her lost throne; it is the ability not only to resist temptations when unmasked, but also to detect the devil in the guise of an angel of light. For fallen men have two weak points, dull spiritual discernment and depraved desires. It is the office of the Holy Spirit to fortify these points, and to bring souls obedient to the truth to that full age or perfection which consists not only in having their spiritual perceptions clarified and exercised to discern both good and evil, but also in the ability always to resist the evil and to cleave to the good.

There is constant need of the exercise of this power of perception and resistance. In the Garden of Eden our first parents fell; Eve through dullness of spiritual discrimination, and Adam through lack of stalwart will power. "Adam was not deceived," — he sinned with his eyes open, — "but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." Much more do their degenerate descendants need to be strengthened with the might of

the omnipotent Spirit begirding "the inner man." Sin paralyzes the will even where it fails to put a film over the eye. In the downfall of our race, in the transgression of our first parents, all our spiritual nature was damaged; the intellect the least, the will and moral sensibilities the most. Whence is the strength by which this weakness can be removed? Certainly not from within man, but from without; not from beneath, but from above, even from the source of all power, God himself. If fallen man is to overcome the evil propensities in his depraved nature and sit with King Jesus on his throne as he overcame and is set down with his Father in his throne, he must secure a mighty ally in the war which he must wage with the world, the flesh, and the devil. With this ally he can walk arm in arm in unsullied whiteness through the pollutions of the present world. As Jesus Christ is to-day in spotless holiness (1 John iv. 17), so are we who believe in him with a faith that lays hold of the highest possibilities of grace divine. It used to be argued that although man in his fallen estate has the natural ability to repent and believe, he has a total moral inability by reason of the perversity of his will. This deadlock between natural and moral ability was formerly urged as an excuse for impenitence, till the special call and the irresistible grace of the Holy Spirit should come to those who are written down in the register of God's secret will as unconditionally elected to eternal life before the foundation of the world. When Jesse Lee, the apostle of Methodism, came into New England in the last decade of the eighteenth century, he met everywhere, among saints and sinners, preachers and people alike, this pernicious doc-

trine, dishonoring God and destroying the souls of men. He banished it from the pulpits of New England by preaching the impartiality of the Divine regards, the universal extent of the atonement, and the GRACIOUS ABILITY of every sinner to repent through the help of the Holy Spirit freely bestowed upon all without respect of persons.

Whatever duty the Spirit prompts a person to do, whether repentance toward God, or saving trust in Jesus Christ, or to seek entire sanctification through his blood and that perfect love which casts out fear, the same Spirit will enable him to accomplish. Moral obligation always implies gracious ability. In every "ought" there is an implied "can."

But the endowment of the Spirit is not limited to his negative efficiency in the destruction of evil in the inner man. He is the ally of the believer in his offensive war against sin in others, in advancing the kingdom of God by aggression upon the ranks of Christ's enemies. When this ally is neglected there is no progress; the chariot wheels of King Jesus are taken off and the hosts of Satan prevail.

When we inquire into the source of that might by which self is sanctified and Christ's kingdom is advanced, we encounter those who teach that it is developed within us by culture, as strength of body is increased by muscular exercise, and as intellectual strength is attained by severe study wrestling with difficulties. We are told that there is a germ of spiritual might in the most morally irresolute, and feeblest souls, which needs only natural stimulants to develop it into titanic strength. But neither experience, observation,

nor history confirms this theory which theologians, from its first eminent advocate, called Pelagianism. Spiritually the natural man is dead. Aside from divine help he has no power to purify his nature, and to soar aloft and hold communion with the skies. He has no wings for such a flight, nor motive power. These are the gift of divine grace under the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, the gift of the risen Christ. We are not slandering the natural man when we describe him as sensual, not having the Spirit, for we are quoting the adjectives used by an acknowledged expert, the inspired apostle Jude. It were as reasonable to incite a corpse to walk the streets, and till the fields, as to inspire an unregenerate soul to rise from earth to heaven in its affections by any power less than that which comes from God. An eagle cannot outsoar the atmosphere. The natural man unaided cannot rise above depravity. Spiritual might is not a development, but an endowment capable of great increase by faithful use. "Tarry ye in Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high. Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." This promise includes our times, for the uttermost pagan tribe has not yet been evangelized.

This source of power is ignored and neglected just in proportion to the conformity of the church to the world. This is to sympathize with its spirit, to be chilled and deadened by its unbelief. When for the first time the Paraclete was promised, Jesus said respecting him, "Whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth him not, neither knoweth him." A worldly

Christian, if such a paradox is allowable, has lost acquaintance with the Comforter. Thus sundering itself from the source of power, it seeks various substitutes, such as impressive architecture, artistic music, costly bouquets, gorgeous ceremonials at the altar, and rhetorical fireworks in the pulpit. Every church is a machine requiring some motive power. One church, after declining into worldliness, causing the departure of the Holy Spirit, the only agent to attract, convert, and sanctify people, and frame them together into a living church, resorts to the power of fashion; courts the classes, and in adapting its services to their refined taste, alienates the masses, and thus loses a hundred-fold more than it gains.

How strikingly are proclaimed the spiritual poverty and infantile weakness of many of our city churches, which have moved from localities crowded with poor people speaking the English language, because their high-toned æstheticism, called Christian worship, their only power of attraction, utterly failed to attract and uplift and save the perishing thousands near by, who might have been saved if the church had possessed grace enough to get down from its stilts and adapt its ministrations to the needs of the unchurched multitudes! What a cowardly act for a church of Christ, who came to seek and to save the lost, to desert a city ward because there are so many sinners in it! It retires to a more respectable location, where it may gather the gay and rich, and, shutting its pews against the ragged poor, may sit down on velvet cushions and dream of going to heaven on flowery beds of ease. Such a reproach to him who ate with publicans and sinners would not have

been if that church had fully trusted in the power of the Spirit to rescue the vicious, and transform the criminal, and had adjusted the gospel message to this sole aim.

Another whole denomination attaches its machinery to an apostolic wheel eighteen hundred years distant, and imagines that it conveys down through all the ages the whole power which Christ bequeathed to his apostles without loss or waste. According to this exclusive theory, which boasts a patent right to the Holy Ghost, the only way for the individual believer to receive the Pentecostal gift, and thereby to be endued with power, is to receive it through the hands of "the historic Episcopate," which professes to hold a monopoly by virtue of the apostolic succession, not of God's regenerating grace, but of the Holy Spirit as the sanctifier and abiding Comforter. This many deluded souls are trusting in as the channel of their full heritage in Christ, though Lord Macaulay says, "It is probable that no clergyman in the church of England can trace up his spiritual genealogy from bishop to bishop even so far back as the time of the Reformation. There remain fifteen or sixteen hundred years during which the history of the transmission of his orders is buried in utter darkness. And whether he be a priest by succession from the apostles, depends on the question whether, during that long period, some thousands of events took place, any one of which may, without any gross improbability, be supposed not to have taken place. We have not a tittle of evidence to any one of these events."

We therefore caution all who seek the fullness of the Spirit and his uttermost saving-power to beware of so

doubtful a method as that of clapping the band of your faith around an apostle, though that band

“be long and dark
As a musty roll from Noah’s ark.”

We live in a day when intellectual culture is in some denominations assuming to be the source of power. The so-called liberalistic organizations have without a blush openly dethroned the Holy Spirit and enthroned education. This is the panacea for all the evils of the human heart and all the ills of society. Some go so far as to say that science is the only positive power in the world which is to be enlightened and purified by rejecting all the miracles of the Bible as so many myths, and banishing the superstitions of Christianity, and inaugurating the era of universal knowledge. This is the only power needed by mankind to cure their bodily, mental, and moral maladies. Guilt is a superstition which a liberal education will dispel. Sin, “a much-abused word,” is a necessary step in the process of human development. The steam-engine is the Savior which is elevating mankind, and the magnetic telegraph and the long-distance telephone are his band of apostles preaching with electric tongues this new gospel of science. Against this rejection of Christ and displacement of his gift, the Holy Spirit, evangelical churches loudly protest. Yet many of these are unconsciously, or semi-consciously, leaning on the same broken reed, to be pierced through with the sorrow of disappointment. This disproves the claim for the purifying power of education dissevered from Christianity. Was Athens at the zenith of her æsthetic culture, not

cherishing human slavery and its twin vice, licentiousness? How fared the suffering nations when Rome had her iron heel on the neck of the prostrate world? How gloomy the prospects of the present republic of France under the auspices of a cultivated infidelity!

While power in the abstract is a simple idea, spiritual power is capable of analysis.

1. It consists first in the removal of a source of weakness. Incertitude is a paralysis of the soul's highest faculties. Doubt weakens by distraction. Etymologically it signifies moving in two opposite directions. It produces fluctuation, hesitation, and suspense. "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." He has a divine premonition that he needs "not expect to receive anything from the Lord." If he is a preacher, his announcement of the Gospel will be weak and ineffectual. He cannot speak with the assurance of a personal experience which is requisite to produce conviction. How many preachers would multiply their efficiency and usefulness if they would kneel down by the side of Paul and repeat in faith his petition that they might be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man! It was his experience of the revelation of the Son of God in him by the Holy Ghost that made him successful as an evangelist, mighty in labors, courageous in dangers, patient in sufferings, and triumphant in martyrdom. No heroism was ever born of doubt. It is only when the soul is set on fire by some great moral truth, clearly seen and firmly grasped, yea, ingrained into its very texture, that moral sublimity in effort, in sacrifice, and in speech emerges. Doubt heads no glorious company of martyrs marching to the stake. It is customary to

advise the doubter to a study of the Christian evidences, to count the towers of Christianity, and mark well her bulwarks. Such a survey has done me much good, and I commend it to all who have leisure. But there is for the mass of busy people a shorter way. Everybody cannot thoroughly master the treatises of Bishop Butler, Archdeacon Paley, and President Hopkins, and, if they could, they might die before they had got so far along as to be convinced of the truth and receive Christ as both Savior and Lord. What is the shorter way? With the New Testament open before him, even if he doubts the ability of Christ to save, let him act on the truth he does believe, however small, and kneel down with a sense of dependence on some higher power or person, and utter an honest prayer for help. Let him, if he doubts even the existence of God, begin as one bewildered skeptic did, by saying, "O God, if there be a God, save my soul, if I have a soul." Our merciful God did not disdain to answer this prayer. The Holy Spirit showed in quick succession the greatness of his sins and the surpassing greatness of his Redeemer, whom he was enabled by the same spirit to apprehend by faith as his personal Savior. Now this shorter way, which we recommend to the slave ignorant of the alphabet, we commend to skeptical sage sitting in his ample library. On your knees pray for light, and as fast as it comes follow it. "If any man willeth to do his will" — God's will — "he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God, or whether I speak from myself," as a mere man without divine authority. Heaven and earth shall pass away before one jot or tittle, one crossing of a *t* or dot of an *i*, shall fail in this promise in the case of one who

seeks with a spirit of obedience to know Jesus Christ's character and mission. No man can be an honest skeptic till he has faithfully tried this shorter way and found that it leads nowhere. This way honestly trodden brings the doubter to certainty. Says Joseph Cook, "I assert that it is a fixed natural law that when you yield yourself utterly to God, his light will stream through and through your soul." God honors obedience because it implies faith as its root. This truth we commend to those who regard it a special excellence to be in uncertainty respecting their relation to Christ. To be void of assurance they regard as an evidence of humility; whereas it is an evidence of a very defective obedience and of an absence of total self-surrender to God. As well might the guest without the wedding garment plead that this destitution evinces superior humility. Assurance is always accompanied by humility. Thomas never felt smaller than in the moment when his risen Lord stood before him challenging him to test the reality of his body. When he was constrained to cry, "My Lord and my God," how cheap and mean his previous doubts seemed, and how deep his self-abasement.

2. Another element of power inwrought by the Holy Spirit is love. We have all heard the phrase made classic in Christian literature by Dr. Chalmers' title to one of his sermons "The Expulsive Power of a New Affection." A man's spiritual foes are chiefly of his own natural heart. He needs a power to bind these enemies and cast them out before he can have perfect peace. This power is love, not merely the natural affection for kindred and friends, but that supernatural affection "shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit,"

causing our whole being to move God-ward and man-ward, because man wears the image of God. The Holy Spirit must not be viewed as a material agent infusing a subtle, imponderable fluid into man's body. He is God's messenger through whom he communicates the good news that his anger for our sins is turned away from us, and that he now loves us because of our faith in his Son. This trust in Christ has caused a revolution in us, turning us away from our sins and bringing us into the sphere of his complacent love. This good news from God that he loves me, even me, awakens responsive love in me, a new affection averse to every impulse in me which is hostile to God. This is the philosophy of the expulsive power of love. Do I need any such message direct from God? Can I not infer from a study of my own mental exercises, and a comparison with the description of God's friends in his written Word, that God loves me? Let us see. The same Word of God declares that he is angry with the wicked every day. My conscience testifies that I am wicked. Before I can have perfect deliverance from a sense of guilt and dread of punishment I must know, beyond a peradventure, by an assurance excluding doubt, that I have been taken out of the company on whom God frowns, and have been put into company basking in his smile. Inference is not sufficient. I must have an assurance from the mouth of God himself. This alone allays fear and opens the fountain of the purest joy. This message instantaneously communicated is in beautiful harmony with our Protestant doctrine of justification by faith, a momentary act taking place in the mind of the Moral Governor in heaven.

The witness of the spirit is the link between the pardoning God and the pardoned sinner. The news of God's benefaction awakens love towards the Benefactor. Hence this love divine arises in us in perfect harmony with the structure and laws of the human mind. Love is the essence of Christianity and its central power which is moving it through the world, and which will ultimately draw all nations to God:

“Sink down, ye separating hills,
Let sin and death remove ;
'Tis love that drives my chariot wheels,
And death must yield to love.”

The more love the more power. Perfect love brings the maximum of spiritual power to the individual and to the church. When churches decline in love they lose their power to attract and to convert. Then it is pitiable to see the ineffectual substitutes for the lost power. To hold the young people who belong to them by inheritance they resort to entertainments, but these do not transform and fill with divine love. They are soon disgusted, and fall away from attending those amusements, which are discovered to be only baits to draw them unwilling into the net of the church when all their inclinations are to the world and its more attractive entertainments, — the pleasures of the dance, the card-table, and the theater. This is a most woeful mistake made by many modern churches. It must be rectified or those churches will become extinct. When does a church die? When it loses its converting power, just as a family becomes extinct when its power of reproduction is lost. You will find in our great libraries *A History*

of *Burke's Extinct Baronetcies of England, Ireland, and Scotland*. Some centuries hence there may be found in our libraries a History of the extinct denominations of the United States, the Quakers, Swedenborgians, the Unitarians, the Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists. They all died of one disease, — heart-failure.

Jesus Christ's method of conquest by love, disarming malice by turning the other cheek to the smiter, has been sneeringly criticised by a shallow philosophy as the vantage ground to wrong and not to right, as subversive of justice and good order, and inadequate to the cure of social evils. More recently a better philosophy, called altruism, has prevailed. Its primal principle is that the only way to beget right feelings, motives, and impulses in others is to manifest them as incarnated in yourself; that love toward the unworthy and malevolent will awaken responsive love. The second altruistic principle is that love towards enemies can originate and flourish on the plane of nature far below the sphere of the supernatural. The love that is conquering the world is not human but divine. Only by divine grace can you love the unlovely and hateful. You cannot do it by mere will power. Unchristian altruism is a fine theory but it will not work; it is utterly impracticable. Christianity is practicable when it successfully confronts all the moral, social, political, and economic problems, because omnipotence is its motive power, the omnipotence of that love which is sky-born.

The success of a preacher is not so much in the strength of his logic, or the splendor of his rhetoric, as in the atmosphere of love in which both his pulpit and

pastoral work are ensphered. The brainy man will be admired, but admiration is not ministerial success. It converts no sinners. The man of a warm heart will be loved. Gospel salvation makes sanctified human love its electric wire to souls distant from God, and melts them into penitence. It is not possible for all preachers to be as irresistible in argument as Chillingworth, as brilliant in diction as Macaulay, or as his gifted limner, Punshon; but all may have the baptism of love, perfect love to God and man, love the fountain of pathos and of power to sway men, drawing them to God. If this secret of success is within every one's reach, how can it be obtained? Some tell us that we must commune with nature, study the beautiful flower, listen to His voice in the zephyr, and, in a reverent and childlike attitude, read earth and sky as two pages of God's love-letter to man. It is true that "part of his name divinely stands, on all His creatures writ." But only the sentiment of love, not the real virtue of love to God, will be awakened by the study of nature. The contemplation of Nature is one thing, but communion with the Personal God is another and far superior thing. Sentimental love bearing the Christian name will prompt no sacrifices, awaken no quenchless zeal, inspire no unspeakable joy, eradicate no inward depravity, tame no evil passion, make no roll of heroes, thrust out no evangelists, and erect no trophy of victory over the world. That this is a truthful description you will not deny after an examination of the characters of those who profess this kind of love to God. On their return not from communion with God on the Lord's Day, not in the house of prayer, but in the forest or field, what kind of fruits do they bear?

Are they aflame with that love to God which obeys with gladness all his known commands, and diligently searches his Word for a more accurate knowledge of his will? Are they burning with zeal to spread his kingdom? Do they so earnestly love their fellow-men in the pagan lands, or in the slums of our great cities, that they gladly sacrifice for the success of Christian missions? Worshipers of nature have never been known to bear these practical proofs of genuine Christian love. They have not been to its source, they do not know the Person who enkindles every truly believing heart into a flame of love by dropping a spark from the skies. "Hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit given unto us." Others assert that we do not need the Spirit to reveal God's love, that the Bible is all the revelation that we need. It is true that the Bible is our sufficient revelation of God's attributes, the principles of his moral government, the law he has given us, and the Redeemer whom he has provided. But my pardon and purity are personal facts which it is not the province of God's written Word to reveal, but his Spirit only. "No man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Many talk glibly about a Father to whom they have never been introduced by the Son through the mission of the Spirit, crying in their hearts "Abba, Father." They belong to the "many" to whom the Judge will say, "I never knew you, depart from me." Salvation includes much more than a book-knowledge of God. It is quite probable that the entire New Testament, if not the whole Bible, will be found in

hell in the memories of those who have read it, but have failed to be regenerated by the Holy Spirit. Thousands have read the Gospels, and have seen the Son of God pass four times before their eyes, and have failed to know him as their personal Savior. They can admire his sinless character and still say, "This man shall not rule over us." They are not new creatures, because they refuse to be born of the Spirit. They may have a historical faith in Jesus Christ, but they come short of that evangelical trust which receives him as the Savior and enthrones him as king. "They have the form of godliness while denying its power." Trusting in a form is building your mansion on a cloud instead of the Rock of Ages. This is the great peril of nominal Christians. Their number increases rapidly wherever persecution has ceased and Christianity has become fashionable. They have never been transformed by its power. They have never really submitted to God and received his adorable Son as their infallible teacher, effectual Savior, and rightful Lord. They have never cast themselves in utter self-despair upon the merits of his atonement, crying, "for me, for me my Savior died." They have never received a response from heaven, the witness to their adoption, uttered by the Holy Spirit with a voice which no one knows excepting him in whose heart it has consciously resounded. They have no power because they have no life. They may have culture, science, money, and social standing, but they have no grip upon God, the source of all power. What they need is that vital power which overcomes the inertia of nature and makes the sluggish active. Look at the apostles. Like all men they once preferred ease to toil, security to peril, and life to death.

After Pentecost they knew no rest, shunned no peril, and counted not their own lives dear unto them in their attestation of the truth that Jesus is the Messiah of the Jews and the Redeemer of the world. Peter, who less than two months before had uttered cowardly lies, vainly confirming them with oaths, shaking with terror at the presence and questions of a servant girl, now looks the assembled Jewish magnates in the eye, and boldly declares that they with wicked hands have crucified the Prince of Life. Timidity yields to the might of the Holy Spirit having full sway in the believer's soul. Many regenerate persons are weakened by timidity. They are spiritual mutes in public and private. Utterance and boldness would be theirs if by faith they would submit their hearts to be strengthened by the might of the Spirit.

3. Temptation is one of the conditions of human probation. We must be put to the proof so long as we are in this world. Character can be solidified and beautified in no other way. Solicitations to sin under various disguises severely test all men. Temptation is a fiery furnace which either anneals or annihilates. The question, Which of these destinies? is determined each for himself. It is the question of power to endure the flames. This power in turn is the question of the indwelling of God, making the soul and body his habitation through the Spirit. This ultimately hinges on faith. "This is the victory which overcomes the world, even our faith." This unites with God and infuses into us his omnipotence. Some are tempted in one way and some in another; some in their animal nature, and yielding, are drawn downward to sensuality; some are

tempted on the intellectual side, and failing to overcome, they become skeptics and stumble on the dark mountains of unbelief. Kings and presidents are tempted by their possession of power, and by a crowd of flatterers; the beggar is drawn toward the low vices of falsehood, deception, and theft. How may all classes overcome? There is but one sure way — by being girded with strength by the Holy Spirit received by faith in Jesus Christ.

This strength is required for the eradication of evil habits, especially from the yoke of degrading artificial appetites which are more tenacious and invincible than inborn tendencies. The acquired appetite for tobacco, opium, alcohol, and other drugs, yokes under which millions are groaning to-day, can be broken. The Lion of Judah, the Giver of the cleansing Spirit, can break every chain in a moment, and completely emancipate the soul from its degrading slavery. The instances of an instantaneous, complete, and permanent annihilation of these appetites, not by the gold cure, but by the Holy Ghost, are too numerous to be detailed here. The only effectual reform of drunkards is by gospel temperance, preached by earnest believers in the transforming power of the Spirit of God. I have lost faith in all other schemes of moral rescue. We must, in assaulting the Gibraltar of wickedness in our great cities, acquire the spirit of early Methodism in the streets and fields of England, preaching to mobs of raving, swearing, and threatening men just from the ale-house. The faith in which the early Methodist applied the Gospel to such men is well reflected by Charles Wesley's Hymn-Book, entitled "Hymns for Times of Trouble," and

“Hymns to be Sung in a Tumult.” Listen to a few verses :—

“Outcasts of men, to you I call,
 Harlots, and publicans, and thieves;
 He spreads his arms to embrace you all;
 Sinners alone his grace receives:
 No need of him the righteous have;
 He came the lost to seek and save.

“Come all ye Magdalens in lust,
 Ye ruffians fell in murders old;
 Repent, and live : despair and trust!
 Jesus for you to death was sold.
 Though hell protest, and earth repine,
 He died for crimes like yours and mine.

“Come, O my guilty brethren, come,
 Groaning beneath your load of sin;
 His bleeding heart shall make you room,
 His open side shall take you in.
 He calls you now, invites you home—
 Come, O my guilty brethren, come.”

Lest I should be misunderstood as decrying moral reforms, I say that efforts on the plane of nature to prevent vice are valuable, but such efforts to reform the vicious are failures. The Gospel of Christ contains the only cure. The leprosy lies deep within. The new birth and the Holy Spirit received are the only effective power for the moral recovery of the grossly vicious whom many now pass by as hopelessly lost.

4. It will be spiritually healthful to dwell upon a few of the desperate cases which illustrate the power of the Gospel. Paul thus describes a miracle of the Holy Ghost wrought in Corinth: “Neither fornicators, nor adulterers, nor drunkards, nor idolaters, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the

kingdom of God. And such were some of you ; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." Look at this rogues' gallery, — as vile a gang as ever were sentenced to State-prison, — transformed by the grace of our Lord Jesus into a company of seraphs fit to be enthroned beside the archangels. See Augustine, a rake transformed by the Holy Spirit, in answer to his mother's prayers, into the saintly Christian bishop. It was the power of the Spirit which changed John Newton, the captain of a slave-ship, into an eminent minister of the gospel of love, and the vicious tinker of Elstow, transfigured by the regenerating and sanctifying Spirit, into the glorious dreamer and author of *Pilgrim's Progress*, a book which has a grip on an earthly immortality next to the Bible itself. Take one of the many remarkable conversions of our own times ; that of Jerry McAuley, notorious as the wickedest man in New York, a thief, drunkard, ex-convict, and noted river pirate. He was when nineteen years old sent to prison for fifteen years and six months. After he signed the temperance pledge, "he fell five times in the first few months and got fighting drunk." But after he let the Holy Spirit have the right of way through all his being he never fell again. He established a rescue mission in which hundreds, if not thousands, of sinners of his class were saved before his death, and many since he went up to receive a victor's crown. Modern Methodists would receive a healthful spiritual tonic in studying the triumphs of the Gospel as preached by Wesley and Whitefield, disarming desperate and infuriated men, turning cursings into blessings, drunkards into sober men, whole

communities of ignorant, besotted, and belligerent colliers into intelligent, peaceable Christians, thickly dotting their once semi-pagan region with elegant Wesleyan chapels, filled with joyful worshipers singing the hymns of the Wesleys, whose faith in the Holy Spirit's power to save was so strong that they risked their lives in preaching, to these worse than beasts at Ephesus, the glorious gospel of Christ. They believed that it could change lions into lambs. God signally honored their faith. O for such preachers everywhere, to-day and to-morrow and forever as long as sinners are found on the earth.!

Well may the triumphant believer sing, —

“Thou dost conduct thy people
Through torrents of temptation;
Nor will we fear while thou art near
The fire of tribulation;

“The world, with sin and Satan,
In vain our march opposes;
In thee we will break through them all
And sing the Song of Moses.”

C. WESLEY.

CHAPTER XII.

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S EARTHLY TEMPLE.*

THE Spirit dwells not in the mass of Christians organized into the church, but in the heart of the individual believer. Man was created like God in his mental, moral, and spiritual constitution. In his body and soul (psyche) he is related to the animal orders. But in his spirit, the dome of his nature full of skylights, he is related to the spiritual intelligences above him and has the capacity for becoming the "habitation of God through the Spirit." As Adam was made a son of God within the sphere of creaturehood, he was made a temple of the Holy Spirit, as the only begotten Son was the Temple of the Spirit in the sphere of divinity. As God finished the first creation by breathing the life-giving Spirit into Adam's body, so Christ finished the new creation of his disciples when "he breathed on them and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." The Spirit received is the completion of the new creation. As Adam's fall caused the withdrawal of the Spirit when he lent his ear to the tempter's falsehoods, so his restoration is complete when the risen Christ breathes that Spirit anew into the soul that turns its ear to God in a total and irreversible self-surrender. Thus the last Adam becomes to every believer a quickening spirit by imparting the Comforter, the Lord of life. We must

* "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" *1 Cor. vi. 19.*

limit the pentecostal gift, except as a reprover, to believers of every age, sex, and condition, and thus conditionally "upon all flesh" was the Spirit poured out as a permanent indwelling comforter.

In all the Christian ages there have been witnesses to the conscious indwelling of the Holy Spirit. These have been few and discredited in eras of rationalism, and stigmatized as mystics and fanatics in periods of formalism; but they have been numerous and received with credence in the most spiritual eras and sections of the Church. Their testimony is confirmed by their deadness to sin and self and fullness of joy. "It happens sometimes that the indwelling of Christ and God and his Spirit signalizes itself with such energy in the believer, that the human individual life is overflowed and swallowed up by the divine, as a river of delight."* Delitzsch quotes the case of the "holy Ephrem who experienced such wondrous consolation that he often cried, 'Lord withdraw thy hand a little, for my heart is too weak to receive such excessive joy.'" John Fletcher at times offered a similar prayer. There are now on the earth witnesses to the conscious indwelling of the Holy Ghost in larger numbers probably than ever before. I know a man in Christ twenty-eight years ago—in the body, or out of the body, no matter which—into whose consciousness the Comforter came and took up his permanent abode, in a day and hour never to be forgotten either in this world or in that to come. Invisible himself he glorified Christ whom he revealed within as a bright reality, as he did in Paul, when God revealed his Son in him.

* *Biblical Psychology*, p. 418.

Though earnestly sought, his incoming was a blissful surprise. He brought with him delicious viands for a feast, which he spread for his guest; manna from heaven, and all the fruits of the celestial Paradise. The former residents he expelled. He sentenced depravity to the cross, and banished doubt to eternal exile. The touch of his hand removed all weakness, begirded with all strength, and disarmed all fear. The promise which he made when he entered, "I have come evermore to abide," he has thus far faithfully kept. Foreboded evil, borrowed trouble, and wasting worry — that dismal triad — slinking away from the radiant indwelling Christ, have disappeared as birds of night before the rising sun. Death, "the King of terrors," has been discrowned and reduced to a servant, a porter to open the gate when the tenant of the temple on the earth is invited to go up to his "house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens." This man of more than two score blissful years is quite indifferent to the time when the invitation will come to leave the palace below, where he has supped with the King, and to enter the palace above, where the King will banquet him. The feast and the two table companions will be the same. Probably because of the innumerable host of other banqueters, men and angels, Paul had a slight leaning toward the upper temple "which is very far better" (Phil. i. 23, *R. V.*).

There is a difference in the way of the Spirit's coming in his fullness. The day of Pentecost is not to be taken as an exact model; certainly it is not in the supernatural concomitants, such as the sound as of a cyclone, the tongues of fire, and "the miracle of ears," rather than

tongues, every man of sixteen nationalities hearing in his own language "the wonderful works of God."

It was proper that the advent of the promised Paraclete should be signalized by extraordinary and impressive phenomena. This is usual at new beginnings as at the giving of the Law on Sinai. In a lower degree, something of the same kind is noted in the great outpouring of the Spirit in missions, such as have graciously favored some of the Baptist and Methodist missions in India in recent years, and in revivals at home, sweeping over the country like a tidal wave. In these times of refreshing, Christian men are suddenly, mightily, manifestly, filled with the Holy Spirit as the Comforter, and unbelievers are deluged with his power in conviction of sin. It is natural for us to fall into the mistake of inferring that the incoming of the Spirit to take up his permanent abode in the inmost life of the believer, must be attended by the enthusiasm and overflowing gladness of Pentecost. The Spirit is not limited to one method of manifestation. He may accentuate love or peace, or some fruit other than joy, which is the most emotional of them all. For this reason there are special dangers to be guarded against. The blessing is often too much dependent on the concurrence of many believers of like experience, or it is superficial and extends only to the emotions, the outermost and more accessible currents of the Soul's life. This we may call ecstatic fullness. The seat of character, the will in its deepest root, has not been completely subdued, and the inmost life has not been transformed. This is seen in the vacuity, the dissatisfaction which follows a change in externals, an abatement of the ex-

citement of a jubilant crowd, and a removal from the contagious gladness of other Christians. Then we find out whether we ourselves have been baptized with fire, or whether we have been warmed by other people's fires. Moreover, it must have been noted by careful observers that there are Christians of the type of Barnabas, "a son of Consolation, a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost." These never speak of a cyclonic experience, a marked and memorable event sharply defined in memory. Yet the fullness of the Spirit manifests itself in deep and intense devotion to Christ; in a life of constant obedience and complete victory over sin; in a walk in the light of God's countenance; in a simple trust and uninterrupted and cloudless communion with the Father and the Son; and in the humility of a self-effacing love to all whom they can reach with their good deeds and prayers, whether friends or foes. We observe that such souls do not recur to dates, to sudden and memorable transitions and spiritual uplifts. Like Lydia, their hearts seem to have been gently opened to regenerating grace, and the Paraclete without observation has noiselessly gone from apartment to apartment till he has taken complete possession. This we may call ethical fullness. "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled."

Professor Austin Phelps remarks that next to the mystery of the Three Persons in the one divine nature is the habitation of the human spirit by the Holy Spirit interpenetrating its substance with his vitalizing presence, pervading all the faculties of the human mind, becoming the life of its life, the soul within a soul, in a sense to which no other union makes any approxima-

tion. "He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit" (1 Cor. vi. 17). This mystical union is symbolized by the human body united with the head, the branches and the vine, the union of husband and wife, the dependence of the temple on its corner-stone. Paul has a union with Christ by the Holy Spirit so intimate that he speaks of his own heart throbbing in the bosom of Jesus Christ: "For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ" (Phil. i. 8). It has been said that such is the Spirit's efficacy that there is not one thought, feeling, or emotion pervading the man Jesus Christ, amid the glories of the upper Sanctuary, but may be said to be reproduced in the experience of his people on the earth, so that their every want and sorrow vibrates to him like the touching of a chord of which he is instantly aware. This telegraphic connection is implied in the joy of the angels over one penitent sinner, a ripple wave of gladness rolling over all the heavenly hosts. This communion of feeling is because the Holy Spirit who dwells in Christ dwells also in his people.

Are believers conscious of this indwelling of the Spirit? If not at all times they certainly are sometimes in moments and hours, and even days of cloudless communion with God. "But ye know him (the Comforter); for he dwelleth with you and shall be in you" (John xiv. 16). "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you" (1 Cor. iii. 16). "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you" (vi. 19). All these passages declare that we know, while other texts imply this knowledge, such as, "If any man

has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Rom. viii. 9). Of course we cannot explain the mode of this knowledge. We cannot state how we know any fact outside of the sphere of the bodily senses.

John says, "He that keepeth his commandments abideth in him (Christ), and he (Christ) in him." This reciprocal indwelling is a double wonder. If the indwelling of Christ by his representative, the Holy Spirit, is a mystery, the indwelling of the believer's soul in Christ is to one who has no experience a mystery of mysteries beyond reason, and beyond such natural faith as is possible to the unregenerate, except on the theory of pantheism. This theory exaggerates God's omnipresence. It makes him everything as well as everywhere; as a soul in man, in nature, in the universe, just as life is in animal bodies. This soul has self-consciousness only in man. Man's individuality is a brief illusion, as a bubble momentarily floating on a river, then losing its form in the current which bears it onward to the ocean. There is in pantheism no such thing as personality in man or in God. It denies freedom in both. This implies that neither God nor man has a moral character or a moral sense. God is a blind, non-descript force acting through material organisms. Neither sin nor holiness has any place in this philosophy. There are two objections: first, the testimony of consciousness to freedom and moral accountability; and second, the Bible idea of God as a perfect personality, having intelligence, feeling, will, and moral freedom. We now have a basis for stating the doctrine of the indwelling of God in the believer and the indwelling of the believer in God. Both personalities are retained, but mentally

interpenetrated. The Spirit does not take forcible possession of the body and mind, as evil spirits do in the case of demoniacs, dervishes, and devotees of Hinduism, but he gently enlightens, purifies, and guides the trusting and renovated soul, and through it he controls the body. As a Person the Spirit has an intelligent and definite aim, which is to produce and conserve holiness in the believer. Such a person dwells in Christ because he is ensphered in his mighty personality, and encompassed by his love: —

“Plunged in the Godhead’s deepest sea,
And lost in its immensity.”

The reciprocal indwelling is the strongest possible expression for the union of God and the believer. The relation so intimate is indescribably blissful. It begirds weakness with omnipotence. It banishes fear. It arches the future with the rainbow of hope.

“And when I’m to die,
‘Receive me,’ I’ll cry,
For Jesus hath loved me,
I cannot tell why:

“But this I do find,
We two are so joined,
He’ll not live in glory
And leave me behind.”

What a sense of security one has who carries God in his bosom and at the same time is consciously dwelling in the Gibraltar of God’s overshadowing presence, power, and love. Such a man is gloriously delivered from fear and doubt. He has the full assurance of faith, and the victory over the world which comes through faith.

There is another view of this mutual indwelling which does not tend to the strongest faith. It is best described by Dr. J. P. Thompson: "There is a mystical notion that the Holy Spirit, as an essence, somehow dwells in the innermost heart of a renewed man as in a shrine, quite apart from the man himself and his mental and moral acts—a mysterious entity, of whose presence the mind is vaguely conscious as a something distinct from itself, and which acts upon the mind in the way of direct inspiration, impulse, vision, or spiritual exaltation; that is to say, the Spirit's indwelling is a mysterious something that produces certain supernatural frames and experiences within the soul apart from the normal action of its own faculties. But the Bible represents this indwelling neither as physical nor as fanciful; neither as a power acting upon the nerves and organs of the body, nor a light, a voice, a mystery addressing the imagination; but as the personal influence of the Holy Spirit upon the will and the affections, inciting and disposing them to holy love and holy living."

There are many whose abiding in Christ is seeming and not real. Of these there are two classes. The first comprises all who were once living and fruitful branches but have become barren and dead. They still appear to be a part of the vine, for the knife of the pruner is not instantly applied. Judgment is delayed to give a chance for the life-giving sap to flow from the vine to make the branch bud, blossom, and bear fruit again. These are backsliders in heart or in life. They are nominal Christians. They may exhibit a good degree of interest in the church, attend its services, contribute

to its support, and desire its prosperity as an institution that conserves the well-being of society. But they are vitally sundered from Christ. Their faith has relaxed its grip and their love to him has died. In the absence of love, no intellectual advocacy of Christian truth, no moral excellence, no activity in reforms, no giving of goods to feed the poor, can be fruit in the eye of God.

The second class includes professors of Christianity, who never truly repented of their sins and never exercised a saving trust in Christ. These do not abide in him because they were never grafted into the true vine. The thought is a very sad one that there are many who are in this mistaken attitude towards the only Savior of sinners. They imagine that they are in the ark of salvation when they have never embarked. They are very confident that they are securely abiding in Christ who are yet not in Christ at all. They delude themselves with a semblance of fruit. They have a kind of interest in the church; they are so busy in its externalities, adorning its temples, embroidering altar-cloths, supplying its pulpit with flowers, making its music artistic, organizing its young people, and carrying on its fairs, festivals, and entertainments, that they delude themselves with the idea that they are bearing much fruit unto Christ. They have not learned that fruit to Christ is the fruit of the Spirit, the possession of Christlike qualities. How did these persons come into this deplorable delusion? They mistook for repentance some act which falls short of God's command, such as rising for prayers, kneeling at an altar, signing a card, or attending an inquiry meeting. They were urged to the performance of some one of these acts which is not decisive of religious character.

This was much easier than that genuine repentance which goes through the heart like a subsoil plow. They substituted an outward act for an inward, gracious and thorough work. Unwise and unwary advisers allowed this fatal substitution, and thus encouraged unregenerate persons to be baptized and to join the visible Church. They are now spurious branches of the true vine, branches attached with glue or sealing wax, and bearing adventitious fruit like oranges artificially attached to a Christmas tree. This untrue religious profession is an almost impervious shield against all alarming gospel truth. Hence it is not probable that many who are in this unfortunate relation to Christ will awake from the delusion, which they have welcomed, till they shall hear the Judge say, "Depart from me, I never knew you." The cause of this hopeless delusion is a false Christ in which so many are trusting in preference to the true Savior from sin.

CHAPTER XIII.

BUYING AND SELLING TRUTH.*

“WHAT is truth?” The only person able to answer this question declined the task, and that, too, when he had only a moment before asserted, “To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.” The reason why Jesus refused to answer Pilate was that he was incapable of receiving Christ’s definition. As well might a mathematician define the Binomial Theorem or Differential Calculus to a wild Indian of the Rocky Mountains. The communication of ethical and spiritual truth requires not only a competent teacher but also a receptive pupil. Jesus observed his own precept, “cast not your pearls before swine.” Truth has been variously defined. Says one, “It is the relation of things as God sees them.” Another says, “It is the knowledge of things as they are.” Men are said to have spiritual truth when the verities of Divine Revelation are by faith apprehended as solid realities in accordance with which they are bound to act by the high sanctions of eternal weal or woe. There are several significant implications in our text. First, that we are adapted to the truth, and capable of receiving the truth, and to know it with certainty. Secondly, that it is of supreme importance. It is the hinge of destiny. In the

* “Buy the truth, and sell it not.” *Prov. xxiii. 23.*

third place, much emphasis is put upon truth in the Bible which contains no hint of any substitute. There is not in the Holy Scriptures any vestige of the modern popular notion that sincerity can take the place of truth in the scheme of salvation. In the fourth place, that a real knowledge of saving truth does not come to us without strenuous effort and painful sacrifice. This is not true of material things which obtrude themselves upon our five senses, such as colors, music, odors, and magnitudes. There are other truths of intuition which lie open to our inward perception, such as the axioms of mathematics and of ethics. These come to us spontaneously without effort when we first awaken to thought. They are self-evident. But this kind of truth is not that which God commands men to buy, and forbids them to sell. Though man is by nature religious, he does not come into the world with a full equipment of Christian truth. Natural religion, or the religion of Conscience, may not require much effort, nor does it go very far towards the attainment of the great purpose of life to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever, though it is a ground of accountability to God in the great and last day. Religious truth must be bought in order to become the real possession of the soul. What is the price? Not silver and gold, though Jesus, finding a rich young man who was making these his god, demanded their surrender as the price of saving truth. He could not receive essential Christian truth while idolizing his riches which destroyed his capacity for this heavenly treasure. God, in his Word, has set the price of saving truth.

1. Diligent search. Scientific truth comes only through

patient research. Truth has been compared to a beautiful marble statue, broken into fragments and scattered through the universe. He who would attain all scientific truth must collect these scattered members, digging deep in the earth, and with the telescope scan all the heavens, and thus painfully reconstruct the entire image. He must travel half round the globe to catch a lost particle of truth blazing on the edge of the sun in an eclipse, and he must make perilous adventures into the polar regions and risk his life among the icebergs in the interest of scientific knowledge. This is the steep and rough path up which the successive generations must climb for the attainment of the glorious vision of Nature's truth. So it is with religious truth with this difference. God's truth is a revealed whole and not a broken statue. We are not required to hunt through all lands to gather widely-separated parts of truth. It is all in the Book of books. Why then need we toil all our lives? It is not to find the truth but to find a place for it in ourselves. We must stretch our powers to the highest tension to make room for the truth. What says Divine Wisdom? "My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee, so that thou apply thine heart to understanding; yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God." What a steep stairway of eager verbs is here — incline the ear, apply the heart, cry after, lift up the voice, seek, and search, then shalt thou find. Up this difficult steep must you ascend if you would enter

into the presence of Divine Wisdom and be thrilled with the vision of her beauty and be enriched with her merchandise. Do not be ashamed to cry so loudly that the whole world may be convinced of your earnestness and of your steadfast purpose to find and to possess that treasure which gold cannot buy. In heroic devotion and sacrifice you must not only rival but excel the tireless votary of science, because the object of your pursuit is infinitely more excellent, outshining in splendor and outweighing in value the whole material universe. "The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." The superiority of divine wisdom to human should awaken superior zeal in its acquisition. Much praise is due to Professor Morse for inventing the electric telegraph, and to the persistence of Cyrus Field in laying it beneath the Atlantic so that thought may be flashed in a moment from the old world to the new, but more praise should be bestowed on him who has learned the glorious art of holding converse with the skies while dwelling on earth.

2. A concentration of all your energies. All your springs of action are to be quickened and directed to this one end. All other ends must be subordinated to this chief end. All else must be held cheap in comparison with the apprehension of truth and the perfect conformity of our characters to its requirements. We cannot have two supreme aims lying so far apart as earth and heaven. Our bodily eyes are so constructed that our vision cannot be clearly fixed on one object which is near and on another distant one at the same time. Standing within a lettered window you cannot

fix your attention on the letters so as to read them and at the same time have a distinct view of objects far beyond which are in the same line of vision. The lenses of the eye cannot be simultaneously adjusted to the near and the distant object. Our souls have the same limitations; we cannot be consecrated to Mammon and to God so that both will be supreme objects of desire. We must choose between them. Wise men had made the discovery that it is very difficult, if not impossible, to gain the riches of this world and treasures in heaven, too, before Jesus said, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."

Entire consecration to God in order to grasp the highest spiritual knowledge is not an arbitrary requirement. It is in perfect accord with our mental, moral, and spiritual constitution. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hid in a field, the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and *selleth all that he hath*, and buyeth that field." This great price no man can pay unless he has that faith which realizes the transcendent value of spiritual verities. "This is the victory that overcomes the world, even your faith." Faith gives substance and solidity to eternal realities, and brings them near, and makes them more influential in shaping the character than the things which address our bodily senses, than the changing fashions and fleeting opinions of men.

3. The price which must be paid for truth is abstinence from all such sensual pleasures as are repugnant to its possession. Pleasure is a siren whose music enchants and allures to destruction. It bewilders, befools, and misleads. Religious truth does not dwell in the

same sphere with pleasure. The one always dwells on high; the other is in the nether sphere, earthly and sensual, having not the Spirit. Pleasure draws a film over the eye of the soul, hiding spiritual realities; truth clarifies the vision and transports us into an atmosphere of Italian clearness, alike free from mists which blur and the mirage which falsifies objects. Lord Bacon in enumerating the *Idola*, or sources of false appearances, specifies among them the influence exercised over the understanding by the will, the passions, and appetites. No man can grasp and retain spiritual truth while under their mastery. They must be reduced to perfect obedience to reason, conscience, and the word of God.

4. Prejudice must be cast away as a part of the cost of truth. The mind must take off its green spectacles and lay them aside forever. Most of us are victims of prejudices which rob us of precious truth. Few people are candid enough to confess that they hate the truth. They prefer to dress it up in their own misconceptions and erroneous opinions, and then to show their hostility to this scarecrow of their own imaginations. They shut the blinds and thickly curtain the windows, preferring to mistake shadows for substance, falsehood for truth. By a strange perversity they prefer to hug a lie to their bosoms, though it deforms and blights their souls, rather than the truth, which would transform them into angelic beauty and loveliness.

5. Pride must abdicate her throne as the price of truth. Pride prompts to the concealment of ignorance, the road to grossest errors. Ignorance confessed and asking for light is climbing the mountain where Truth

has her abode. God regardeth the proud afar off. Neither he nor his attendant, Truth, can get near to Pride; but they both make their abode, their permanent residence, with the humble spirit. Here science and Christianity come into beautiful concord. The philosopher who would extract from Nature the secret locked up in her arcana must take a humble position at her feet and, like a little child, ask questions. Hence the wise saying of Bacon, "The kingdom of science like the kingdom of heaven must be entered with humility." The Greek philosophers, who were too proud to come to nature like little children, never advanced the natural sciences a single inch. They constructed their theories without a careful observation of facts, and haughtily commanded nature to verify them. She stubbornly refused to obey, and the world went on its dark way till Bacon bade proud Philosophy get down on her knees and, confessing ignorance, ask simple questions. Then Nature unsealed her lips and poured out the secrets hid from the proud and self-sufficient. Then were born astronomy, chemistry, geology, biology, and scores of other ologies, making up the triumphal procession of the modern natural sciences. If any one would enter the low gate of the temple of divine knowledge let him creep in on his hands and knees. Let him study Jesus Christ, the Light of the world, enthrone him as the infallible teacher to instruct the ignorant and them that are out of the way. So-called Christian lands contain numerous persons with cultivated intellects who are spiritual agnostics — the Greek for ignoramuses — simply because they will not recognize Jesus Christ as the unerring source of truth, yea, the truth

himself, and receive him as their wisdom. If they recognize the existence of the personal God, they have no confidence in his promise, "If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given to him." But, queries an objector, am I to give up my reason that I may believe in Revelation? As well might you put out your eyes in order to see the rings of Saturn through the telescope. Faith in Christ, on the ground of his unique and sinless character and supernatural works, crowned with his own resurrection from the dead, is the highest reason. Pride of opinion keeps many from a diligent study of the Christian evidences lest they should be constrained to believe and to deny self, take up the cross daily, and follow the despised Man of Nazareth. Many of the contemporaries of Galileo refused to look through his telescope lest they should be obliged to confess their error that the earth moves around the sun. Some people are so proud that they will not look at religious truth through God's telescope, the Bible, because they are too proud to give up the error of their ways, and the mistaken devices of their thoughts and of their theories made to justify their sinful conduct. Thus you must pay for God's saving truth, diligent search, a concentration of all your energies, amounting to the entire consecration of self to the truth, abstaining from all forbidden sensual indulgences which incapacitate for the vision of spiritual realities, throwing away prejudice and abandoning pride. All this they must freely give to possess that truth which is incarnated in Christ and made the conditional heritage of all men. We now go a step further and say that, —

6. We must give *ourselves* for this heavenly treasure — our hearts and our wills. Pascal says that the things of this world we must know in order to love, but God the Father and Jesus Christ his only begotten Son we must love in order to know. But how can a man love such an abstraction as truth? Properly speaking, we can love only a person, neither a quality nor an abstract entity. Behold the wondrous condescension of God! He puts truth into concrete form, he identifies it with his Son, who has become a man with faculties responsive to ours, and has come, by his self-sacrifice for us, into the sphere of our affections; for it is natural for love to respond to love, for gratitude to go out toward a benefactor. God can save us only by awakening our love. His love alone is insufficient. There would be no bad children in the world if a mother's love could turn them away from a career of sin. Her love can succeed only when it awakens obedient and repentant love in the perverse child. God's love must fail to reconstruct and restore the sinner, if its display in the amazing gift of his Son does not enkindle gratitude in his heart as soon as this wonderful love for him is made known.

You cannot receive Christ, the truth, without a disposition to conform your character to the demands of that truth. This requires unquestioning, unhesitating obedience. "Every one who is of the truth heareth my voice." The buyer of truth puts his will into the attitude of harmony with the will of this infallible Teacher. He accepts "all the counsel of God," however painful.

He follows the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. To

have pleasures which he does not sanction, and sources of joy which do not spring from him, is to raise up in himself a barrier against the truth. This is the great difficulty which prevents saving faith from having its proper effect in worldly minds. Christ builds a fence across the path of sinful gratification, and kindles a fire in the house of their idols. He bridles appetites and exterminates the whole brood of malevolent passions. He commands us to cut off right hands and to pluck out right eyes. The votaries of truth will ever be eager to know the truth. Hence they will, by day and by night, study the words of Jesus, the source and standard of truth, and the words of his apostles, through whom he more fully unfolds the germs of truth which he so freely scattered on the earth in his brief ministry. The lovers of truth will search the whole Bible, which is made up of the historic and the prophetic record of Jesus Christ. We say *search*, because, while all saving truth lies on the surface, there are profundities unfathomable. It has been well said that the Bible is "a stream where alike the lamb may wade and the elephant may swim." The truths which instrumentally regenerate and sanctify, which inspire life and beautify the character, can be apprehended by uncultivated intellects. Well did Isaiah prophesy, "The wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." Yet there are nuggets of pure gold awaiting the patient faith and toil of the miner who will sink a shaft down to their hiding-place. We often revert to the motto of good old Bengel, who prescribes a code of rules for himself worthy of adoption by every student of the Holy Scriptures:—

“*Te totum applica ad Textum ;
Rem totam applica ad Te.*”

(“Apply thyself wholly to the Text;
Apply the subject wholly to thyself.”)

Thus may you all buy the truth. Take Jesus as the truth, and then study his words with a constant application to thy own heart and life. Moreover, there is a special, appointed helper in this work. If you would, experimentally and assuredly, beyond a doubt know the cardinal and vital truths of the Gospel, put yourself under the leadership of the appointed Guide, who sustains an intimate relation to the truth and to the inquiring soul. He is called “the Spirit of truth.” It is his office to lead the believer into that realization of spiritual truth called, after the day of Pentecost, *epignosis* — full knowledge. Christ will never be a real divine Personality whom you will instinctively call Lord until this Guide unveils him to your astonished vision. To secure this Guide, his person and offices must be recognized by something more than an intellectual assent to the tenet of the creed, “I believe in the Holy Ghost.” He must be definitely sought, received, enthroned, and followed. “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” All such the Spirit guides — not by the revelation of new truth not found in the Bible, but by giving a sense of reality to truths already revealed and lodged in the intellect. Many wear the Christian name, and fear God as servants, and in a legal spirit keep his commands, who in their inmost hearts have never heard the Spirit’s cry, “Abba, Father,” and realized the joy of his indwelling. As a consequence, their perceptions of spiritual truth are indistinct and hazy —

not clear and sharply defined. They are like the men spoken of by Jeremiah (xxiii. 30), "Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that steal my words every one from his neighbor." If they find the truth they do not come honestly by it, but get it at second hand from some one who has been to the source of spiritual truth by coming into experimental contact with God. They are not in personal communication with him. They lose the freshness and power of words coming directly from his mouth. Though the formal creed which they confess is genuine, for it is God's word, their religion is counterfeit. It is essentially human, because it has been received from man — from acquiescence in hearsayings from parents, preachers, and teachers — and not from personal experience. If from fathers, it is a hereditary religion; if from the Church, it is a traditional religion; if received because of its venerable age, it is a kind of antiquarian religion; if on the authority of great names, it is a man-taught religion. In testimony there is no positiveness, little originality, much sameness, and great weakness. In their inquiry after religious truth they reverse the following orthodox rules: First the closet, then the study; first the Bible, then the commentary; first the Scriptures, then theology. God wants individuality in Christian experience, because he is pleased with variety in the spiritual life as he is in the natural world. Those who have a marked personal experience of God's saving power are not wise in thinking that their experience is, in its minute incidents, a model for all others. This is misleading to seekers. God is pleased with as great a variety in his new creation as he was in his first crea-

tion. When Jesus calls his own sheep by name he sees in each one some spiritual trait which makes him different from all other believers. "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." Let the Holy Spirit individualize men in their regeneration and entire sanctification. Then there will be no feeble imitations. Then we shall not be weakened by an uncertain religion. For a borrowed experience, and what Jeremiah styles a stolen testimony, are haunted by doubt and timidity. Boldness belongs only to him who has wrestled with the angel of mercy and has prevailed. Converted pagans, and all who are brought into the kingdom at the beginning of great religious movements, where there was no one to copy from, have always been marked with great strength because of their striking individuality of experience.

We are forbidden to sell the truth. There are various ways of making this sale. In general, let me say that you sell any truth when you pursue a course of conduct which destroys its influence over your life. Moral and religious truths are not final — that is, they are not to be obtained for themselves alone. They are a means to an end. That end is righteousness and benevolence, the two constituents of holiness. Truth is a ladder to sanctified character. Now, the important principle which I wish to impress on all minds is that Christian truth can be retained only as it attains this end. It cannot be firmly held as a mere speculative theory. A scientific truth which has no such practical aim may be firmly held in the mind for a half century, as I have retained certain facts in astronomy. But no

such religious truths can be held in the heart while the will refuses to apply them to the man in the production of newness and purity of life. Take monotheism — the existence of a personal God, holy, just, benevolent, wise, and true. This basal truth cannot be held as a mere theory sundered from service and worship. If it does not sway the life and transfigure the character, conquer sin, and inspire love and purity, the mind must lose its grip upon it as a verity and become practically atheistic. Thus every Christian truth, repentance, the new birth, the day of Judgment, heaven, and hell, all become airy abstractions and visionary unrealities. Out of this chaos systems of theoretical atheism sooner or later arise. Disobedience to the truth is the seed of all forms of infidelity.

Truth can be bought and it can be sold. We buy it when we hold all else cheap in comparison with it, and are willing to part with everything inconsistent with its possession. We sell it when we more highly prize the pleasures which it forbids.

Again, simple neglect of truth is selling it. The seller is not usually aware of the bad bargain he has made. He thinks he can at will call up that vivid realization of truth which once came to him on some mount of vision in his youthful days, when for the sake of some selfish end he refused to walk in that clean path to which the finger of truth then pointed; but he cannot command the return of that vision. It is to him no longer a truth. He has sold it, and a fool's bargain has been made. This irretrievable bargain has been made by multitudes who to their sorrow have found it impossible to take back the treasure so thoughtlessly sold.

Once they heard the trumpet of Sinai waxing louder and louder in its call to obey the law of Christ. They disliked the sound of this summons to their conscience and their higher nature. They turned away and gave their ears to the soft tones of pleasure, so agreeable to their lower propensities. Now their ears have become deaf to the sound of that trumpet, and they begin to doubt its reality. It seems to them like an unpleasant dream.

Once they saw Heaven's gate wide open and the angel of mercy beckoning them up the narrow way, but the way looked steep and lonesome, and they chose the broad, descending road, a boulevard filled with gay promenaders, with whom they have sauntered along, till the vision of the good angel has faded away forever. Eternal life is now a myth, and the momentous words of Jesus about the narrow way to life and the broad road to destruction are treated as the day-dream of a visionary fanatic.

I appeal to those of my unregenerate readers who are not Christians, who have passed beyond youth into mature manhood and womanhood. Was there not a time when every declaration in the Bible relating to duty and destiny, repentance, trust in Christ, holiness of heart and life, the day of Judgment, and the sentences there pronounced, were to you realities, awakening in you a very sober interest? Did you not then see the law of God as a sword suspended by a single hair above your guilty soul? Did you not also see the Savior of sinners as a rock cleft to take you in and hide you from the tempest which shall sweep away the ungodly? Do you not remember the times when contemplating these

realities you were on the point of turning from the way of sin to the path of life? Do you not remember that just then you listened to the voice of sinful pleasure, and yielding to the fascinations of this world, you said to the Redeemer of your soul, "Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season I will call for thee"? Do you now regard the truths which had so much influence over you then as no longer realities, but rather as mere myths unworthy the serious contemplation of a rational being?

Let me tell you just what you have done. You have sold out God's saving truth, the only instrument of your salvation. You thought you could buy it back whenever in the future you should be so disposed. Disposed? Ah! there is where the difficulty lies, in your changed disposition toward the truth. It is no longer to you truth but fiction. It is not in accordance with the laws of mental philosophy that you shall ever have the same vivid impression of the truth which you once had. You cannot by your volitions awaken feeling. The feelings are not the objects of the will. You cannot will any emotion to arise in you. The most that you can do is to gaze upon those objects and listen to those sounds out of which the sense of the beautiful or of the sublime arise. For the latter you look at the starry heavens, the rainbow, the sea-beach after a storm, or Niagara's awe-inspiring cataract. When you wish religious feeling you must contemplate religious truth. But if it has lost its reality to you, your contemplation will fail to awaken the proper emotion which is the effect of truth. This is the philosophy of the process of becoming spiritually hard and callous under the preaching of

Christian truth. Those who believe and obey become more and more susceptible to the emotion which it effects. But those who disobey its requirements become more and more indurated, because the truth has in their estimation become falsehood. But God may in his long-suffering compassion give you another vision of truth, but less impressive than before, and, therefore, less influential and less likely to convert the soul from the error of its ways.

Says Pundita Ramabai: "The purpose of the Lord in sending me to the United States was to teach me some very precious lessons. While in that country I met certain Western admirers of Swami-ism, which passes for Hinduism in Western countries. It seems that they did not find any satisfaction in the Bible and were seeking after something better. I had neither time nor inclination to reason with these people. But one thing was clear to me — that even with the open Bible in our hand, if one does not live a supernatural life and prove the religion of Jesus Christ to be the religion of heavenly life by experimenting upon it, the Scripture may become a dead letter. What is needed in all countries where the Gospel is preached is, that its preachers and followers should live a supernatural life. I have to learn much before I know what obeying God and having the fullness of the Spirit means. I was in the habit of interpreting the Bible as it suited me best, while trying honestly to keep the commandments of God. This, of course, did not help me to lead a supernatural life. The Lord showed me clearly that the world will love and honor what is its own — that so long as I have any part in a compromise with the world I shall not be used of God as a witness for his truth."

The truth cannot be safely trifled with; it loses its suasive power. The fine gold becomes dim by neglect. The longer the neglect the greater is its depreciation in value. An old man once said to his little grandson sitting on his knee, "My child, seek God now." The boy, knowing that his grandfather was not a praying man, replied, "Grandpa, why do you not seek God now?" — "I would, my child, but my heart is hard," answered the old man, who had found out to his sorrow how difficult it is to buy back the truth that he had sold. He could not recover that affecting view of divine realities which, as the birthright of his youth, he had bartered for a "mess of pottage," to allay for a moment his hunger for sensual pleasures.

My readers, you are to-day, every one of you, buying that truth which will admit you when you come to the gate of Heaven, and pass current through the eternal ages; or you are selling it and making yourself an everlasting pauper with the remorseful reflection, "It is my own fault and folly that I am not a spiritual millionaire."

Which are you to-day, buyers or sellers? This question is almost as appropriate for the contemplation of professed Christians as it is for unbelievers. For Christians are as strongly tempted to sell those unpalatable and generally unaccepted truths which underlie the highest spirituality as sinners are to sell truths leading to repentance and the new birth. Advanced experience rests on the most precious truth. Entire sanctification in this life is attained only by the firm grip of faith upon this priceless truth, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." Do not let this glorious truth be obscured and hidden from your vision by the

fashionable misrepresentation of the next verse (1 John i. 8, "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves"), wherein is rebuked the Gnostic philosophers, who ascribed all sin to matter and asserted that the soul is sinless and above the need of an atonement. The erroneous explanation of this verse has kept many in bondage to sin all their days.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES.*

THESE are the words of a man in jail for preaching Christ. He had been a prisoner several years. His outlook for the future was toward the bloody block on which the headsman's ax would sever his head from his body at the command of Nero. He expresses no regret for the career of missionary travel which has exposed him to this fate. Rather he congratulates himself on the privilege of heralding Christ Jesus to the nations. When he calls himself "less than the least of all saints," by the use of a double comparative, he expresses genuine humility, because he had with a persecuting hand beaten Christians in every synagogue and caused them to blaspheme. He deemed the lowest place on God's footstool too good for a man who had seconded the deliberate murder of Stephen, the first martyr. Some people say that they must sin a little every day to keep them humble; as if sin can cure sin. St. Paul did not need such a remedy, but he kept himself in a lowly place at the feet of all his brethren by the constant memory of his past sins. This was the consideration which kept King David humble — the recollection of the sins of his youth, praying that they might not be remembered against him. This is suffi-

* "Unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."
Eph. iii. 8.

cient to produce constant humility in us all. We note the improved tone of Paul's feelings in relation to preaching the Gospel. A few years before this he wrote to the church in Corinth words seeming to imply that it was a task from which he shrank but did not dare to refuse: —

“For though I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel.” — *Cor. ix. 16.*

This sounds like one under a painful constraint. He did not then say that it was more than his meat and drink to point bigoted, bitter Jews to Christ crucified, and persecuting Pagans to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. He speaks with an “if” — “for if I do this willingly I have a reward, but if against my will, a dispensation of the Gospel is committed unto me,” and I will be a faithful trustee even if I cannot be a jubilant herald. But three or four years afterward he uses words which contain no such implication, “Unto me is this grace given,” this great favor, this peculiar privilege, “to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.” To me this language indicates a growth in grace, a more gracious revelation in him of the transcendent preciousness of Christ. In other words, he had been more copiously anointed with the oil of gladness, the Holy Spirit, infusing a passionate love for the Nazarene once despised and hated. His soul had become a furnace flaming with the ardors of love. There is a great difference between the woe and the anointing as motives to actuate the preacher. Yet God honors both, while he bestows his delighted approval on the anointed herald. There is a tinge of

legalism about many Christians. They are servants rather than sons. They sigh more than they sing. When such become preachers of the Word, they may become very instructive and persuasive, but they will not touch the zenith of power till the woe has been exchanged for the anointing. It is the office of the Comforter to take of the things of Christ and to show them unto us. This vision of Christ is necessary to genuine and effective eloquence. Some of us can testify to this fact. Nor is this remark limited to preachers. It is true of all Christian workers and of all believers. No man or woman attains the maximum influence for Christ till anointed by the Holy Spirit. The study of the Holy Scriptures is absolutely necessary to intelligent piety and effective labor for others, but it can never be a substitute for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. There is all the difference between the woe and the anointing that there is between a pump and an artesian well, between a tug and a gush. Oh, the gladness, the spontaneity of the work — *work*, did I say? of the *privilege* of sounding the name of Jesus in the ear of sinners where we feel the throb of an abundant spiritual life leaping through every vein, when we are conscious that soul and body is the habitation of God through the Spirit.

“O, that I could all invite
This saving truth to prove,
Show the length, the breadth, the height
And depth of Jesus' love.”

There are too many tinkling cymbals and too much sounding brass in Christian pulpits; too much empty rhetoric and barren philosophy, containing as little spir-

itual nutriment as the east wind. Only love can awaken love. Only love can feed love. There is nothing like an experience of saving and sanctifying love as the pre-eminent element of pulpit power. I have now uncovered the secret of success in the Wesleys and the Methodist fathers in England and America. They drank abundantly from the wells of conscious salvation, and then cried out to a generation faint and dying of thirst:—

“Ho! every one that thirsts, draw nigh;
'Tis God invites the fallen race;
Mercy and free salvation buy;
Buy wine, and milk, and gospel grace.”

We now call attention to a more cogent proof of Paul's intense love to Christ and his fellowmen, and of his inexpressible delight in heralding the message of free and full salvation. He was a true patriot. He loved the Hebrew nation. He could not suppress the national feeling which frequently flamed out in great intensity. He often prayed for Israel, and, next to Jesus Christ, Jerusalem was his chief joy. To secure the salvation of the Jews he was willing to be accursed from Christ, as the Son was, in the estimation of men, accursed from the Father. He was willing, if possible, in order to save his kinsmen according to the flesh, to make another atonement on top of that made by our Lord Jesus. This is our exposition of Rom. ix. 3. How glad would this Hebrew patriot have been if the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls had appointed him pastor of the Jerusalem parish, where he would be brought constantly into association with his Hebrew brethren, and with tears and loving entreaties and

cogent arguments, based on their own Scriptures, he could persuade them to receive Jesus as the promised Messiah. But it was not in the divine order that Paul should ever be the pastor of the Church of Christ in the Jewish capital. He was the chosen vessel in which the water of life was to be carried to the Gentiles, whom he had from childhood been taught to despise as outcasts from the divine regard, and to stigmatize as dogs, just as the haughty Turks now insult Christians with the same epithet. We are now prepared to feel the full force of Paul's self-gratulation because of the favor bestowed on him in permitting him to preach anywhere on earth, even in Dogtown, the unsearchable riches of Christ. How perfectly had the grace of Jesus Christ conquered and eradicated Paul's hereditary repugnance to all non-Hebrew peoples and substituted a world-embracing philanthropy — yea, even a passionate love for the most degraded and unlovely tribes of mankind! Were this spirit universally prevalent in the Christian Church, there would not be any lack of suitable volunteers for foreign missions and for labor in the slums of our great cities; and bishops, charged with the duty of distributing pastoral laborers to the best advantage to the kingdom of God, would be relieved of their chief perplexity — the endeavor to satisfy not a few who seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.

This brings us to our theme: —

The subject matter of Gospel preaching — the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Let us consider the unspeakable value of Christ's personal relation to every disciple. There were in Rome at this very time when Paul wrote these words

men so rich as to lavish myriads of money on a single public dinner, but these men were paupers when compared with the humblest man who was favored with the personal friendship of the Son of God. Beyond all value expressed in human symbols, silver and gold, is the personal regard of him who is the revelation of God to men. Dr. Wayland defines wealth as abundant means for the gratification of desire. Gold gratifies that range of desires which are called sensual, the natural and artificial appetites, the lust of the eye, the pride of life, the love of power, the gratification of cultivated tastes by travel and gazing on the beautiful and the sublime in nature and art. But there is a higher range of desires which millions of gold cannot gratify. The spiritual aspirations demand a spiritual object. We must worship — this is attested by universal man — and we must love the object worshiped, if our religion becomes a source of joy. To worship a being who excites only terror, is to be supremely wretched. President Warren has recently declared that more than half of mankind live in distressing dread of deified snakes and dragons. Parents transmit this superstition to their children. In every religion except Christianity fear predominates, not excepting Judaism, which is summed up in the prevailing Old Testament phrase, "The fear of Jehovah." The happy saints under Mosaism were an infinitesimal fraction of the whole Hebrew nation. When they were obedient God revealed himself in mercy, but when in disobedience he made himself known in judgments. As they were more frequently disobedient, their conception of him became that which inspired dread in a higher degree than love.

To reverse this God came into the sphere of our affections, took upon himself our nature with faculties responsive to our own, ministering food to the hungry crowds and healing to multitudes of the sick, weeping at the tombs of their dead and bringing them to life. Beyond this he illumined the darkened minds and pardoned the guilty souls. He gave the greatest possible proof of his love by his voluntary surrender of his own life that he might open to us the gate to life everlasting. Here is an object of adoration and worship whom we instinctively love. To withhold our love is to repress the noblest part of our nature. To refuse to love him is to dash from our lips the full goblet of happiness. Here is true riches satisfying man's noblest aspirations, while it inspires such economic virtues as tend to a full supply of all our lawful animal wants. All these things will Christ add to him who seeks the kingdom of God first.

The riches of Christ not only fully satisfy, they also endure forever. Says the Old Testament preacher, Ecclesiastes (iii. 11, *R. V.* margin) "He hath set ETERNITY in their heart." This is the true standard of all values. God has deeply rooted *eternity* in every human heart, and every considerate man applies this test to all his acquirements and enjoyments. He asks, Is this object for which I have toiled and sacrificed ephemeral, or is it eternal? If it is transitory and limited to the present life, it is of little comparative worth.* Wise men earnestly strive after that which

* Jonathan Edwards in his youth wrote the commendable resolution to live not only for the highest happiness of the present hour, but for his best well-being millions of ages hence. The result of this resolution faithfully kept through his life is well expressed by a writer in the *Westminster Review*: "From the days of Plato there has been no life of more simple and imposing grandeur than that of Jonathan Edwards."

can be carried with them along the ceaseless cycles of eternity. They have observed that Jesus Christ mints the only current coin that they can carry with them to the land of immortality. "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

Let me ever drink of this water. Let me treasure up riches which will become inwrought in my immortal spirit. That vast multitude, who are in the mad rush and scramble for millions of money, have failed to note the important omission in the customary outfit of the body of one going into the grave. They do not put pockets in shrouds. You brought nothing into this world and it is certain you will carry nothing out—nothing *plus* character. If this is modeled after the character of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, you will go into eternity a *multi-millionaire*. O that men would put the correct estimate upon things in which they should have so deep a concern!

This is the chief work of the preacher to destroy false standards and to put the true standard in their place. In other words it is his great aim to get men to believe the words of Jesus Christ respecting building character and happiness on the rock or on the sand.

We omit because we cannot adequately portray the blessedness of communion with the personal Christ. To the inexperienced we are mystical; we are climbing the clouds and walking on the sky when we talk of conscious intercourse with the invisible Christ at God's right hand. But it is a glorious reality. Human friendships decay with age. We who live in this changeful world must be careful to keep our friendships in repair

lest they all perish and we are left in loneliness. But fellowship with Christ compensates for the loss of all other society. The Christian is the only one who can grow old cheerfully. He is going to his treasure. The aging worldling is going from his, and is sorrowful indeed. Satan has no happy old men and women. We do not attempt to itemize and catalogue the unsearchable riches of Christ; for "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in him, in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." But we may mention some of the gifts which he has bestowed upon the whole human race.

1. The continued existence of that race after the fall flows from the mediation of the Son of God. Justice demanded the extinction of mankind in the penal death of Adam and Eve in consequence of their sin. God could not be good and holy and just in bringing into being moral intelligences with a bent to sin, nor could it be honorable and right in him to create in a secondary way, or allow the procreation of such beings, under the dispensation of law untempered with mercy and grace.

The new basis on which the offspring of the sinning pair with inherited evil propensities are brought into being in harmony with the moral attributes of God, is distinctly declared to be the mediatorial work of the Son of God foreshadowed by the promise given, at the closed gate of Eden, to our guilty first parents: "The Seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." Here the eye of faith foresees the Son of God come in the flesh, the corner-stone of a new heaven and a new earth in which righteousness and only righteousness shall ultimately dwell. Is life in this world, with the possibility

of a glorious immortality, an unspeakable boon? It is to me, and I daily give thanks to my adorable Lord Jesus for this precious gift. Many regard life as a burden, and gravely discuss the question, "Is life worth living?" A life of rebellion against God is not worth living. But no one is obliged to live such a life. Every sinner has freely chosen a career of sin and sorrow when he might have elected a life of obedience and happiness. The best safeguard against the dreadful crime of self-destruction is faith in Jesus Christ, and an unfaltering trust in his promise of the abiding Comforter here and of everlasting life hereafter. "In Greece, at the epoch of Alexander, it was the current saying, and one profoundly felt by all the best men, that the best thing of all was not to be born, and the next best to die."* This shows the awful gloom which paganism produces, "having no hope."

2. Initial Salvation. The theologians call it prevenient or provisional salvation. It includes all the gifts of God's grace administered by Jesus Christ to men unconditionally. (1) His atonement as a conditional substitute for the punishment of sin. This is the ground of the pardon of penitent believers. Provisionally all are saved. Actually only those sinners are saved who appropriate this salvation by a faith which lays hold of the Personal Savior, inspires love, purifies the heart, transforms the character, and overcomes the world. All dying in infancy before accountability begins are unconditionally saved through the blood of Christ. More than half the human race are thus saved. Nearly half who are born in the whole world, Pagan and Christian, die before twelve months.

* Mommsen, *History of Rome*, Vol. IV. 586.

Like a great magnet the Redeemer of the whole race attracts these infantile souls to himself.

“I take these little ones, says he,
 And lay them in my breast;
 Protection can they find in me,
 With every blessing blest.
 Death may the bands of life unloose,
 But can't dissolve my love.
 Millions of infant souls compose
 The family above.”

Thus says the poet. What says the Savior? “Of such is the kingdom of heaven.” What says the theologian Paul? “As by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life” (Rom. v. 18). Guilt is not imputed until a voluntary and responsible choice of sin in preference to righteousness has been made.

(2) The gracious ability to repent of sin is another unconditional gift of Christ. “Him hath God exalted to give repentance to Israel,” and to all for whom he shed his blood. The value of this gift is not appreciated until the loathsomeness of sin is realized. It is the deadliness of the plague that enhances the value of the remedy. Consider the blight, the corruption, and the destruction wrought by sin, disturbing the just balance of the powers, dethroning Conscience, God's vice-regent in the soul, and enthroning degrading appetites and despotic passions; then will the power to break every fetter, and to throw off every yoke be appreciated by the individual. How terrible the social effects of sin, the wrongs which distress, the oppressions which crush,

the wars which desolate, the Armenian massacres which crimson human history from the murder of Abel to the present hour! All these sorrows and sufferings have come from the cocatrice's egg, sin. Could we see with God's eyes the unseen and unwritten pangs of guilty souls, the turpitude, the hideous disfigurement, the indelible defilement of sin, we would shrink back in astonishment. Sin thrust the angels down from heaven, dug hell and lighted all its fires, thrust men out of Eden's bowers into a world of thorns and graves, and made the wide earth a potter's field to bury paupers and strangers in. Sin is the most striking object on which God looks down from heaven. Sin was the burden of every prophet's vision. Sin was the Goliath that challenged the Son of God to mortal combat when he appeared on the earth. When John the Baptist saw him approaching the Jordan he hailed the victor over sin in words which thrilled the world of sinners with hope: "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." When Jesus began to preach, his theme was sin, and his urgent exhortation was, "Repent." He works miracles, but his purpose is to show that he can forgive sins. He sees in the paralytic a deeper and deadlier malady, and he bids it depart, saying, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." He individualizes the whole race of men, groaning beneath a burden which they cannot lay down, and in tender compassion he utters the blessed invitation, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

He groans beneath the sins of the world in Gethsemane, and endures the bloody sweat to place every man on a vantage ground where, if he will, he can conquer

sin. On the cross the theme which absorbs his thoughts, and makes him forget his own intense pain, is the sins of his murderers, and he prays, "Father, forgive them." No man can study the fourfold biography of Christ and fail to note the tremendous importance of the great gift of repentance. On the neglect or the right use of this gift hinge eternal destinies, heaven or hell, eternal life or eternal death. Without Christ's help no depraved soul can break the power of sin. All Neptune's great ocean cannot wash away its dreadful stains. But Jesus brings to me and to every one an unsearchable treasure found nowhere else in the whole universe. It is the grace by which I may turn away from the abominable thing which God hateth. Jesus came to bless the entire race by turning every one from his iniquities. How crude and puerile the preference of many to be blessed in their iniquities till the last gasp of the earthly life, and then be taken, unwashed and unforgiven and impenitent, into a holy heaven to dwell in the presence of a holy God surrounded by holy angels to spend eternity in acts of worship which they abominated all their earthly life!

(3) The next unconditional gift to a world of sinners is the convicting agency of the Holy Spirit. It is true that conscience, a natural endowment, enables men to distinguish right from wrong and to feel compunction for wrong actions. But they need more than conscience to feel compunction for the seed of all sin, unbelief towards the Redeemer, who is the way, the only way, to reconciliation with God. Unbelief is not an act, but a state of fallen humanity. For this reason it does not call down the condemnation of conscience in the natural

man. Human law never takes cognizance of unbelief. It requires the special illumination of the Holy Spirit to realize its deep and damning guilt. Under the blaze of that light the unbelieving moralist discovers the truth and the justice of these declarations: "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God: He that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son . . . that eternal life is in his Son." It is not the office of the Spirit to supersede the New Testament, by revealing the historical Christ, his words and works, but to accompany the Gospel record, and the evangelical ministry, and to make Christian truth real to the reader and the hearer. Thus he awakens a sense of guilt for religious indifference, and for neglect of Christ. If he is the Son of God, one with him in nature, he is worthy of worship, trust, and obedience. If he by his atoning death has become the sinner's benefactor, a cold disregard of him is the blackest ingratitude.

3. Let us now consider the conditional gifts which flow from the unsearchable riches of Christ: —

(1) Among these we note the forgiveness of sins. This is not exclusively a New Testament privilege, for it is found in the Old Testament also. The ancient philosophies all taught the impossibility of a righteous forgiveness of the guilty. "Penalty," said they, "must inevitably follow sin, just as the cart-wheel rolls in the track of the ox," and as pain follows the infraction of any physical law. Natural law carried into the spiritual realm would entirely preclude forgiveness of sin.

The dictum of philosophy is against remission of the penalty of sin. Ethics has no place for pardon. Without the atonement it would neutralize law and overturn God's moral government. The blood of Christ renders the conditional pardon of transgression a safe thing for the author and protector of moral law. The condition is the faith of the heart, not of the head merely, but a faith which instrumentally inspires newness of life. There is a unique phrase in Paul's great theological epistle — "justification unto life." Thus spiritual life is imparted at the moment of the forgiveness of sins. This brings us to another gift depending on the right use of our freedom.

(2) The new birth is a work of the Spirit in us, while pardon is a work done for us, taking place in the mind of God. This change in us is the great safeguard of forgiveness. The governor who proclaims amnesty to rebels has no such safeguard. He cannot create them anew and make them loyal citizens. The priest who in the confessional absolves the penitent "of all his sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," cannot inspire the regenerate life, and thus guard against the abuse of absolution as an encouragement to continue in sin, because its guilt is so easily canceled. God never pardons till he sees real repentance and a genuine loathing of sin. Also he accompanies forgiveness with the implantation of love to the Lawgiver, which insures obedience to the Divine law. This love is not developed from a germ of natural goodness. It comes from above. It is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit, beginning the reconstruction of the soul in loyalty and holiness. Various are the

figures of speech under which it is described in the Holy Scriptures. It is emancipation from slavery. "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." It is a new creation. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold they are become new" (2 Cor. v. 17, *R. V.*). It is a resurrection from the dead. "If ye be risen with Christ, set your affections on things above." It is the new birth, or birth from above. It is the circumcision of the heart, called also "the circumcision of Christ," because he is the author through the Holy Spirit. It is the stony heart changed into a heart of flesh. It is the inscription of God's law "in the inward parts." It is translation out of darkness into marvelous light. It is putting the Gospel leaven into the three measures of meal, — intellect, sensibilities, and will, — to assimilate the whole man to the image of the Son of God. It is putting off the old man and putting on the new. It is initial purification by water as by the washing of regeneration preparatory to that final and thorough purgation by the fiery baptism of the Holy Ghost. "Ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit." Thus we see that truth believed and obeyed is the instrument of this great change in the hand of the Holy Spirit, the Divine transformer. By the new birth men become partakers of the Divine nature as children of God. We live in an age in which liberalists, so-called, and some called evangelical, talk about the Fatherhood of God as including all men as his children, in the New Testament sense, whether regenerate or unregenerate. Whereas Christ speaks of sonship to God as the distinguishing mark of believers, the peculiar and unspeakable

privilege of those who receive him. "Unto as many as received him did he give power, right, prerogative, to become sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." This evidently excludes all others from this spiritual sonship. Still more positive is this exclusion in these words of Christ, "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth (is pleased — *Wesley*) to reveal him" as Father. Observe that this special revelation is to the individual. Jesus is not speaking of that general revelation of God to the human race by the incarnation, but of the filial feeling inspired by the Holy Spirit in the heart of every one who comes to him in penitent faith weary and heavy laden. Sonship is a treasure in the keeping of Christ for such souls only. To these is the joyful certitude of the Fatherhood of God made known.

(3) This knowledge by the Spirit of adoption is the next item to be specified and dwelt upon as a part of "the unsearchable riches of Christ." Because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba, Father." Before the mission and message of John Wesley, it was taught that the cry of the Spirit was only in the Bible revealing the marks of the new birth from which the seeker of salvation, if he found similar marks in his own heart, might infer that he had grounds for a hope that he would be saved at last. Wesley emphasized the place of the Spirit's cry, "in our hearts," thus affording positive assurance, beyond a doubt, that we are adopted into the Divine family. This immediate contact of the Holy Spirit with my spirit is the essential and vital element

of the Wesleyan movement. It is called the direct witness of the Spirit which inspires love, joy, peace, and all the other fruit of the Spirit which follow the cry, "Abba, Father," and afford a basis for the inference that I am saved. This fruit of the Spirit is the indirect witness of the Spirit, needful as a safeguard against presumption, and mistaking something else for the voice of the Spirit.

The disciples after Pentecost went everywhere preaching the knowledge of forgiveness of sins. This accounts for their happiness and their joyful endurance of persecution. "Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your possessions, knowing that ye yourselves have a better possession and an abiding one" (Heb. x. 34, *R. V.*). The margin reads thus, "knowing that ye have your own selves for a better possession." What a dignity and worth the Gospel imparts! What certitude attends the Spirit's message of salvation, making the fact of my adoption into God's family as sure as that of my personal existence, or any other fact of intuition!

Various metaphors are used to describe this testimony of the Spirit, the chief of which are the earnest and the seal. The earnest is a sum of money paid to bind the bargain. It is also a pledge that the full payment will be made when the service has been rendered or the goods have been delivered. It must be remembered that a part of the blessedness of the Gospel lies beyond the grave, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Are these blessings held by naked faith without any present token in aid of faith? No. Let us praise the Lord for that help to faith in the earnest of the Spirit as the divinely appointed and comforting assurance that things to come

after death are ours. "In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession," elsewhere explained as the redemption of the body from the power of the grave. A careful reading of this Scripture shows us in what this earnest consists. The Spirit is Christ's earnest and seal; for he seals believers not *by* the Spirit, as an agent, but *with* the Spirit, as an instrument. The conscious presence of the Spirit in our hearts is our constant surety of the resurrection and eternal well-being. "Now he that hath wrought us for the self same thing is God, who hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident," always saved from doubt, "knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; for we walk by faith, not by sight." Lest faith should weaken and fail in our long absence from the visible and glorified Jesus, while wishing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord, Christ stays our faith and cheers our longing hearts by the gift of the indwelling Comforter. The Christian who has not this gift is not claiming his full heritage of the unspeakable riches of Christ.

4. Another gift of Christ is purity of heart. Some deem this too great a gift for our mighty Savior to bestow on us while we dwell in houses of clay. This seems to be the remnant of that dualistic philosophy which the Gnostics early incorporated into Christianity to its great detriment. There is no moral evil inherent in matter. The body is as capable of sanctification as the soul. When the human spirit is entirely purified

from the inherited propensity to sin the body becomes the instrument of the sanctified will by which the natural appetites are chastened, and artificial appetites are purged away.

The relation of Christ to sanctification is found in the efficacy of his atonement, and in the sufficiency of the agent whom he provides, the Holy Spirit, the efficient inward worker. Jesus Christ is provisionally the Regenerator and Sanctifier of all mankind. He really regenerates and sanctifies only those who receive the Holy Spirit in these respective operations. It is Christ's part of entire sanctification to provide the means, his own blood, and the agent, the Holy Spirit. It is our part to secure by our faith the act of the Spirit applying to us the cleansing efficacy of the atonement. Hence there is a sense in which we are to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit." We are to link ourselves to the sanctifier by faith. We are to place ourselves beneath the purifying stream.

After the great work has been wrought we need the gift of wisdom to guide our imperfect judgments, which it is not the province of sanctification to render infallible.

Christ is made unto us wisdom. His wisdom becomes ours when we believe all his words, and obey his commands, and follow his example. This is the short and sure road to wisdom. The follies which disfigure men, and deprave and destroy the individual and society, would all disappear if all mankind would perseveringly trust in Jesus Christ. Life is a school in which all may become wise. There is only one way by which we can appropriate the riches of Christ — the way of

faith. Wisdom is the right use of knowledge. It elects the best end and applies the best means for its attainment.

It is related that a young man, half-witted, the heir of a little money, succeeded, to the surprise of everybody, in multiplying it till he became a millionaire. How? He watched a shrewd, successful man and imitated him in all his investments in real estate, and in stocks of various kinds. Thus using another man's wisdom he became very rich. If you wish to keep out of the eternal poorhouse of lost souls, and to have treasures of the gold tried in the fire, watch Jesus Christ, and do as he did, borrow his wisdom and you will attain his eternal wealth.

In this world of bewildering fallacies, where myriads of false lights are luring to destruction, we inexperienced and short-lived mortals may be saved from fatal experiments by availing ourselves of God's experience, and by faith in him, seize success in this life and lay hold of eternal life. What is success? Not money, nor fame, nor power, nor knowledge, but saintly character. It takes faith, great faith, to choose this as the aim of all effort and to persist from youth to old age in making a straight run toward this prize. Such in the sight of God and his holy angels are the only true heroes on the earth. Not one of them escapes God's notice. He wishes to see more. "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show himself strong in behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him." 2 Chron. xvi. 9. If there are no such characters on the earth it would seem to be unwise to be on the constant lookout to find them and give them

a lift in times of special need. The words just quoted were in rebuke of one who had "done foolishly."

The unsearchable riches of Christ become more and more manifest amid the adversities, the losses, the bereavements and sufferings of life, just as the splendors of the starry heavens become visible in darkness. When worldly possessions vanish, and health fails, and our loved ones sink into the grave, and we begin to realize that all earthly foundations must soon fail, then it is that Jesus Christ, "the same yesterday, to-day and forever," is indeed "the Rock of Ages," worth more to an immortal soul standing thereon than all the material universe. Death, our last enemy, is conquered by him who is the resurrection and the life, whom to know in the evangelical sense is life everlasting. This is being rich enough. It just fills out the meaning of that freshly coined word "multi-millionaire."

We do not deprecate the accumulation of capital for the great enterprises of men, covering the oceans with steamships, and the continents with swiftly moving streams of commerce. These appliances of our Christian civilization have their place, but they are no part of the believer's true riches. They do not satisfy even the unbeliever in whose heart the Creator has set eternity as the only correct measure of values.

5. We have not time to speak of the deliverance from the fear of death, which the believer enjoys in advance, and the complete victory which crowns him on his dying bed; of the glorious resurrection of the body at the coming of the Son of Man to judge the world; of the boldness of the disciple of Christ in that great day, conscious that he is conformed to the moral image of

the Son of God who will not condemn fac similes of himself; and of the crown of life eternal enthroned with our elder brother sharing the throne of his Father.

If, as I have endeavored to show, Christ is the only object which can fully and eternally satisfy desire, and hence, according to President Wayland, the only true riches, it remains for me to inquire individually, are you in possession of this riches? Are you to-day according to God's standard a rich man, or a pauper? It is not agreeable to men who have thought that they were rich, and in need of nothing, to confess bankruptcy. Spiritual bankruptcy is never acknowledged by anybody who does not buy of God, the divine collyrium. "I counsel thee to buy of me gold refined in the fire that thou mayest become rich, and eye-salve to anoint thine eyes, that thou mayest see." To see yourself as related to eternal realities is worth more to you now than all the gold in the Bank of England, for you may now seek and find the true riches; you may now buy God's gold. In the financial history of New York City there stands out a terrible day called black Friday, when a few greedy men made a corner on gold when specie payment was suspended, and brought down financial ruin on scores, if not hundreds, of gold speculators who did not see the plot and escape. They must in an hour buy gold or become bankrupt; but gold could not be had except at a ruinous price. It was ruin to buy and was disaster not to buy. Thus they went down in an hour. Another black Friday is coming when men will find out that they must have God's gold when it is too late. God's gold is on sale only in this life, not in the world to come.

Our subject throws a flood of light on the one absolutely inexhaustible theme of the evangelical preacher in whom the Son of God has been revealed by the promised Paraclete, glorifying Christ and showing to the anointed eye his matchless beauty and worth. A preacher's experience determines his choice of themes. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. He who, like Paul, has that inward revelation of Christ will, like that great apostle, not confer with flesh and blood, will not consult men about the topics of his pulpit discourses. After he has been on the Mount of Transfiguration, and had a vision of the glorified Christ, he will never run short of pulpit themes, even though he should preach half a century to the same congregation. He will find no necessity for diluting or watering the Gospel to extend it over many years without the tedium of wearisome repetition. To him Christ will be a theme ever new so long as he dwells on the Mount, and gazes with rapture upon him who is the chief among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely. Such a preacher will be constantly ministering to the deepest needs of his hearers. He will not lack an audience. Says Jesus, "When I am lifted up I will draw all men unto me." A simple, earnest, warm, and sympathetic herald of Christ will never need to advertise ephemeral secular themes, gathered from yesterday's daily paper, or to magnify the excellences of the quartette and soloist hired from the opera in order to attract an audience.

Daily discovering new beauties in Christ, and daily experiencing new joys in conscious companionship with him, the preacher will come to his pulpit with Christ in his heart and on his tongue as a new theme. This sup-

poses in every preacher a deep spirituality, a heart surcharged with power from on high. Do you ask "How may I get such a heart"? Bow down before the Spirit of grace, of truth, and power, and importunately and trustfully pray, —

"For me thy boundless gifts I claim,
The heart of zeal, the tongue of flame:
To me the wisdom give, and love,
That blend the serpent with the dove.
O bring thy rich endowments near,
Of counsel, might, and holy fear.
Spirit of fire, pervade, enfold,
Consume the dross, refine the gold;
Spirit of life and light, display
Salvation's full and finished day,
That my own gladdened soul may share
The gospel-wealth my lips declare."

Such a prayer offered with the pure desire to glorify Christ before the eyes of the sinful race whom he has redeemed cannot fail. If you are called to preach, there is an equipment, an endowment, a panoply in the arsenal of God belonging to you. Claim it and put it on and wear it evermore.

CHAPTER XV.

KNOWING BY OBEYING.*

THE Revisers have done excellent service to this text. They have brought into prominence the pivotal word which is obscured in our Authorized version and slurred over as a simple sign of the future tense of the verb *to do*. "If any man will do" should be "If any man willeth to do." It is not the bare performance of God's outward commands, but the right attitude of any man's will, which will give him certitude respecting Christ's doctrine. He must be brought into ethical harmony with God in singleness of purpose and perfect self-surrender, if he desires to be led on to that faith in Christ which ends in a satisfactory and certain knowledge of the divine character of his teaching. Men are not always in a condition to do God's will, but they can *will* to do God's will always, even as did the penitent thief on the cross. His hand was not free, but his heart was obedient.

This utterance of Jesus is of great value inasmuch as he teaches that obedience is requisite to saving faith, and this faith is crowned with a joyful assurance. Obedience is the root of faith, and faith is the seed of all spiritual knowledge. Christ tells us in the text how this seed may sprout and bud and blossom and ripen into the fruitage of assurance. It is not pleasant for a

* "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God, or whether I speak from myself." *John vii. 17 R. V.*

preacher to assume that he is addressing any skeptic. We will not make any such assumption. Skepticism in our times does not often go to church. We will assume that all our hearers assent to Christ's claim to be the Revelation of God, and are desirous of arriving at a certainty excluding all doubts respecting both the divine origin of Christianity and their personal salvation. The question which challenged the investigation of every Jew confronts each of us and demands an answer: "Does Jesus speak from himself as a mere fallible man, or is he the mouthpiece of God for the expression of immutable truth? Was his humanity a veil in which the Son of God dwelt, receiving the truth from his Father on one side of the veil, and handing it out to mankind on the other side? Does the Gospel bear the image and superscription of man, or of God?" This is an inquiry which should awaken the most intense interest in every inhabitant of the globe. Values inconceivable, estates imperishable, are involved in this interrogatory. If all your earthly substance, the earnings and savings of all your active life, were sold for one bank note, with what caution and carefulness you would examine that note to determine first its genuineness and then the character of the bank to ascertain its solvency. You would exhaust all sources of knowledge, you would question all the experts accessible. The New Testament is God's bank note issued to you, involving not only temporal values but eternal well being. Especially important is this examination on your part, since the value of Christianity to you individually, after you have proved its heavenly origin, is dependent on your own faith, the attitude of your own will toward the personal Christ. Your lack

of faith in a genuine bank note does not destroy its value so long as the bank is solvent and will give you its face in gold. But your personal faith is absolutely necessary to you, if you wish to realize the transcendent worth of Christianity to you personally, after your reason is convinced of its truth. This kind of faith always implies a will submissive to God's will. It is true that your distrust of a genuine bank bill does not damage its real value, but it is detrimental to you and destructive of all benefit to you, if it causes you to sell it to the rag-collector for a penny a pound, or to regard it as worthless and to keep it forever from the counter of the bank where you might exchange it for gold coin. This is the condition of multitudes in Christian lands. They do not have faith in Christ sufficient to induce a complete submission of the will to God. Hence they live in the land of doubts and darkness. They are paupers with millions of gold on deposit awaiting their demand. Just as confidence in a bank whose notes are in your pocket is requisite to prompt you to present them for the coin, so is faith in God's promises a necessary condition of your reception of the salvation that he offers. He who believeth persistently shall be saved. Let not the man who wavereth think he will receive anything from God. He does not ask us to believe without sufficient evidence, nor does he ask us to obey him without a proper knowledge of his character. When he says, "This is my only begotten and well-beloved Son, hear him, believe in him as ye believe in me," he affords abundant proofs of the Godhood of the Son, who came into the world with the Father's great seal of miracles in his hand. His sinlessness amid a race of sinners

demonstrates his heavenly origin. His resurrection according to his own prediction establishes beyond any reasonable doubt the truth, "He who hath seen me hath seen the Father; I and my Father are one." Though the argument is cogent, and the scriptural proofs are convincing, yet there is a still more satisfactory demonstration that Jesus is the Divine Savior, experience of his power to save, and to certify the fact by the testimony of the Holy Spirit crying in the heart "Abba, Father."

An obedient will puts the soul into harmony with God and his moral universe. It puts eye-salve upon men's eyes and they clearly see. Our text, in teaching that knowledge comes through the will, upsets all the mental philosophies. None of them has ever made the will anything more than the executive of man's personality. But Jesus teaches that the will is the organ of spiritual perception, the highest knowledge. At least its right action is the condition of such knowledge. The highest Christian evidences are not logical, but experimental, and are accessible to the Uncle Toms and Dread Scotts, illiterate slaves, as well as to the Isaac Newtons and John Lockes of science and philosophy. The most cultivated intellect refusing to bow to God's commands inevitably misses that knowledge which the humble and God-fearing slave easily receives, because his nature is open God-ward. Says the Psalmist, without any boasting, "I am wiser than the ancients, because I keep thy law." Says Pascal, "The heart has its reasoning which the reason knows nothing of." This is the substance of Balfour's "Foundation of Belief." There are in our text several assumptions: —

1. Christ's doctrines are worthy of examination and of reception, if they are from God. No man can be an honest, religious inquirer who ignores that religious teacher who has subverted the Grecian and Roman mythologies, changed the course of history, and laid the foundation of modern civilization. To neglect Christ is to repress your noblest instincts and to antagonize your clearest moral intuitions. Man is a religious being. He must elect one of the many religions of which the world is full. To refuse to bow the knee to some object of worship is to become an Atheist, a monstrosity. To which one of the rival gods will you bow? The twelve greater gods of mythology were driven from Olympus fifteen centuries ago, Jupiter, Juno, Venus, Apollo, and the rest. Will you turn to one of the modern pagan gods, as Buddha of India? Or will you adopt the religion of the sensual and bloody Mahomet, or become a disciple of Confucius, who has made the millions of China a stagnant pool among the nations of the world? There is a religion which prizes and transforms the individual, quickens the intellect, purifies morals, inspires liberty, organizes free constitutions, founds common schools, builds hospitals, and ministers to suffering humanity everywhere on earth. We need not call its name. It arose upon the world like the sunrise with a self-evidencing power so impressive as to extort from all thoughtful and candid men the exclamation, "This is the Sun, all other lights are mere phosphorescent exhalations from the swamps of the earth, deceiving the hopes of the benighted race of men." We need no candle to see this sunrise. He lights his own pathway through the skies with the splendors which he pours

forth. Thus the historic Christ arose, and thus he manifests himself to the consciousness of the believer as the day star arising in the heart. To the believing soul Jesus is the revelation of the true God. The Holy Spirit inwardly reveals him so enstamped with the marks and badges of Divinity that all other lights become dim before his brightness. His matchless symmetry of character, his self-sacrificing philanthropy, his spotless purity, his infinite superiority to all others who claim worship, leave us with no alternative but Jesus or Atheism. The skeptics are so impressed with this fact that they are endeavoring to explain the character of Christ on the plane of naturalism, to classify him as a mere man, to destroy, pervert, or explain his unique Person. This is the Herculean task of Liberalism, to explain away that divine Personality which has burst into the world, changing the color of the whole stream of history, and creating a golden milestone for the course of time to which all events in human annals must be referred, as if nothing had preceded it.

2. We note another assumption in the text. The will of God is so far known to every soul as to make it morally accountable. To the Hebrews God revealed his commands through revelation. They were required to bow to the mandates of Jehovah. We are assured in our text that every devout Jew who had thus obeyed would be drawn into so strong sympathy with Jesus and into so complete identity of will with that of the Father that he would immediately discover the truth of the teaching of Christ by a kind of spiritual intuition arising from spiritual affinity. All truly spiritual minds in the Hebrew nation did receive him as the promised

Messiah. The same is true of the pagan world to-day. All who have the spirit of faith and hunger for righteousness are disposed to receive Jesus Christ as the object of their faith when his Gospel is first clearly made known. This is because the moral law which is incarnated in him is also imbedded in our nature though fallen. All pagans who hearken to its voice are listening to an echo of the voice of the Son of God through whom they were created. Hence Jesus affirms that every truly conscientious person, Jew or Gentile, who desires to do right and wills to obey his moral convictions, will infallibly recognize Christ as his Savior and Lord, when his Gospel is presented to him. Immanuel Kant affirmed that the two things which awakened in his bosom the highest emotions of sublimity were the starry heavens above and the moral law within. Daniel Webster testified that his most sublime thought was man's responsibility to God. Natural religion, or the religion of conscience, is sufficient to render all men everywhere accountable to the moral Governor of the universe. "For when the Gentiles, which have not the (written) law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law are a law unto themselves; which show the work (essence) of the law written in their hearts" (Rom. ii. 14, 15). Such Gentiles are "of the truth." Jesus says, "every one who is of the truth," disposed to follow wherever truth leads, "heareth my voice," i.e., obeys me. There is no exception. Hence there can be no such character as an honest skeptic. If he is honest now, he has not always followed his best light, even though it be the starlight of Nature. At some point in his history he has seen his

duty and refused to do it fearing unpleasant consequences. This refusal has dulled his moral perception so that he does not recognize the Truth when she puts on the vesture of flesh and walks forth in the form of the sinless Son of God. Willful sin spreads a film over the eye of the soul. Hence no man who has willfully sinned even once, can set up the plea of perfect honesty in his neglect of Jesus Christ. Not till there is heartfelt repentance of that sin will the power of a clear spiritual perception be restored by the grace of God. Living in a skeptical age we fail to find one unregenerate person who declares that he now wills to do all the known will of God, and that he has always and invariably thus willed. Hence we say there are no honest and innocent unbelievers. It is said that a man may repeat a falsehood so many years that he may come at last to believe his own lie. But this does not lessen his responsibility, nor does it prove that he is now an honest man. The Gospel of Christ commends itself to every man's conscience, just as the theorem in geometry and the multiplication table commend themselves to every man's reason. The careless boy who learns this table incorrectly cannot be an accurate accountant till he has eliminated from his memory this streak of falsehood. It is just so with the man who insists that his conscience does not prompt him to show by love and obedience his gratitude to Jesus Christ his Divine Benefactor and Savior.

The eye that sees no beauty in the rainbow is a defective eye. The soul that sees no loveliness in Christ has a perverted moral sense. No soul can set up the plea that he came honestly by this perversity till he has

shown that it is not the product of his own will in transgressing some known law of God. "Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life," said Jesus to students of the Scriptures seeking eternal life in the Old Testament, while rejecting the Giver of eternal life with manifest marks of divinity written in every feature and in every word and deed. "The Scriptures testify of me, and yet ye will not come to me that ye may have eternal life." Our text recognizes the fact that there is more than one will in the universe. A free will is a cause uncaused, a first cause, of its own moral acts. When God created the first moral intelligence, he introduced the possibility of moral discord commonly called sin. Every free agent in probation may, by a deadlock of his will with God's will, obstruct his own salvation, and commit moral suicide. The possibility of such a result cannot be avoided in a moral system. Risks always attend freedom. To eliminate this risk would be to reduce the moral system to a mechanical system in which the Maker is the only responsible being, yea, and the only person. All things would move smoothly in such a universe. There would be eternal harmony, with no discord grating on the ear, no desire or purpose clashing with the will of God. There would be no suffering, because there could be no sin; and there could be no sin, because there is no freedom. Nor could there be any acceptable praise from a universe of puppets acting only as they are acted upon by the manager behind the scenes. God had such a universe once before he created angels and men. The whole material world, every particle of matter in the remotest fixed star, obeyed the Creator's will. But he was not satisfied with

the obedience of mechanical necessity. It afforded no scope for the display and exercise of his moral attributes. He wished creatures capable of bearing his image, beings having personality and faculties responsive to his own, beings with whom he could commune. Such beings must be free, for God is free. In probationary beings freedom to stand is inseparable from freedom to fall. This is saying that sin under such conditions is possible, not necessary. Into such a universe no suffering could come except through the gateway of some will setting itself against God. What a sad and eventful hour was that when the first will arose in rebellion against the moral Governor of the world! It requires no prophet's eye to foresee the unutterable woe which must follow the collision of the creature with the Creator. When the collision came on the earth, the Son of God appeared in the robes of humanity to persuade his mortal kinsmen to obey the scepter in the hand of omnipotent love, rather than to render an eternal, unwilling submission to the rod in the hand of justice. To prevent a disaster so appalling was an occasion worthy of the interposition of God the Father Almighty, who so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son. Behold the suffering which wrung the Father's heart in the surrender of the Son of his eternal love. In the atonement mark the removal of the barriers against pardon on the God-ward side, and the melting suasives applied to men to remove their hardness, disarm their hate, dispel their fears, and draw them to a penitent submission to God, and a glad enthronement of his Son as both Savior and Lord. The whole range of possible motives is appealed to, hope and fear. While Sinai

threatens, Calvary invites. Jesus uncovers the abyss of woe, and bids the sinner look upon the undying worm and the unquenchable fire. He also parts the clouds above, and bids him hear the angels in the presence of his Father rejoice over one sinner that repenteth. He goes about doing good to the souls and bodies of men, that he may draw their wills into submission to his Father. When he sees that all his work of love, all his instructions and arguments, are unavailing, he weeps over his beloved Jerusalem in view of that pitiless storm of wrath which would so soon come down upon the Holy City.

Methinks I see the adorable Lamb of God, just before he leaves the mercy-seat and mounts the throne of final judgment, look down from some heavenly Olivet, and with tearful eyes exclaim, "O rebellious men, rebellious men, how often I would have gathered you, but ye would not." Here the human will defeats the merciful and saving purpose of our adorable Savior.

Omnipotence has its limitations. Wisdom and love set bounds to the exercise of power. God is too wise to attempt to create loyalty by almightiness, and He is too good to crush out freedom of will and reduce a man to a machine, in order to save him from hell, and he is too pure to enthrone a vile soul in a holy heaven, and to compel unholiness to dwell forever in the presence of His own spotless purity. Banishment from God would be a mercy to such a soul. Freedom of moral choice is a right which our Creator will ever sacredly respect.

The great problem of salvation involves the question, how to bring all human wills into accord with

God's will. Hence we are all taught to pray, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." The whole scheme of the Gospel, in all its provisions, doctrines, and motives, under the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, is adapted to secure this harmony of wills by the glad surrender of man to God. If the present dispensation fails to sway any human will, it is certain that the visible reign of the Son of God on the earth would fail to do anything more than to constrain unwilling souls into a sullen and unloving submission to a majesty and power which it would not be good policy to resist. The present dispensation of the invisible Christ influencing men by his representative, the Paraclete, best conserves that balance of motives requisite for the free action of the will in its choice of a spontaneous obedience to God, aided, but not compelled, by Divine grace. The risen Jesus has been exalted, not to necessitate repentance, but to give the gracious ability to repent and claim by faith the remission of sins. We believe that this is the best state of probation for a fallen race, redeemed by the blood of God's only begotten Son; that it is best adapted to test the question of our loyalty to Christ, and to develop stalwart Christian characters. Our faith in God's wisdom and love constrains us to believe that he has adopted the best means to persuade sinners to repent and to receive Jesus Christ, and that this best method will continue till he descends to the general judgment to pronounce the final sentence upon the righteous and the wicked.

The doctrine that spiritual insight or the capacity to receive spiritual truth comes from a will in accord with the Divine will is only another way of saying that sym-

pathy with the truth is requisite to a vision of truth, that obedience lifts the soul out of darkness into the marvelous light. Then Christ stands forth apart from all created beings as the truth itself, manifested in humanity in order that the truth may be more perfectly manifested to humanity. Thus seen with the two eyes of obedience and faith Jesus Christ, the fountain and essence of truth, ceases to be a vague and shadowy being, but he becomes a glorious reality. Viewed with the intellect only he is without substance and comeliness, "and there is no beauty that we should desire him." Obedience sets an electric arc light in the soul, dispelling all shadows and illusions, and setting Christ forth as a bright reality. It has been well said that if a person should pull up doubt by the root he would find a sin at the end of it as the seed from which it sprung. Doing God's will, therefore, is the shortest road out of the wilderness of doubt.

3. As a safeguard against fanaticism we call attention to the fact that Jesus does not promise that obedient souls will have new revelations of spiritual truths, but that they will be perfectly assured of the Divine origin of truths already accredited as inspired. They will know all vital Christian truths when they know Jesus Christ as the truth. In addition the Holy Spirit will reveal such personal facts as the pardon of sins and purity of heart—facts fundamental to salvation in its two great stages of regeneration and entire sanctification. We do not assert that there will be in all who do God's will a perfect agreement respecting every item of the so-called evangelical creed, for the systematic classification of Christ's teachings as unfolded by his

apostles, and their formulation in a creed, is the work of fallible human intellects in which there will always be room for differences of opinion and belief; yet the spiritual transformation which follows obedient faith enables men to see, eye to eye, all cardinal truths. The anointing that abideth and teacheth removes many intellectual difficulties, and magnifies all vital truths, such as the supreme Divinity of the Son of God and of the Personal Paraclete. There may be intellectual mysteries respecting these Persons, but to the consciousness they will be *realities* incomprehensible and generally indistinguishable. He who has had difficulties with the doctrine of Christ's Godhood will see a new and unanswerable argument in the fact that faith in him has created the soul anew. He can no longer doubt that he was its original Creator.

Sin, the essence of which is the neglect and rejection of Christ by unbelief, will now be seen in its enormity; also the unspeakable baseness of ingratitude toward such a Benefactor and Savior, and the fitness of the ultimate woful destiny of all who persist in thwarting his efforts to "bless them by turning them away from their iniquities." It is a very significant fact that just in proportion to the decline of a church in spirituality by the admission of members who have never bowed their wills to God in the new birth, will be the amount of skepticism and agnosticism. Where the converting power has long been absent from a people, they become at last unable to call Jesus Lord. But when such persons make a complete surrender of their wills to God, their spiritual intuitions are so clarified that orthodoxy naturally follows. We need not cross the oceans

and the centuries to find instances of spiritual decline followed by doctrinal decay. It is only one hundred and fifty years since Whitefield preached throughout America as a burning seraph just come from the presence of God, with his ardor in no degree dampened by the chill of unbelief. Many churches welcomed this great evangelist and heeded his messages of warning. These churches hold fast orthodoxy to-day. But those churches which were so spiritually dead as to shut their doors against him, have long since abandoned the doctrines of their Puritan ancestry, the faith once delivered to the saints, and have ceased to call Jesus Lord. It has been said that orthodoxy can be conserved only by spirituality. The heart is the keeper of the head.

This suggests the most effective method of restoring the agnostic, the pantheist and the skeptic to the true faith. First show in your own transfigured character that regeneration by the Holy Spirit is a reality giving victory over the world and over sin, which their false philosophy signally fails to do. Secondly, induce them to practice the little truth to which they still cling. If their God is only a power which inclines to righteousness it affords some obligation to revere, and to worship. This implies prayer and praise and an earnest study of nature, history, and the records of that modern form of religion which has adorned individuals with the highest excellencies, and has given its national possessors the political domination of the world. This will bring them to the study of their dusty Bibles and to a clear knowledge of God's will. If they submit to his law just as perfectly as it is revealed to them they will be led step by step to Christ, the truth and the life. A heated

theological debate with them will not bring them to Christ. It may be an exciting kind of intellectual athletics, a brilliant sword practice, but it will not bring them to a penitent reception of salvation through faith in the atonement. The old couplet is true —

Convince a man against his will,
He has the same opinion still.

What skeptics need is the warm atmosphere of unfeigned Christian love to thaw their hearts chilled by willful unbelief. How true is our text in the case of good people who are in doubt about the possibility of a complete extinction of the inherited propensity to sin. The sincere inquirer may easily put the doctrine to the test. I have a vivid recollection of an eloquent passage in one of Joseph Cook's lectures in which he calls upon the intellectual doubter to be scientific in his treatment of the Gospel by putting it to the test of an actual personal experiment. He challenged his hearers to fulfill the conditions of certainty and see what will be the result. Said he, "I assert that it is a fixed natural law that when you yield yourself utterly to God, he streams through and through your whole being, soul and body, giving you a new sense of his existence, and imparting a strength and a joy unknown before." Will you try self-surrender, submitting your will to God's will and continue in this attitude till heaven's fire descends on all your public and private altars? I have never known one to fail who perseveringly tried this experiment.

In conclusion we would say that we have specially accentuated the will of man because it is the only creator of character and destiny. For man is a creator of

character. That is all that we shall ever be able to create in this world. We may amass money, build houses, ships, railroads, and cities, but we are only putting matter into new combinations; we *create* nothing but character, a fountain of joy or of sorrow evermore. In this particular man is like God. The moral attributes of both rest upon will, free will.

“Choose ye this day whom ye will serve.”

CHAPTER XVI.

THE GREATER WORKS OF BELIEVERS.

THE question is often asked, What are "the greater works" which believers in Christ shall do? This marvelous promise is found in his consolatory address a few days before his death. The chief topic of encouragement, comfort, and hope is the Paraclete whom the risen Lord will bestow. His works will be more wonderful than the physical miracles of Jesus Christ. This is declared in John xiv. 12-17. I quote Dr. Campbell's version, which is remarkable chiefly for its punctuation. It must be borne in mind that there is no punctuation in the original. "Verily, verily, I say unto you" — a formula "in which the Son of God speaks out of his coequality with the Father" (Stier)—"He who believeth on me, shall himself do such works as I do; nay, even greater than these shall he do; because I go to my Father, and will do whatsoever ye shall ask in my name. That the Father may be glorified in the Son, whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, I will do." It is worthy of note that this doing greater works, this survival of the supernatural from age to age, is not the exclusive prerogative of the apostles, but it belongs to everyone, however humble, who believes on Christ. Again, our greater works are done by the glorified Jesus on the throne above in response to our faith. In the same breath he declares that he will do the greater works

which we shall do. This paradox he explains in his next utterance: "If ye love me, keep my commandments; and I will entreat the Father, and He will give you another Monitor to continue with you forever, even the Spirit of Truth." This "Helper, Advocate, Paraclete," will be the divine Agent sent down from heaven to do these greater miracles through believers in Christ. This brings us to "the miracles of the Holy Ghost" which in the Old Testament are physical, as when Ezekiel says, "The Spirit lifted me up and took me away." The same manifestation of supernatural physical power by the Holy Ghost was experienced by Philip: "The Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more." But the promise under discussion does not relate to miracles in the realm of matter, but rather to those in the province of mind, in the re-creation of the human soul, called figuratively birth from above, or the new birth, the resurrection of a dead soul, the new creation. This spiritual miracle is greater than any physical miracle wrought by Christ before he burst asunder the gates of death by his inherent power to take again the life which he had laid down, for the following reasons:—

1. Physical miracles were temporal in their effects. Those raised from sickness died of disease in a few years. The multitudes fed by miracle hungered again in a few hours. The eyes into which Jesus by a word let in the light were soon darkened again by the shadows of the tomb. The tongue of the dumb loosened by the Son of Man was soon silenced by the touch of death. But miracles wrought in the transfiguration of the soul are enduring unto eternal life. "He that believeth on

the Son hath eternal life" within the grasp of his free agency. Jesus healed the body for time, the Spirit heals the soul for eternity. "A healed leper may appear to be a greater miracle than a renewed soul, but in reality, in comparison, he is hardly a miracle at all!" (Joseph Parker.)

2. The results of spiritual miracles are far more valuable. Mind is far superior to matter. Hence "to minister to a mind diseased and pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow" is an achievement in a higher realm and of immensely greater value. For this reason Christ himself did not place a primary emphasis on physical wonders as his credentials, and they are scarcely so much as referred to in the apostolic writings. Peter, who had seen them all, mentions them only once, and then only to Christ's murderers in Jerusalem, who were incapable of appreciating any higher proof of his Messiahship: "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs." St. Paul magnifies those spiritual marvels which God wrought by the Holy Spirit in the regeneration and sanctification of souls. In his estimation "the shining in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," was a greater act than the *Fiat Lux* which illumined the first day of creation (2 Cor. iv. 6).

3. To transform a spirit from death to life, from sin to holiness, requires a higher power than any change wrought in matter. Spirit is a self-determining personality which may successfully withstand omnipotence, or rather physical omnipotence is inapplicable to the production of spiritual effects. Sin cannot be crushed out

of a soul with an almighty trip hammer. God can transform inert matter as he may will, but he is powerless to regenerate a stubborn human will; but in the presence of a consenting will he displays to the astonished universe "the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe." Hence the age of the most notable miracles is now in the very zenith of its glory. They are visible in every land where the Gospel is preached in faith. Boston has just witnessed the transformation of a burglar and drunkard into a missionary on the Congo. Recovered from the slums and converted in the Kneeland Street Rescue Mission, he immediately wrote to the Governor of Maryland, the scene of his crimes, offering at his request to appear in court, testify against himself, and be sentenced to the penitentiary. In the absence of such a request he volunteered to go to a deadly clime to preach Christ mighty to save. "When the proud Brahman has received the truth as it is in Jesus, and extended the right hand of Christian fellowship to the meanest member of the lowest caste whom he has met at the Lord's Supper, a greater miracle has been wrought than in the healing of the lame or the raising of the dead." To put God's law "in the inward parts" of a tribe of thieves in India, as the Holy Spirit has done through Bishop J. M. Thoburn, transforming them into sons of God, "is more than to fill the firmament with stars." "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, . . . and it shall be unto Jehovah for an everlasting miracle that shall not be cut off." Spiritual miracles, in the regeneration of depraved and wicked men, are the standing proof of the divinity of the Holy Spirit. Regeneration, crowned

with the entire sanctification of a soul once dead in sin, loving what God hates and hating what God loves, is the supreme miracle of the Holy Ghost vividly portrayed by Paul: "Fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate [catamites], nor abusers of themselves with *mankind* [sodomites], nor thieves [robbers, Conybeare & Howson], nor covetous [wantons, C. & H.], nor drunkards, nor revilers, shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10). What a rogues' gallery is this! as vile a gang of criminals as ever broke jail. What can the Holy Spirit do with these but to abandon them forever? But, hold! let us read further: "And such were some of you; but ye washed yourselves (Rev. Ver., margin), but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by THE SPIRIT of our God." The Paraclete has transformed them all into a company of saints, bearing the image of Christ, and candidates for promotion to thrones beside the archangels. Bad men have been transformed into good men standing in the same shoes.

The presence of the supernatural is demanded for the introduction of animal life in our world which was once a molten globe rolling through the heavens. No processes of the laws of nature can bridge the gulf between dead matter and life. Life cannot be evolved from non-living matter. The contrary was once asserted by third rate philosophers who had a machine for grinding out animalculae. But when the machine was tested by the exclusion of atmospheric air, it failed utterly. This proved that instead of creating animal life it simply gathered the living germs floating in the air.

The evolutionists must admit the supernatural origin

of the human Spirit with its reflective self-consciousness, its sense of right and wrong, and its capacity to commune with God. The human spirit was never evolved from matter. It is supernatural. The whole career of Jesus Christ, his words and his works, were on the lofty table-land of supernaturalism. What man outside of a lunatic asylum ever talked of what occurred in his personal history before the foundation of the world. Hear him pray, "Holy Father, glorify me with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." A thread of consciousness running back in memory beyond the beginning of time into the past eternities.

That other most marvelous word was uttered while standing on a globe ridged with graves from ocean to ocean and from pole to pole, "I am the resurrection and the life." What were his works but miracles, suspensions of natural laws, ending in that crowning miracle of his resurrection from the dead? It is vain to attempt to show that this stupendous miracle came about as the result of natural forces. This confounds the evolutionists who assert that every event is the effect of a natural cause.

Pentecost demands a cause transcending Nature, a personal cause, the only real cause in the universe, a cause which permanently abides in the Church, which is a company of spiritual men and women, who, while in the world, are not of the world. They are through faith supernaturally held above the currents of impurity and sin which sweep over the world; held by an invisible Person, the Lord and Giver of life, the Holy Spirit. I should have said they were first supernaturally plucked from the rapids of depravity as they dashed onward

towards the Niagara of perdition. Christianity is the supernatural bridge on which the personal Holy Spirit stands and reaches down his strong right hand to rescue all who will lay hold on Christ for salvation. He saves only through the Spirit's threefold office of conviction, the new birth, and sanctification. Romanism shuts up this supernatural and Divine Agent in the age of the Apostles; ritualism limits him to the Sacraments in the hands of priests in the mythical apostolic succession. But those forms of Protestantism which have spiritual life, believe in the immediate, free, and direct action of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven accompanying Gospel truth, the whole scheme of saving verities proclaimed in faith. I have now uncovered the secret of the Wesleyan reformation in an age of formalism and spiritual death. The vital element is the direct contact of the Divine Spirit with the human Spirit along the electric wire of evangelical truth faithfully preached. This accounts for the permanent change suddenly wrought in thousands of vicious men and women, who, if left to their evil hearts, would have subverted the British throne and the Church of England by a revolution worse than that which precipitated the reign of terror in France in 1793.

Says Canon Farrar of John Wesley, "He distinctly saved the Church of England from the nemesis of just retribution, which but for him would sooner or later have overwhelmed her in indiscriminate collapse, and might not improbably have buried under her heaps of ruin all that was best in the great heritage of English religion." The historian Lecky before Canon Farrar said the same thing in his *History of England*. But

John Wesley without the Holy Spirit is, in modern terms, an electric motor without a current of electricity. His shoulder beneath the submerged masses of England would have been powerless to lift them into intelligent and law-abiding citizens if the supernatural had not dwelt in him in the person of the Holy Ghost. Read his *Journal* and his *Sermons* and you will find this is the open secret of his amazing activity, undaunted courage, and marvelous success.

A few weeks ago Dr. C. H. Parkhurst, under God the conqueror of Tammany, the bottomless pit of New York politics, uttered these words in a searching and mighty sermon on Acts xix. 2, "Did ye receive the Holy Spirit when ye believed?" Listen to these words which uncover the secret of power in this remarkable man: "It takes Christ as a law and the Holy Ghost as a passion both to make of a man a completed Christian. We must learn to realize that in this matter of the Holy Spirit we are dealing with an essential. No matter how perfect a *half* Christian a man may be, you have not secured Christian-hood till you have put on the other half along with it. There is matter here to be thought upon. It concerns us as Christian men and women, and it concerns us in our collective character as a Christian church. There were no completed Christians till Pentecost, and there can be no completed Christians with the cessation of Pentecost. There was no church till Pentecost, and a church without a Holy Spirit is as much a delusion as a church without a Christ. . . . In its detached passages and in its collectible drift the New Testament story means that to be a believer is not a finality but a preliminary, and that it is simply a condition which puts

us within reach of the waiting possibilities of finished Christianhood. We dare never to forget that though the disciples were thoroughly converted to Jesus Christ at the time he withdrew from them, that yet they remained in a condition of organized helplessness till the work of Jesus had been supplemented by the work of the Spirit." These are not the words of John Wesley in his *Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, but they teach the same doctrine. The Presbyterian urges his hearers to become "completed Christians through the fullness of the Spirit, and the Methodist exhorts believers to become perfect Christians by the incoming and indwelling of the Sanctifier. Both mean the same thing. I cannot forbear to give you another quotation from this sermon printed in *Times of Refreshing* for August, 1896: "Now, Christian believers, I want to ask you whether you lay upon the office-work of the Holy Spirit the emphasis that the Bible does; whether there is not in your mind a lurking idea that the Holy Spirit is a good deal more an ornament than it is a utility; whether there is not within you a conviction that the church is, comparatively speaking, a powerless organization because we are skipping one necessary link of redemptive energies, and that our particular communion is comparatively in a condition of abject debility, absorbed in trivialities, relying upon pitiable and poverty-stricken devices, for the reason that its belief is not an in-Spirited belief, its activity a divinely compelled activity, and for the reason that its manipulated dust and its shapely members are not having breathed into them the breath of life."

It is quite evident that Methodism has the same weak-

ness, increased by our reliance on our millions of members, and that in all our churches it should sound out from the pulpit, "Not by might (Heb., an army), nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord of hosts." The more we sacrifice to the dragnet of the probationers' list, and burn incense to the general minutes and educational statistics, the more impotent we shall become. We are dying of naturalism. Only the supernatural will save us. We need a demonstration of its presence, in Pentecost repeated, in the downpour of the Holy Ghost, a tongue of fire in every mouth proclaiming "the big realities of our holy Christian faith." We have hinted that the chief of these is in transforming a sinner into a saint through the power of the Holy Spirit. But he has his divinely appointed limitations. He works this amazing miracle only within the sphere of the truth. This is his instrument, "the sword of the Spirit is the word of God." Hence the close connection between preaching the unadulterated Gospel and the conversion of sinners.

If our lecture rests upon any one assumption it is that man is a spirit capable of conscious contact with the great Spirit; that he has a religious nature, a capacity for receiving God; that man's rational being is surmounted by a crystal dome through which there streams down into the depths of his being supernatural light, above the brightness of the sun, convicting of sin, and, to the penitent believer, revealing the personal Savior Jesus Christ, and transforming him into his image, making him a partaker of the divine nature through the new birth of the Holy Ghost. This is the everlasting sign of Isaiah present wherever the regenerating power

is felt in a human heart. "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the briar come up the myrtle-tree, instead of a bad man, through the supernatural transfiguration of the Holy Spirit, a good man shall be found; instead of the drunkard, a sober man; instead of the thief, an honest man; instead of the profane man, a praying man. And it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." * This is the standing miracle attending every true church, the converting power, the seal of God on both the ministry and the people who have faith in the Holy Spirit sufficient to secure his abiding presence. This change of nature from sin to holiness in the twinkling of an eye is the work which Christ had in mind when he said, "Greater works than these shall ye do." What can be greater than raising to life a dead man with a word? Greater is it to raise a dead soul than a dead body; for the body has no power to resist and thwart the life-giving word, while the soul dead in sin may eternally resist spiritual resurrection. On the first day of the week after Christ was crucified was wrought a greater miracle by him than was ever before seen in this or any other world. The resurrection was Christ's own work. "I have power to lay down my life and I have power to take it again." Yet this act was included among those works which believers were to exceed. Lest any one may object that this is putting the servant above his Lord, the creature above the Creator, we have shown by Dr. Campbell's punctuation that the greater works of believers are in reality wrought by the risen and glorified Redeemer.

* Isaiah lv. 13.

Supernaturalism in Christian experience is one of the chief proofs of the divinity of Christianity. Dr. Parkhurst's sermon from the beginning to the end implies that in the common experience of believers this supernaturalism does not come into consciousness with the first inspiration of spiritual life. This is almost universally true of converted children. They are for a period half Christians. Then if properly instructed in respect to their privileges some seek, till by the baptism of the permanent fullness of the Holy Spirit, they become completed Christians. Others remain incomplete all their lives. We all pity dwarfs in physical stature. God and adult believers commiserate the spiritual dwarf, and desire his full development into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, — explained by Meyer, the great exegete, as that stage of progress "in which one receives the fullness of Christ. Before one has attained," says he, "to this degree of Christian perfection," — the very phrase of J. Wesley, — "one has received, indeed, individual and partial charismatic endowments from Christ, but not yet the *fullness*, the whole *largas copias* of gifts of grace which Christ communicates." Thus there is perfect harmony between the German annotator, the Wesleyan Founder, and the Presbyterian preacher above quoted. It is proper for the speaker to add his concurrent testimony on this 17th day of November, the twenty-eighth anniversary of that religious crisis which made him a "completed Christian."

The incoming of the Paraclete into his heart while sitting in the President's room in Genesee College was the most memorable event of his life. "I have come to stay forever" expresses the first impression made by

the Comforter when he entered the longing heart. Twenty-eight years are not forever, but they are a sufficient assurance that Christ, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, will not withdraw the great gift of the divine Comforter from the soul that ever fulfills the conditions of his indwelling. The experience of that day in 1870 revolutionized your speaker's whole inner being. It gave him an evangel to the church which for more than a quarter of a century he has endeavored with tongue and pen to proclaim without regard to the question of worldly loss or gain to himself. He is pledged before high heaven to keep the trumpet of full salvation to his lips so long as God permits him to breathe the vital air. When Dr. Olin died, he said to Bishop Janes, "I feel the old foundations under me." I expect to die with the old doctrinal foundations of conscious Pentecostal salvation under me. Let these few words be my twenty-eighth milestone.

In conclusion we raise the question to every professor of saving faith in Jesus Christ, whether the greater works promised by him are wrought through your instrumentality, your holy living, your victorious faith, your prevailing prayers. Do not evade this legitimate question, but manfully consider it, and candidly answer it in the fear of God with your hand on your own headstone and your eye on the day of Judgment. Has the promised Paraclete taken up his permanent abode in your consciousness? Has he wrought in you changes which awaken your astonishment? Has he extinguished the carnal mind, nailed to his cross pride, envy, and all unholy tempers? Has the Spirit cast out love of the world and all cravings for its riches and

honors? Can you truthfully, with Paul, proclaim the double crucifixion, "I am crucified to the world and the world is crucified unto me"?

In the second place is there anything marvelous about the saving effect of your individual life in its transforming influence on the unsaved souls immediately about you, under the shadow of your influence? Do your children see the truth of the Gospel in your saintliness, in your deadness to the world, in your love for souls, and in your zeal for their salvation? Our Divine Savior by a striking metaphor declares that you are the light of the world, but he intimates the possibility of the light in you becoming great darkness. If you are lighting the pathway of no soul to Christ, is it not a legitimate inference that your torch has gone out? He calls you the salt of the earth. If everybody about you is waxing corrupt through sin, if corruption riots unchecked under the shadow of your home and business life, is it not fair to infer that you as an individual lump of salt have lost your savor and are in danger of being trodden under men's feet, as so much gravel for the sidewalks, instead of being an antiseptic power purifying your environment?

CHAPTER XVII.

WHAT IS MAN ? *

WE invite you to-day, beloved hearers, to range with us through all the philosophies in quest of a correct foot-rule with which to measure man, and determine his rank in the universe. He must be an enigma to himself till his true measure is found and his relative rank is ascertained. For the same reason all social and educational systems must be erroneous, and all ethical precepts must be defective, so long as man's true position in the scale of being is unknown. Hence Revelation is as much needed to disclose man to himself as it is to reveal God.

The most obtrusive, clamorous, and superficial philosophy is what is called by Carlyle "Dirt Philosophy." This baneful system is widely prevalent in modern times, especially in America. It degrades and discrowns man. The fact that his nature is composed of the same kinds of matter as the brute creations tends to lead man to a low estimate of his rank in the universe, and to a denial that he is destined to a possible superiority to the archangels before God's throne. Depressing indeed is the doctrine of the materialistic evolution of animals and men from the same original cell or protoplasm, man being in his anatomy classified as

* "When I consider thy heavens . . . what is man?" *Psalms viii. 3, 4.*

a vertebrate animal, of the sub-class mammals, of the division bimanus, and of the species homo.

Now, because man's body fits into this series of animals, the inference is that he is only an animal which has stepped a little ahead of his less fortunate brethren, that he is of no more importance than they, and that at death he sinks with them into the nothingness from which he sprang. This conclusion is strengthened by the fact of man's physical inferiority to many orders of animals in certain qualities. The ox is stronger, the deer is more fleet, the eagle has a more piercing eye, and the hound a keener scent, while nearly all the brutes can endure greater hunger and thirst, heat and cold. The babe is the most helpless of all the young animals. Man sickens and dies after a few years, and, with the inferior orders, turns to dust. In such materialistic researches we fail to find any clue to man's true greatness. We are still more perplexed and depressed in our estimate of humanity when we consider the actual condition of our race as a whole, their brutish lives and groveling aspirations, ambitious only —

“To devour the cattle, fowl, and fish,
And leave behind an empty dish.”

The savage condition of vast masses of men in paganism, the squalor, rags, gluttony, drunkenness, licentiousness, and all conceivable moral leprosy, which blot the highest civilizations to which men have yet attained, eclipse the glory of man from the materialist's point of view.

Stanley found in central Africa a tribe so degraded that he said he would give any one a half a dollar to

prove that they were not human. The cheapness of human life, and the ignoble uses to which despotisms, wars, and slavery have put man, making him, all along the ages, a thing, a chattel, a gory stepping-stone to a throne, bewilder us and falsify any high estimate of his dignity, worth, and destiny. The false standards which society sets up burning incense to successful villainy and scorning humble virtue, complete the illusion.

Philosophical Materialism has its origin on this wise. In the study of the varieties in nature there is in all minds need of classification, grouping individuals into species, and species into genera. Thus the apparent chaos of nature is reduced to order, and science which is classified knowledge emerges. The tendency is very strong to carry this process of classification up to unity. This is Plato's definition of philosophy — "the reduction of the many to one." What is this one thing? The answer to this question determines the character of the different philosophies. If you say with Anaxagoras that mind is the origin of all things, your system is a spiritual, theistic philosophy. But if you say that matter is the first principle of the universe you become an atheistic materialist, denying the substantive existence of spirit or mind, and make it an attribute of matter. The foremost modern champion of this philosophy was Tyndall. Hear his confession of faith not in Christ, but in matter as the impersonal source of all beings, "Abandoning all disguise, the confession that I feel bound to make before you (a scientific association) is that I prolong the vision backward across the boundary of the experimental evidence, and discern in that Matter (properly capitalized), which we in our ignorance, and not-

withstanding our professed reverence for its Creator, have hitherto covered with opprobrium, the promise and potency of every form and quality of life." This is the seed of the theory of materialistic evolution which we will examine to find whether it exalts or dwarfs man. This theory of which the nebular hypothesis of La Place — though not necessarily atheistic — is a part, when pushed to its logical outcome, introduces man on the earth by the invariable necessity of physical law with no direct action of a creator. All the assumption with which this theory sets out is the existence of a mass of attenuated fire-vapor or star-dust possessed of all the properties of matter with the addition of self-motion. Now without the interposition of any external agency or force, this Matter alone, "containing the promise and potency of every form and quality of life," under the reign of law, will unerringly develop suns, planets, satellites, vegetables, and animals in geologic succession; and at last it will grind out man with all his intellectual, moral, and spiritual furniture and all his history, Alexander and all his conquests, Demosthenes and all his orations, Plato and all his dialogues, Shakespeare and all his dramas, and Jesus and all his parables and miracles. Does this astonish you? Still greater surprises await you. The half that this impersonal magician, law, can blindly do without intelligence and design has not yet been told. A personal God presiding over creation moves forward in a straight line, not being compelled by necessity to repeat himself, always having power to make new orders of beings, and to cause new events in history. But natural law, with no personal lawgiver behind it, moves forever in a circle repeating the same effects

since there is no variation in the impersonal cause. Hence man and all his sinful and sorrowful history, the same race, and the same individuals, will come into existence again and again, forever under the reign of inflexible law. After the lapse of some vast cycle of millions of years, perhaps, Adam and Eve will well appear again in Paradise, be befooled again by the lying serpent, eat the forbidden fruit, and hand in hand with lingering steps and slow through Eden's gate take their solitary way into a world of toil and trouble. The scenes of murdered Abel, of Noah and the Flood, Moses and the Decalogue, of Joshua commanding the sun, and of the Roman army destroying the temple in Jerusalem, will reappear at intervals followed by all the villainies, tyrannies, butcheries, and leprosies recorded in history, the same Herod executing his own sons, the same Nero murdering his mother and standing on the neck of the world, the same Judas betraying the same Jesus, and the same Pilate nailing to the cross the King of the Jews. All this is because without intelligence and design an automatic machine is always blindly grinding out uniform products like coin from the mint. Evolution of the atheistic sort will eternally accomplish invariable effects, since there is no personal intelligence to throw the band off the wheel and stop the machine. According to materialism thought and feeling are excited by a little shaking of the brain, producing vibrations in the whitish half-fluid substance. Hence, sooner or later, perhaps to-morrow or millions of ages hence, under the reign of uniform and invariable law, you will all be present to hear him who is now addressing you. He will speak on the same theme, without any improve-

ment in his style because like causes produce like effects. Says Hartley, "Precisely the same thought and feeling will exist wherever a similar motion can be excited in a similar substance." So you see that I am bound to appear again and again on the same platform as often as the great wheel of this material universe comes round to a certain point and jogs my brain in the same way, and you, for the same reason, are bound to accompany me again on the same ramble through the philosophies in search of a correct mirror in which to get a full length view of man. But according to the same philosophy I have already been here a thousand times in the vast revolutions of former ages, for like causes have been producing like effects through the illimitable æons of the past.

But what kind of a being is it that goes into the hopper of the mill of inexorable law in the form of fire-mist and drops from the other end of the machine a finished man? Has he the godlike attribute of freedom? Has he an ethical nature? Can he spontaneously choose his moral acts? Is he a cause uncaused in the creation of moral character? Herbert Spencer shall answer: "I take it to be demonstrable that it is utterly impossible to prove that anything whatever may not be the effect of a material and necessary cause, and that human logic is utterly incompetent to prove that any act is really spontaneous. Such an act is absurd. The progress of Science will gradually banish from all regions of human thought what we call spirit and spontaneity." Here we have what we might naturally expect from this atheistic philosophy, machines the product of machinery, and not free moral agents the crowning work of an intelligent

Creator. You cannot get from this mill of iron law a personal, free, responsible moral agent. The outcome of the Spencerian philosophy, the deification of law, is the degradation of man from being a cause uncaused in his moral acts to a simple cog in a wheel acting only as it is acted upon. What is the value of such a product of sovereign law? Like all the products of machinery man is a very cheap fabric, a mere incident in the course of unintelligent, designless nature as she rolls round her ceaseless orbit to attain her unknown and unknowable end. Therefore, if we turn to natural science to find a foot-rule to measure the altitude of man we will surely meet with a sore disappointment. The magnitude of the material universe dwarfs and depresses him by the contrast. We live in an age of amazing discoveries, enlarging the domain of matter to dimensions which stagger thought and baffle imagination. By means of our fifty-inch telescopes we are able to look through that cluster of universes, of which the milky way powdered with suns is the rim, into the empty space beyond. The estimated diameter of this cluster is from 20,000 to 30,000 "light years" — years which it takes light to move at the rate of 180,000 miles in a second of time. This gives us some conception of the "mileage and tonnage" of one cluster of the vast whole of the worlds in infinite space. By the testimony of the spectroscope to the earthly elements blazing in the most distant fixed star feebly glimmering through the thousands of "light years," we are impressed with the unity of the material universe as well as its unthinkable vastness. Man, who in contrast seems like a microbe clinging to that floating speck of dust called

earth, is correspondingly minified. Modern Science overpowers us as we gaze at the old rolling heavens through our telescopes and crushes us into nothingness. We seem to find our proper place with the insects and animalcules in the dust beneath our feet. Even in ancient times, before human vision was aided by the telescope invented by Galileo, the thoughtful spectator of the starry dome above us was humbled at the thought of his own insignificance, and turned away from the sublime yet depressing vision exclaiming, "What is man that thou art mindful of him?" But the ancients in regarding the earth as the immovable center of the universe looked upon the heavens merely as the bespangled drapery of his couch, both earth and sky ministering solely to the happiness of man. Hence the celestial magnificence was in truth only a reflection of his greatness. We need travel backward only ten or twelve generations to find ancestors who gazed upon the heavens as an immense hollow solid, or *firmament*, a vast crystalline sphere revolving daily over their heads — all the fixed stars being firmly imbedded in that glassy vault — as passengers in a coach look up to the brass nails in the canopy. All this magnificence awakened in the bosoms of our ancestors emotions of sublimity, but it did not overwhelm them with a sense of their nothingness. It rather exalted them as God's favorite children "for whom all nature stands, and stars their courses move." For not only did the sun and moon and planets with a real translation travel daily over their roofs for their well-being, but the fixed stars imbedded in the solid concave sky whirled over their heads with an inconceivable velocity every night to please

their eyes and to shed their mystic influence upon mankind. All this is now changed by the disclosures of Science. We can no longer flatter ourselves that we are the only intelligent citizens of this vast material domain, and that for us all this magnificence exists. We have found out that the earth is a sand-grain whirling through the heavens. The millions of suns, centers of systems of worlds unveiled to our wondering eyes, in the nebulæ which cloud the nightly sky, suggesting the existence of countless orders of moral intelligences, thronging these heavenly spheres and sharing the love of their Creator against whom possibly none of them have ever rebelled, take us down from the pedestal of a monopoly of the Divine regards, and seemingly degrade us to the rank of the emmets which toil for one poor grain. Again the inference from Geology of innumerable æons of time through which our earth has passed, while race after race of animals have flourished and become extinct, leaving their bones as so many letters on the stony page, depresses us with the thought of our own ephemeral life, and awakens the suspicion that mankind must disappear, and be succeeded by some superior beings who will dig up the fossil homo, and speculate on his habits and history as we gravely theorize on the bird or animal which has left its tracks in the Connecticut red sandstone.

Nor do we find the desired proof of man's greatness in that new phase of material philosophy called Positivism. This is a systematic assault on man's true nobility, since it involves an open denial of his spiritual nature, his immortality, and the possibility of a supersensual philosophy. It destroys human freedom, annihilates

conscience, and the atonement for human sin, regeneration by the Holy Spirit, the day of Judgment with its eternal sentences, as the exploded errors of an outgrown era of religious superstition which darkened the childhood of our race. Positivism deals only with physical phenomena, discards causation as beyond our faculties, and asserts that the universe is a ship with no clearance papers, adrift on an uncharted sea, with no pilot but fate, no chart but conjecture, and no destined harbor but chance. It assumes that only matter exists, and that thought is its attribute or product. The purpose of man's existence is a mystery too deep for this philosophy to fathom. It is busy only with uniform phenomena which it calls natural law. It deals with appearances and shadows, and ignores or denies realities and substances.

Among philosophers the Positivists are the exact antipodes of Plato, who could construct his system only on realities, eternal, changeless archetypal ideas, discarding the ever-changing phenomena of matter which is in a perpetual flux. Positivism sneering at Plato's spiritual, immutable forms, because they do not address the five senses, believes only in what can be weighed and measured. Since it finds electricity the most subtle manifestation of matter or the most energetic of imponderable agents, the electrometer is its highest test of truth. It boasts that it can reduce all there is of man to a gas. It looks with proud contempt upon both mental philosophy and theology, prates of mankind passing through the babyhood of theology or fiction, the youth of metaphysical philosophy or abstraction into the glorious era of scientific certainty or positivism. Its

object of worship is no invisible being, but collective humanity. Every element of man's true greatness, his speculative reason, moral freedom, ethical and esthetical faculties, spirituality, and immortality, are all cast aside as rubbish by this philosophy. Here we search in vain for the true measure of man's greatness. He is a bubble seen for a moment on the stream of phenomena and then totally disappearing forever.

Before proceeding to our next field of research, we wish to set up a safeguard against the erroneous inference that we slight and undervalue natural law. We believe in the sovereignty of law, but the personal God is the sovereign, and law is his uniform mode of working. The laws of Nature have been aptly styled "God's habits." Dr. Joseph Parker felicitously describes them as "God's police force intended to keep fools in their places and help honest men do their work in security." This is the Christian view of the reign of law, the expression of the will of the Divine Lawgiver. But recent philosophies would attribute power to law itself, and would imprison the impersonal lawgiver in a tomb from which there is no possible resurrection to create a world, authenticate a revelation by a miracle, to answer prayer, to redeem a world, or pardon a penitent.

We turn now to American Transcendentalism to find an infallibly correct measure of man's greatness. This philosophy has created a literature filled with the dignity and worth of man. It is Unitarianism gone to seed, a religious cult which speaks charmingly of the sacredness, yea, the divineness of humanity. It must be therefore that it will exalt a man to the very apex of the universe. The long word transcendentalism com-

prises those truths and principles which transcend the senses and the process of logic, and experience, and are grasped immediately by intuition as self-evident. In addition to this quality, they are also incapable of analysis, being simple; they are also necessary and universal. They may be apprehended, but they cannot be comprehended. The following are specimens, cause, space, time, right, and wrong. You can close your eyes and conceive of the non-existence of this building in which we are, but you cannot conceive of the non-existence of the space it occupies. Up to a certain point we are all Transcendentalists; but we stop before we have gone so far as to say that revelation is superfluous, since the human mind intuitively grasps all truth necessary to its highest well-being, such truths as God, sin, righteousness, and immortality. But its concept of God is not that of the personal Jehovah, but that of an impersonal, nondescript force, styled by Emerson "The oversoul." Sin is only an ephemeral aberration, a necessary stumbling of an infant taking its first independent steps from the cradle to the mother's knee; a child's disease like the mumps, or chicken-pox, or measles, which maturity will outgrow. Righteousness is doing rightly towards our fellowmen. The first command, love to God with our whole being, this philosophy ignores. Its doctrine of immortality is absorption into the impersonal oversoul, as water floating in a bottle in the ocean is mingled with the ocean when the bottle is broken. This philosophy is really pantheistic. God is confounded with the universe. Spirit is viewed as the only substance, and matter is one of its attributes. The other form of pantheism is that matter is the only sub-

stance and spirit is an attribute. Both imprison God in the laws of the universe, denying his transcendence. The attempt to marry these two forms of pantheism by Professor Huxley as the officiating clergyman, using the formula, "Matter is a two-faced somewhat having both spiritual and material attributes," is a signal failure. The parties, matter and spirit, refuse to be pronounced one. This philosophy is best represented in its practical bearings by Theodore Parker. Its subtle, fascinating, and deadly errors are most thoroughly exposed by Joseph Cook. It pours its sublimated poison into our higher literature under the name of agnosticism. It has subsidized some graceful and charming pens. It infects some brilliant intellects, inspiring them for the indirect overthrow of Christianity by undermining its foundations. Like the deadly water-gas used in Boston, it gives no intimation of its presence in the atmosphere to warn its unconscious victims. Glorified by the resplendence of genius it mounts the pulpit and steals the words of Christ's evangel for the disguise of its falsehoods fatal to spiritual life. Insidiously it pervades the minds of our youths, and prevents the revival and spread of experimental and vital godliness in our most ancient seat of learning, and the city which has been called the Athens of America.

But what has this to do with our inquiry to-day? Does this philosophy magnify man? It does so apparently but not really. It represents him as the highest personality in the universe. It asserts that God comes to consciousness in man, that his intuitions are God's utterances, God thinking with his faculties. His acts are the actions of Deity also. Hence his moral freedom

and responsibility are unreal, his character, his virtues, and his crimes are illusions. Sin is a good in the process of making. Every moral downfall is a step of progress. Says the sage of Concord, "Mankind, whether in the brothel or on the scaffold, is tending upward." There is in this theory no such thing as absolute evil, for we are all a part of God, who cannot be at loggerheads with Himself. There is no punishment of sin, for God will not punish himself. Does such a system magnify man? It degrades him inconceivably. It annihilates his capacity for that independent causality of his own moral acts which is the basis of moral character, by regarding him as a scrap of God. The philosophy which begins with denying the personality of God ends with discrediting the personality of man. It saps the very foundations of ethics and makes religious worship impossible, unless, with Emerson, "we go to our mirrors and with reverent bow say good-morning to ourselves."

The conclusion of our search among the principal philosophies is this, that there is no radical error which does not degrade man. The systems that discrown God by divesting Him of moral attributes, or spirituality, or personality, discrown man also, the image of God.

There is one more system to be examined, which the world has not dignified as a philosophy because it has not wisdom enough to fathom its depths and discover its divine harmonies. It can know its beauties only by being assimilated to its spirit. In the Gospel of the lowly Nazarene let us search for the adequate measure of man. It is a scheme of salvation based upon the deepest and highest philosophy. The very fact of a Revelation of God to man magnifies him as an object of

special regard. Does not the peasant to whom the Emperor speaks a kindly word, feel that he is ennobled by the condescension of his sovereign? Does he ever after employ his reasoning powers in constructing sophisms to disprove this honor? Does he mystify and stultify himself by magnifying the antecedent improbabilities arising from his own insignificance and the greatness of his ruler? Rather does he not sacredly treasure up this proof of his sovereign's regard as an intimation of his own personal importance? There were good grounds for the boast of the Hibernian hod-carrier, "The King spake to me to-day." "What did he say?" inquired his friend. "He said, 'Get out of my way.'" There was cause for self-gratulation in even such an address to him. For speech implies a correspondence of faculties in the person addressed with those of the speaker. The Irishman had been treated as a man, not as a beast or a post. The King had complimented him by assuming that he had faculties responsive to his own. We never see a man exercising his ingenuity to disprove that the King of kings has spoken to him in the Bible without exclaiming, "Here is a man who is deliberately attempting to destroy his own patent of nobility." For if God has not spoken to man in Revelation, he takes rank with the microbes which find infinite sporting-place in a drop of stagnant water.

But if the fact of Revelation dignifies man, the contents of that Revelation enhance that dignity. On the very first page of the Bible is a declaration of man's superiority to all other creations. In calling into being the vegetable and animal kingdoms the Creator employed secondary causes by giving a miraculous fecundity to

the waters and by fructifying the soil : “ Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life. Let the earth bring forth cattle and creeping things.” But when man was to be created we have no such wholesale production by secondary agencies. Nature does not supernaturally spawn men, as she did the fishes, reptiles, fowls, and beasts. The personal God puts forth his hand to the direct creation of man with a dignity and deliberation which bespeak the greatness of the being to be created, the sacredness of the king about to be crowned : “ And God said, Let us make man after our own image and let them have dominion.” The value of this fact of man’s similarity to God cannot be overestimated. It is the hinge on which the important practical question hinges, Can man know God and commune with him? By the assurance that the mind is made in the image of God we are certain they both alike have rational powers for the perception of truth, for comparison of values, for choosing ends, and for planning to attain them. They alike perceive the distinction between right and wrong, approve the one and condemn the other with the same pleasant or painful emotions. Hence benevolence, justice, holiness, and truth in man are just the same in the Divine character. Hence by knowing the human mind we have the ability to recognize the moral attributes of God, when they are revealed in the star-light of Nature or in the noon-tide of Revelation. As moral character in God implies his freedom as a Cause uncaused of his own acts, so the moral constitution of his created fac-simile implies that in respect to his own moral choices he is a first cause, itself not caused by any decree or chain of antecedent causes.

How this enhances man's greatness. He is the creator of character, the only thing really valuable in man, the only thing that he can carry out of the world, the only thing on which eternal happiness is conditioned. In these modern times, when pantheism in various forms is widely prevalent, the conscious personality of man stands as a refutation of this fundamental error. This is the logic of this matter: If there is personality in the constitution of the creature there must be personality in the Creator, unless the effect contains an element not existing in the cause. No pantheist can adjust human freedom, — a conscious, free, created personality, to his fatalistic philosophy. Says Dr. Samuel Johnson, "I know that I am free, and that is the end of it." It is the end also of the theory which makes me a fragment of God, determines my moral acts not by my own free will, but by a blind irresistible force moving me to action. The only alternative for the pantheist is the assertion that "we are created capable of intelligence in order to be made the victims of delusion; that God is a deceiver, and that the root of our nature is a lie." — *Sir William Hamilton.*

The greatness of man is seen in his endowment with a moral sense which grasps and holds fast the principles underlying immutable morality, principles held in common by both Creator and creature, and principles essential to communion which implies something in common between two minds. The convictions of the human mind as to personality and the axioms of ethics lie at the basis of both theology and moral science. If right and wrong are not the same with God and man, he must be forever unknown and unknowable. The moral

principles imbedded in the mind of man are the most important in the universe. There can be no morality and no true theology without them.

How the doctrine of a particular Providence over man exalts and ennobles him. Hear Jesus Christ's estimate of him: "Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" Again, "How much better is a man than a sheep?" We brand as a deistical falsehood that verse of the poet Pope in which he attempts to magnify the greatness of God by destroying his discriminating interest in the affairs of this world, and especially his superior valuation of the being who bears his image:—

"Who views with equal eye a hero perish and a sparrow fall."

Thus the bard dwarfs his own species in his vain attempt to exalt his Creator. Could a Boston merchant with equal interest see two of his vessels sink, the one a mud-scow with its scavenger cargo, and the other a majestic ship returning from the East Indies laden with his own inestimable ventures? When a sparrow falls, God sees an ephemeral animated atom perish; but when he sees a man eternally wrecked upon the hidden rocks of sin, he sees his own capacious argosy founder, freighted with all manner of priceless treasures too costly to be replaced. That guardianship of man which esteems him so highly as to number the hairs of his head, is not designed to conduct him to nothingness, but to a destiny of inconceivable grandeur and blessedness.

Another truth of Revelation with more than trumpet

tongue proclaims to the wondering universe man's inestimable worth, the incarnation of the only begotten Son, styled by St. John "The only begotten God" (i. 18, *R. V.*, margin, and Westcott & Hort's text). This amazing fact sets man in the Divine regard above all other creatures, angels, archangels, cherubim, seraphim, thrones, and principalities. "For he took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham." We have said that the magnitude of the universe as we sweep the heavens with fifty-inch telescopes dwarfs us into nothingness. But the condescension of him by whom the worlds were made, the Divine Logos, to array himself in the soiled robe of fallen humanity, shading the intolerable splendor of his Godhood with the opaqueness of a tabernacle of clay — this amazing fact lifts me from the dust, and invests me with worth above all the vastness and magnificence of the material universe. Says the late Dr. Dale: "I am greater than the planets, I am greater than the sea; they are subject, I am free. My own conscience assures me of this, and it is confirmed by the voice of God. From behind and above the forces of the material universe there reaches me a word which recognizes my unique prerogative, isolates me from all material things, imposes on me the responsibility of my moral action. The living God who is above nature declares that I, too, am above nature, and must give an account of myself to him. It is this conception of our moral relationship to God that invests human life with dignity and grandeur which the obscurest and the most illustrious of our race share alike." This "unique prerogative" is brotherhood to the eternal Son of God through his assumption of my nature.

This truth of the Gospel, almost too glorious for belief, reassures me when I have no strength to stand erect in the presence of the immense and immovable order of the universe, and am awed and silenced by the vast range and irresistible action of material forces. On this pedestal, the God-man, the indissoluble union of Divine nature and the human nature in the Person of Jesus Christ, rests not only man's redemption, but his significance. So long as my feet are firmly planted on this pedestal my rank in the scale of being will never be endangered by any advanced scientific discoveries, or any new triumphs over regions before unknown. By assuming my nature the Almighty Creator has imperialized me, and invested me with the insignia of regal rank, foreshadowing my conditional coronation and enthronement with my elder Brother, the Son of God. Let the astronomer multiply a million-fold the space-piercing power of his great telescope, resolving into solar systems the faintest nebula in the nightly sky, what has he done but to gather fresh garlands for the kindred of him who founded this boundless kingdom and with a human hand sways over it his eternal scepter?

My New Testament is a wonderful and supernatural book. I have scarcely begun to recount its revelations of the greatness of man. The atonement even more than the incarnation magnifies him. Calvary is a step of condescension lower than Bethlehem; the cross is lower than the manger, for ignominy is worse than poverty. Hence the mockery of Golgotha more emphatically heralds to the universe the preciousness of that object which requires so costly a ransom as the life-blood of the Son of God. As long as the doctrine of

the death of Christ as a conditional substitute for the punishment of the sinner shall stand as the central truth of Christian theology, there will be a sufficient counter-balance to all the causes which would belittle man. On a theme which constitutes so large a portion of the inculcations of the evangelical pulpit we cannot longer dwell, though strongly inclined. For in the cross of Christ, to which we are conducted to-day in our researches, we find the object of our long search, the measure of man's greatness. But the New Testament contains many strong corroborations of the same fundamental truth.

Consider for a moment the fact that under the atonement I am not saved unconditionally, by mere force, as a bale of goods is rescued from a burning warehouse. I am saved not as a thing, but as a man, the arbiter of my own destiny. Here is respect shown by God himself, who earnestly desires that I shall be conformed to the image of his Son. But he does not impress that image upon me with an almighty trip-hammer, against my will, as the head of liberty is stamped on our federal coin. He sacredly respects my free agency in the formation of my character. He treats me, if you will allow the expression, as an associate creator, a brand new cause in the universe, the first cause of my own character and destiny. God saves sinners, but only such as so believe on his Son as to receive him in loving obedience to all his commands. The study of the Bible discloses an admirable symmetry in its revelations respecting man. He is not great in one place and small in another, a giant here and a pygmy there. Jesus Christ is represented as a real man, not a phantom in

human form, but bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, the climax of humanity, the leader of the procession of believers up from the slimy pits of sin to the sunlit heights of holiness. All the great transitions in his earthly history from the manger to the throne, all the tests and contests, all the uplifts and victories of his life, will be repeated in the history of every persevering believer. He experienced the humiliation of the tomb. We in common with all the living creation shall descend into that darkness. But here man parts company with all the orders of animate life beneath him. Jesus said to his disciples: "I am the Resurrection, and the Life: he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Then he proved the truth of this amazing declaration by arising on the third day according to his own prediction. In him as our file-leader, we, that entombed part of the human family called the just, arose to a glorious immortality, "they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of condemnation." The resurrection of the unjust teaches not conditional immortality, but inherent, constitutional, non-forfeitable immortality. It eloquently proclaims that man is too great for annihilation. The same truth is proclaimed by the sentences pronounced by the Judge of the quick and the dead, those on the right hand to *aionian*, everlasting life, those on the left hand to *aionian*, everlasting punishment. It is evident that Jesus, the truth, designed to teach that these opposite sentences are of equal duration. The wicked are not too great to be punished. They are too great to be blotted out of existence.

The ascension into heaven of our Elder Brother and processional leader, with soul and body eternally united and glorified, exalts our race in dignity and rank beyond all conception and expression. A man sits enthroned in power supreme over all created beings. Does not that exalt humanity to the summit of greatness. I look upward with the eye of faith and see him there. What is he doing? He is beckoning me to come up and sit by his side clothed in the dazzling radiance which he reflects on me his brother confessed. I hear him say, as he grasps my hand in warm welcome, "To him that overcometh will I grant to set with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am sit down with my Father in his throne." Whenever I attempt in thought to scale the height of this tallest promise ever made to man, my head swims while I struggle to climb to that Alpine summit of heaven whereon Jesus sits, and to which he has by his sufferings and intercessions hewn a stairway broad enough for the whole race of man to go up abreast. It is enough. I need no further argument. This apocalypse of the greatness of my species in God's eyes, and the exalted destiny possible to every child of Adam, reassures and refreshes me after my tedious and despairing search through all the belittling philosophies. I suddenly grew from a pygmy to a titan when I came to the mount called Olivet, and saw two men in white apparel pointing upward to that heaven into which the ascending Jesus has just passed to prepare a place for me for whom he has left the door open behind him.

"He rose! He rose! He broke the bars of death!
O the burst gates, crushed sting, demolished throne,
Last gasp of vanquished Death! Shout, earth and heaven,

This sum of good to man; whose nature then
Took wing, and mounted with him from the tomb!
Then, then, we rose; then first humanity
Triumphant pass'd the crystal gates of light."

No more shall the vastness of the universe, ponderous orbs flaming in the skies, destroy my self-respect, and overwhelm me with a sense of my littleness, and tempt me to regard my acts, whether good or evil, of no consequence to myself or to my Creator. He who formed those shining globes, and guides them through the shoreless oceans of ether with troops of worlds, perchance freighted with intelligent moral agents, this Mighty Monarch, amid all the cares of his boundless empire, "has magnified man and set his heart upon him;" yea, he has eternally wedded humanity to his own divinity. I will no more think meanly of myself after this full-length view of myself in the Gospel looking-glass. I will no longer soil with sin that manhood endowed with aptitudes which transcend in worth the whole firmament filled with worlds.

"I hold a middle rank 'twixt heaven and earth,
On the last verge of mortal being stand,
Close to the realms where angels have their birth,
Just on the borders of the spirit-land.
The chain of being is complete in me;
In me is matter's last gradation lost;
And the next step is spirit, Deity. I can command
The lightnings and am dust, a monarch and
A slave, a worm, a god."

My hearers, my demonstration suggests important lessons and imperative obligations. We have endeavored to awaken in you a consciousness of capacities

which mere material good, however vast and varied, can never satisfy. Cravings always outstrip accumulations and argue a capacity for eternal progress. Alexander Von Humboldt, after proposing to describe "the contents of space" and actually completing his enormous task in his *Cosmos*, writes thus in his Introduction to that great work: "Thus besides the pleasure derived from acquired knowledge, there lurks in the mind of man tinged with a shade of sadness an unsatisfied longing for something beyond the present—a striving toward regions yet unknown and unoccupied."

This honest testimony to the unsatisfying nature of mere knowledge from a scholar who could write five volumes descriptive of the universe without hinting that it had a Creator, is, as Shakespeare says, "a confirmation as strong as proof from Holy Writ" that

"Man has a soul of vast desires
Which burns within with restless fires."

Having conducted you to the Cross as the only measure of man's amplitude of being, let me exhort you to admit the Paraclete in the fullness of his indwelling, as the only satisfaction of your infinite craving after happiness. I am glad that I have a nature which the whole universe is too small to fill. An infinite desire implies that I was created for loving an infinite Being and receiving his infinite love in return.

If men and women sink into the slime of sin, it is because they have no conception of their greatness and worth in God's estimation of values, the only true standard. They are low-lived because they set a low price upon themselves. Hence the way to elevate them is to

fix their eyes on heaven's measure of man's worth, the Cross of Jesus Christ. Their minds should be filled with the truths of his Gospel. The upward path is found in the diligent study of God's Word, wherein man's dignity and value are revealed in their true proportions. It is said that a thoughtful son of a king, as a safeguard against conduct unbecoming his regal rank and future coronation, was accustomed to carry with him everywhere amid the temptations of his father's court, a miniature portrait of his father, and in the hour of allurements to sin he would take it out of his bosom and look intently at it in order to strengthen himself against the power of the tempter.

Let the image of King Jesus be enstamped on your nature as a safeguard against allowing your soul to be tarnished by any moral impurity. Become by the new birth, the sons of God in the Gospel sense, and you will ever hear the voice of "the Spirit of adoption crying in your heart Abba, Father." With this voice warbling in your ear, you will not only be kept from sinning when the sirens warble in your ears, but also you will be incited to heroic endeavors to attain moral excellences corresponding to your great destiny, a crown and a throne.

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