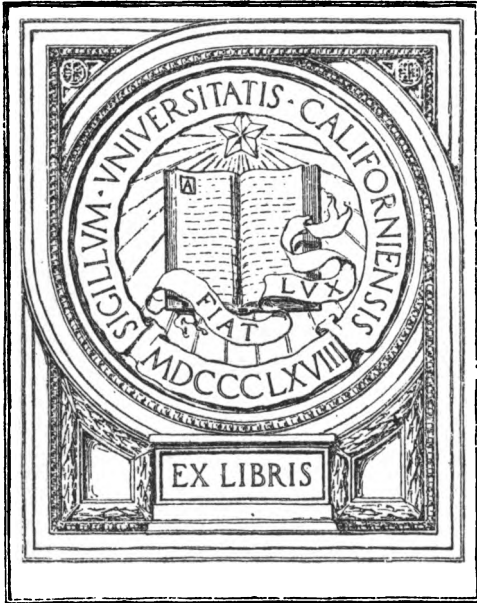


GOD'S WORLD AND WORD

NEAL L. ANDERSON

GIFT OF

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God's World and Word

ADDRESSES FOR TO-DAY

By
NEAL L. ANDERSON, D.D.
Minister, Independent Presbyterian Church,
Savannah, Georgia



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TO WHOM
IT MAY COME

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*Dedicated
to
MY WIFE,
whose love has been God's choicest gift
of life throughout a long ministry.*

PREFACE *

THE sermons in this volume represent a cross-section of the preaching of a busy pastor, and the reaction of such a ministry to the problems that confront earnest-minded men and women today. They are the messages of one whose convictions are immovably anchored in the truth of God's Word, but whose mind is open to the changes through which humanity is passing, and who seeks to translate the old Gospel into the terminology of a new age.

The arrangement into four groups of three sermons each disclosed an undesigned unity of thought in the development of certain great central truths, concerning God's World and His Word, that culminate in the message of the human heart of peace in which dwells the God of Peace.

The first group opens with the problems created by scientific discoveries and the philosophy of a new age, and emphasizes the fundamental mystery that lies behind all truth.

The sermon on "Evolution as a Science and as a Philosophy" discusses the peril of the issues

* The preparation of an Introduction to this volume by the Rev. Professor John D. Davis, D.D., LL.D., of Princeton Theological Seminary, was interrupted by his sudden death. The author in writing this Preface reluctantly takes up the task of this servant of the Church, whose sane, accurate, and reverent scholarship has made the Christian world his debtor.

drawn, and contains a plea for sane, reverent scholarship unafraid for the Word of God, and an appeal to the Church to keep central in its thinking and preaching the message of the Cross, through which alone redemption is to be found.

In the last analysis faith rests upon the testimony of Christ, the Lord of all Truth, as One infinitely worthy to be trusted and qualified to testify, whose message by the Holy Spirit becomes a process of education and a living fact of personal experience.

Faith lying beyond the range of dialectics and philosophy has as its basis and object the Christ of history, revealed by the Holy Spirit in the inspired records; and upon the preaching of such a Saviour the Church must depend in her great mission to the world. There is a warning in this message concerning "The Foundation of Faith" to conservative as well as radical thinking, and it is followed by illustrations of Christ's method of presenting truth to the hearts of individuals.

The outstanding historic fact that all law, divine as well as human, has failed to meet the deeper needs of humanity, reveals the necessity for an intervention of divine grace, which is found in the Gospel message. For what law could not do, Christ has done.

The life thus redeemed by the Son of God is brought into a new freedom that carries with it its own limitations, which are essential to its very

existence and bring men under obligation to the higher law of love.

The redeemed man, seeking to maintain his ideals in an age absorbed in its own petty affairs, and bearing the opprobrium of being called a "visionary," may find cheer in the presence of apparently insurmountable difficulties as he is summoned to make his vision come true, in the consciousness of what God can do with a life dedicated to His service.

And, lastly, there stands revealed God's Highway of Peace to a troubled age that has lost its way. For whatever a man's problems, he may know the peace of a quiet heart that comes when he has committed his every interest to God. This peace of commitment reaches its climax only in the heart which, filled with pure, loving and holy thoughts, is by the Holy Spirit made a habitation for the dwelling of the God of Peace.

N. L. A.

Savannah, Georgia.

CONTENTS

I.	GOD'S WONDER WORLD	11
	<i>John 3: 12</i>	
II.	EVOLUTION AS A SCIENCE AND AS A PHI- LOSOPHY	21
	<i>Genesis 1: 1</i>	
III.	CHRIST'S INTERPRETATION OF GOD	46
	<i>John 1: 18</i>	
IV.	THE FOUNDATION OF FAITH	64
	<i>I Corinthians 2: 4, 5</i>	
V.	CHRIST'S METHOD OF DEALING WITH THE SINNER	79
	<i>John, chapter 4</i>	
VI.	CHRIST'S METHOD OF DEALING WITH THE MORALIST	91
	<i>Mark 10: 17</i>	
VII.	THE LAW'S FAILURE	100
	<i>Romans 8: 3, 4</i>	
VIII.	THE NEW FREEDOM	110
	<i>I Corinthians 6: 12; 10: 23</i>	
IX.	CHRISTIAN LIBERTY LIMITED BY LOVE . .	121
	<i>I Corinthians 8: 11</i>	

X.	VISIONS AND VISIONARIES	131
	<i>Acts 2: 17</i>	
XI.	WHAT GOD CAN DO WITH A MAN	141
	<i>Zechariah 4: 6, 7</i>	
XII.	THE PEACE OF GOD AND THE GOD OF PEACE	150
	<i>Philippians 4: 6-9</i>	

I

GOD'S WONDER WORLD

"If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?"—JOHN 3: 12.

THE thoughts suggested by these words of Jesus to Nicodemus are of compelling interest at this time when modern controversy rages around the problem of the Supernatural.

A WORLD OF WONDERS

There are many people who think they could get along better with religion if they could only explain away all of its mysteries. But Jesus, in the context, declares that we live in a world of wonders; and these mysteries have not been made less, but rather greater, by the achievements of modern science. It was Mr. Huxley himself who, in the midst of the controversy of his day concerning the problem of the supernatural, said: "The mystery of the Trinity is child's-play, compared with the necessary antinomies of physical speculation." If we could only rid ourselves of the conceit of thinking we know things, when we only know how things

behave under certain conditions; if we had the eyes to see and the ears to hear what is happening behind the things we see and touch, we should realize that:

*“ Not only around infancy
Doth heaven with all its splendors lie;
Daily, with souls that cringe and plot,
We Sinais climb, and know it not.”*

LACK OF IMAGINATION

One difficulty with Nicodemus was that he had no imagination. He was like a multitude of good people today who walk through a world literally aflame with God, and yet have reduced all religion to a formula. Many of them can see, perhaps, what they may call a miracle in the works of a juggler, or of Sir Oliver Lodge's mediums, but they find no wonder in a sunset, or in the flower that blooms by the wayside.

“ The man of imagination,” says a brilliant modern writer, “ sees everything as though it were new; every great star in the night might lead to the house hiding the Son of God; every stable has a manger which, filled with dry hay and clean straw, might become a cradle; every bare mountain top, flaming with light in the golden mornings, above the still, sombre valley, might be Sinai or Mount Tabor.”

COMPLACENCY WITH THE COMMONPLACE

We have today banished the fairies from the

buttercups in the dells, and reduced the glories of Nature to the formulæ of the chemist and the biologist, and thus our very wonders have become commonplace. Such an attitude of mind is due, first of all, to the very immensity of the discoveries of the age, which have left many of us dazed and bewildered. We read that the atom is a world in itself, with electrons revolving about a center at the rate of thirty-six thousand miles a second, or that the energy in a single grain of radium would lift a ton one mile; and what can we do, but say: "Indeed!" Then, after a while, we get so used to wonderful things that we think we understand them; even the dog today has reached such a state of mind that he no longer barks at the automobile or even wags his tail.

My father was born in a world without railroads; the wonder of his age was the steam monster that pulled a train along a track. I, born in an age of railroads, like you, took them as a matter of course; but I shall never forget the wonder to me of the first electric lights, or of the first telephone message that I heard across the wire. My children were born in an age of telephones and electric lights; they, with the rest of us, marveled over the victrola and the radio, but my grandchildren accept the radio as they do the sun and stars—as belonging to their world. If one wants to realize how true this statement is, let him listen to a ten-year-old boy talk about condensers,

wave lengths, and audions—thinking he knows all about them. Yet none of us knows even how the lily blooms!

GIVING NAMES TO THINGS

Professor William James, in his *Psychology*, says that all this calm acceptance of the wonders of the world is due to the fact that we give a thing a name and then, having done this, are satisfied and go on thinking we understand it. He tells how, when the steam engine came through Switzerland, the pastor of a certain village, a man of some scientific attainments, lectured on the philosophy of the steam engine to his wondering congregation, gathered around the first train of cars they had ever seen. After explaining the connection between the steam and the cylinders, the piston rods, eccentric valves, etc., he ventured: "I hope you understand it?" A country bumpkin, who had looked on with mouth wide open, promptly replied: "And sure, Herr Pastor—there's a horse in it!" Now, had there actually been a horse in the steam engine, the machine would have been a far more wonderful thing than the steam engine itself. But the country bumpkin was thoroughly satisfied when he had "found" a horse in it. Today we ourselves have not got beyond reckoning kinetic energy in terms of horse-power; but who knows what "horse-power" is?

A NAME TO CONJURE WITH

What more aptly than this incident from Switzerland could illustrate the confusion caused by the strife-stirring word "Evolution"? To call one an "Evolutionist" is in many circles to brand him as a heretic. Some of our brethren have given the name "Evolution" to what they suppose to be exclusively a theory of the descent of man from the monkey. Even so acute a student as Carlyle called it a "Gospel of Dirt." It is a brave man, in some circles, who will let anybody with impunity call him "an Evolutionist."

On the other hand, our so-called Modernist friends are equally sure that they have explained the mysteries of heaven and earth when they have ascribed the phenomena of the universe to Evolution. It is all like a man thinking that an efficiency chart does the work of a factory. For Evolution at its best—or, if you please, at its worst—is only a method, or supposed method, of the operation of forces, modal and not causative; we have explained nothing when we have used the most convenient of all modern names, "Evolution," to conceal our ignorance.

THE WONDERS OF THE COMMONPLACE

Mr. Alfred Wallace, in his epoch-making book, *The World of Life*, says: "Looking at it as a whole, the bird's wing seems to me of all mechanical things that which most clearly implies the

working out of a preconceived design in a new, apparently most difficult and complex manner, yet so as to produce a marvelously successful result. On each feather there are over a million barbs and barblets, each turning upon its axis so that the upstroke of the wing lets the air through, and the downward stroke makes the wing impervious to air." Linked by a "hook and eye" formation, each of the barbules is built up of many thousand, probably millions of cells, "differing in form, and power of cohesion, in order to produce the exact strength, elasticity and continuity of the whole web." Each feather on the wing is liable to wear out, through the friction of the air, and is reproduced every year in its former exact place and color and structure. But this is only a part of the wonderful story; the same blood supplies material for every other part of the body, and the same mystic protoplasm, "exact chemically and physically, builds up and renews the muscles, the bones, the viscera, the skin, the nerves, the hair, with the exact constituents to form here bone-cells, there muscle cells and here, again, feathers, each with different properties."

THE MIRACULOUS

What light all this throws upon the stupidity manifested in much of the controversy concerning the miracles and the virgin birth of Jesus! It cannot be strange that an acute student of science and

philosophy should ask: "If man is endowed by his Creator with his ability to give to the world another germ of life that will in its turn become a man and walk, and speak and do great works, is it remarkable to suppose that God has less power than this creature of His? One conception is not more miraculous than another. The miraculous conception of the Son of God, I can in some measure comprehend. It does not offend my intelligence, for I have unlimited faith in the power of God, but before the fact of the millions of conceptions that are the commonplaces of existence, I stand amazed and incredulous. I can believe that Christ, being what He was, turned water into wine, that He healed the sick and raised the dead, was crucified, buried and rose again; these are simple matters, and not beyond my understanding, but I cannot understand sleep that takes me for a while into oblivion, and brings me back to life refreshed. I cannot understand the grass that blossoms and forms seed, and then dies and gives itself to enrich the soil upon which its seed must live. I cannot understand the stars, the winds, the tides, heat, light, gravity and death. I can explain them, but I cannot understand them. They are visible manifestations of something that is beyond my comprehension."

Are we so puffed up with the conceit of merely knowing how things behave that we have forgotten how little we know of what they are? Are we

ashamed to cry with the poet of the mid-Victorian era:

*“ Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies;
Hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower. But if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.”*

LEAVING GOD OUT

And so there are men today who deal constantly and intimately with the wonders of nature, who measure the cells, the molecules, the atoms, and now the flying electrons within the atom, and leave God out. These are the men who challenge religion; who take His birthright from the Son of God, who balk at miracles, reject the atonement, and scoff at the resurrection, and yet cannot explain a lily, or restore the life crushed out beneath their feet. They have open minds for the mechanics of things, but closed minds for God. They are blind to the greatest of all facts, the grace and power of the present Christ, transforming and remaking souls about them every day. For the mysteries are not shut up in the lids of the Bible, but lie all around us.

A NEW HEART

Everything has changed in this new day of ours, when distance has been annihilated and forces,

vaster than ever assigned to the gods of mythology, do our bidding. Everything has changed in this changing day but man's need, his deep ineradicable need of God.

This need Jesus alone meets. To Nicodemus, this man without imagination, in the midst of a world vibrant with God, deaf and blind to the greatest of all wonders, He shows the need of a new heart. And what a heart it is!

Sitting by the radio in the old Manse in Savannah late in the evening, some months ago, and listening to a scientific lecture by a great surgeon, I heard him say: "Here is a little child twelve years old. Listen! You can hear his heart beat." And over the hundreds of miles through the night, over the mysterious Hertzian waves vibrating along the aerial running up two hundred feet to the top of the great church spire, down through that marvel of scientific achievement, the vacuum tubes, translated from heart-beat to Hertzian wave, from alternating current to direct current, pulsing through the ether to my ear, there came the beat, beat, beat of the tiny heart so far away. Yet a man can believe all this, but stumble over the fact of a new heart given by God!

THE VISION OF GOD

When we have this new heart, we see every common bush aflame with God. We, who cease to wonder at the voices that speak to us through the

night, and at the bird-man who lifts himself up through the clouds, may yet learn to see behind the framework of nature, in the tiniest flower that blooms, in the flashing light of the farthest star, God. Then perhaps we shall not indeed understand, but we shall know Him, whom to know is life eternal. Then we may reverently say of the Virgin Birth, the Incarnation, the Atonement and the Resurrection:

*"I know not how that Bethlehem's Babe
Could in the Godhead be,
I only know the Manger-child
Has brought God's life to me.*

*"I know not how that Calvary's cross
A world from sin could free,
I only know its matchless love
Has brought God's love to me.*

*"I know not how that Joseph's tomb
Could solve death's mystery,
I only know a living Christ,
Our IMMORTALITY."*

II

EVOLUTION AS A SCIENCE AND AS A PHILOSOPHY *

"In the beginning God . . ."—GEN. 1: 1.



A SUBJECT about which every one is talking, many wildly and foolishly and not a few as if the foundations of religion were being destroyed, surely is one which the pulpit cannot ignore.

If we are to arrive at any clear conception of the controversy over Evolution, it is necessary first of all that a sharp and clean-cut distinction be drawn between Evolution as a method of scientific research, and Evolution as a philosophy.

Science deals with facts (phenomena) that need to be verified, and such verification is attempted in the great research laboratories. But the results of all his painstaking labors will be vitiated unless the scientist in his research divest himself of preconceived notions; and such freedom from philosophical bias is a condition upon which his reputation as a scientist depends.

* This sermon was published at the request of the editor, in *The Seminary Review*, following the delivery of the lectures on "In His Image," by the late William Jennings Bryan in the Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Virginia.

Philosophy, however, deals with the problems of ultimate causation, with speculation concerning facts, and with attempted explanation of facts, real or supposed.

Evolution as a Science

The world as we know it today is, so far as our knowledge of it is concerned, so young that many persons now living have seen the dawn and development of all that we call science.

Natural science, in the departments, for example, of geology, biology, embryology and botany, has discovered certain factors of development, such as environment, heredity and natural or sex selection, which have resulted in explanations of some of the most baffling problems of nature; and it has been found that these factors operate in a way apparently so certain and well defined that there is a development from the simple to the complex, and from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous. This development scientists have agreed in calling "Evolution."

Thus Evolution, from the scientific standpoint, is "simply a process, a description of the mode according to which changes take place, and not a power which produces the changes."

That there is such a process at work in nature has been verified by so many experiments, and demonstrated so universally, that the most conservative student of the history of modern science

must admit that every man of standing in science today, Christian as well as unbeliever, whether he be astronomer, geologist, biologist, chemist or botanist, has to this extent accepted Evolution.

Every one who knows the life history of the oak in its relation to the acorn, every child who reads the story of Burbank's wonderful work, and particularly every one who has an even untechnical knowledge of the development of the life of the individual from the simple, spherical cells, one one hundred and twentieth of an inch in diameter, "with absolutely none of the organs or parts of the adult, into a man, with all his wonderful complexities of organization, ability to think, reason, will"—every one who knows these things must also admit that there is such a principle at work in nature as Evolution.

Charles Darwin wrought a revolution in human thinking when he unfolded what as a scientist he believed to be the process which God had established in nature. The result of the application of this method of research and investigation has been the discovery of a universe of law and order.

No one can adequately express our indebtedness to scientific research. Men who sometimes speak slightly of science are yet dependent upon it. The food we eat, the clothes we wear, the vehicles in which we travel, our means of communication, the medicine that heals us, the surgery that carries us down into the valley of twilight and brings us

back to health and happiness—all these are the results of the work of men who have made use of the modern methods of research, and have believed in a process called Evolution.

It should be distinctly understood, however, that Evolution is not a law of nature, in the sense in which there are laws of heat, light, gravitation; there are almost as many different theories of Evolution as there are distinguished evolutionists. And this fact illustrates the folly of grouping all evolutionists together, and praising them or condemning them as suits our fancy or our religious prejudices, fanned to white heat by appeals to support the faith of our fathers.

To bar the teaching of Evolution, as a working hypothesis in scientific research and discovery, would close every department of astronomy, geology, biology, chemistry and botany, electricity and medicine, in every church as well as state institution of learning of any standing in the country. Such a consideration as this should give pause to those who use the term Evolution only as one of reproach, without regard to its scope or meaning.

To affirm broadly, "No man can be an Evolutionist and be a Christian," would ban from the Church the host of reverent, humble Christian men of science who are as loyal to the word of God as any of their critics, and who assuredly know more than they about the departments to which they themselves are devoting their lives.

It is heartening to be able to read the statements of two outstanding men of science, whose work has been given recognition in many lands, and whose profession of faith has given them membership in evangelical churches, when they affirm, speaking evidently not for themselves only: "Evolution by no means takes God out of His universe, but greatly increases the wonder, mystery and marvellous order which pervades nature," and again: "The doctrine of Evolution presents no difficulties too great to be harmonized with the Gospel of Christ. It has no quarrel with His birth, death or resurrection."

Manifestly these two scientists hold a different conception of Evolution from that of many of their colleagues in science, as well as from that of those who oppose all Evolution.

DIFFERENCES AMONG SCIENTISTS

The disagreements among evolutionists appear to be as pronounced as their agreements. They all agree, generally speaking, as to the fact of a process called Evolution, but when they come to explain the process their differences are manifest in their variety of theories of Evolution; and their dogmatism and conceit of opinion rival those of the most dogmatic theologian.

A recent writer makes this remarkable statement: "It must be distinctly understood that every scientific authority in the world today believes that

life was naturally evolved from elements in the early earth." And another equally distinguished author says: "No living naturalist, so far as I know, differs as to the immutable truth of Evolution in the sense of the ascent of all extinct and existing forms of life, including man, from an original and single cellular state."

These deliverances should settle the matter for simple laymen; but what about the facts lying back of the statements?

Doctor Etheridge, fossilologist of the British Museum, says: "Nine-tenths of the talk of evolutionists is sheer nonsense, not founded on observation, and wholly unsupported by facts. This museum is full of proof of the utter falsity of their views."

Professor Beale, of King's College, London, states: "In support of all naturalistic conjectures concerning man's origin, there is not at this time a shadow of scientific evidence."

Professor Fleishman, of Erlangen, asserts: "The Darwinian theory in the realm of nature has not a single fact to confirm it. It is not the result of scientific research, but purely the product of the imagination."

Professor William Bateson, until recently professor of biology at Cambridge, England, says: "Science has faith in evolution, but doubts as to the origin of the species."

Every one acquainted with recent discussion

knows how John Burroughs rejected Darwin's doctrine of the transformation of species, and is aware that the drift of scientific thinking is toward discarding the Darwinian doctrines of the survival of the fittest, the struggle for existence, and sex selection, as furnishing any adequate explanations of the process of evolution. The rival Mendelian theory of Mutations has been described by a scientific authority in a great American university as "little, if anything, short of creative activity."

Even the distinguished head of the Museum of Natural History in New York City has within the past few months stated: "Evolution is a continuous creation of life, fitted to a continuously changing world."

Benjamin Kidd, author of the epoch-making volume, *Social Evolution*, in his recent book, *The Science of Power*, states: "The knowledge has come to me that Darwinism, the sun and flower of the peculiar science of the west, is a compound of astonishing learning and incomparable ignorance."

These quotations have not been made to give the authority of great names to any anti-evolutionary theory, but merely to illustrate the folly of dogmatic statements as to the unanimous agreement of scientists today on any theory of Evolution.

FOSSIL REMAINS

It is well to remember that in all the multitude of fossil remains none has been found that shows

even the gradual transformation of the reptile into the bird, not to say into the mammal.

If one visits the Museum of Natural History, New York, however, he will find beautiful and artistic restorations of primitive man, the Neanderthal race, the Piltdown race and the Heidelberg race, awaiting him in the vestibule. These are designed not as a huge scientific joke perpetrated on the ignorant, but as representing the sober conclusions of men who have no ambition to rival Munchausen.

Yet Branco, at the Fifth International Congress of Zoologists, as late as 1901, said tersely this: "On the subject of the ancestors of man Paleontology tells us nothing." Virchow, renowned pathologist, anthropologist and founder of cellular pathology, said at the Weisbaden Congress of Naturalists: "Every positive advance we have made in the study of prehistoric anthropology has removed us further than before from the proof of evolution to be found there. Man has not descended from the ape, nor has any ape-man existed."

Of the Pithecanthropus, the so-called Java ape-man, Virchow is quoted as saying: "The head is that of an ape, the femur, found fifty feet away, is that of a man, and neither of the two teeth belong to the skull."

As to the celebrated Heidelberg man, the father of the Heidelberg race, it is said: "One per cent

is original jaw-bone, and ninety-nine per cent is restoration." The Piltdown skull has been called a "scientific joke," and of the Neanderthal man Professor Dwight, of Harvard University, says: "It is not a specimen of a race arrested in its upward climb, but rather of a race thrown down from its high position. In no sense can it be regarded as the remains of a human being intermediate between man and the ape." Blake, Vogt, Zittel, have been quoted as agreeing in the statement that this "skull belonged to a human idiot," while other naturalists ascribe it to "an old Celt, or an old Hollander or Friedlander, and some to the remains of a Mongolian Cossack of 1814." Yet these remains are offered as conclusive proof of the evolution of man!

All these problems belong to the domain of science, and may be left to scientists to settle among themselves as best they can.

MAN'S ORIGIN

In a remarkable sermon, preached fifty years before Darwin, Doctor Henry Kollock had this to say concerning man and his relation to the lower animals:

"Man stands at the head of the visible creation, and serves to connect two widely different orders of beings. Compounded of body and soul, by his *body* he bears affinity to the beasts . . . and by his *soul* to those superior intelligences who are not

united to matter, nor encumbered with a body. . . . We ascend, step by step, from dull inert, unorganized matter, to the living plant, the perceptive brute and the reasonable man." *

Here Doctor Kollock, knowing nothing of what we call Evolution, showed a remarkable insight into a question that has done so much to disturb Christian faith. He realized that there is a similarity of physical structure that links man with the lower orders of life and suggests an ascending scale of life from lower to higher forms, culminating in man. For the naturalist, whether theist or materialist, there can be no question as to this likeness, or as to the ascending scale—evolution—from "dull, inert, unorganized matter to the living plant, the perceptive brute and the reasonable (reasoning) man."

It would, however, never have occurred to this great thinker and preacher to ask a question that we are compelled to ask today; namely, Does this ascending scale merely record the fact of historic sequence, or does it describe a process which is itself causal?

"Similarity," says the advanced evolutionist, "argues oneness of original parentage," or, as some one has said quite recently, "Homology, or correspondence in internal structure and functional properties of organs, is accepted, and asserted as proof of common descent."

* *Kollock's Sermons*, Vol. 4, p. 402.

Such a position, nevertheless, can mean only that conjecture has been substituted for proof, and at the most critical stage of the whole discussion. Whether these admitted resemblances prove identity of origin is the very heart of the whole question, and can be settled by facts only. It is a question not yet solved, and the solution is little advanced merely by multiplying the number of such resemblances.

But many persons are asking: "Suppose it should be proved that all the existing forms of life, including man, were evolved from lower forms; what then?"

In considering such a question it is well to remind ourselves that the problem of life is so complex, and involves such a multitude of data, that it would be an exceedingly difficult task to present such proof as would be conclusive. Certainly, as has been shown, the proof thus far obtained has not satisfied the minds of many distinguished men of science, and their very persistence in presenting ever more numerous arguments to prove man's origin from lower forms of life, is in itself evidence that demonstrative proof has not yet been found.

"But suppose it should be proved that man was evolved from lower forms of life; what then?"

For the theist, believing in God as the Creator of the universe, inorganic as well as organic, this question is purely a scientific one—that is, one of

fact—and not a question involving his faith in God. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” As Henry Drummond said so long ago: “The Christian need not concern himself with the problem whether God created the world at one time, as a finished product, or as a world with properties, such that it would pass through successive changes until it reached the condition we see today.”

We may still ask, with one of God's most reverent servants more than a quarter of a century ago: “Is God less truly the Creator of the mighty oak because He did not by a word bring it into its present condition? Is He less the Creator of your body and mine, because we inherited our bodies from a long line of ancestors, or because it was, as we know, evolved by the mystic weaving of protoplasm?”

Dr. Francis L. Patton, former president of Princeton Theological Seminary and of Princeton University, and known throughout the world as philosopher as well as a theological representative of evangelical and conservative scholarship, has wisely said: “What was the process by which man was made, we do not know. But if it could be shown that man is related to the inferior animals so far as his body is concerned, it would none the less be true that God made him out of the dust of the ground.”

Whatever the method of creation, every addi-

tional fact uncovered by modern science makes only more evident the necessity of a living, present and personal God: "The heavens and the earth are full of His glory."

When the naturalistic evolutionist tells us that the universe has been evolved from primitive cells, one may answer: "If this is true—this 'creative evolution' of Bernard Shaw and others—these cells must be endowed with the attributes of divinity, to produce even such a world as we see about us. I think it more scientific and reasonable to believe in a God, who made these cells, for the only creative force we know anything about is intelligent will. You may take your choice and worship cells. I prefer to worship God."

We may be very sure that when all has been said the facts of God's world will not contradict the facts of God's Word; and meanwhile, without claiming to be a scientist, the average man may yet insist that science confine itself to its proper sphere, the ascertaining, systematizing and applying of facts in the natural, physical world.

WHAT THE SCRIPTURES TEACH

One of the saddest things connected with the present controversy is that theologians and would-be theologians have not recognized the justice of a similar limitation on their own statements concerning matters that lie outside of their province.

There is the utmost clarity of statement in the Word of God when it says: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The statement of His immanence and superintendence is equally explicit and clear. But nowhere does the Bible teach in detail by what methods God proceeded in His creation of successive species of life, either plant or animal.

As one has well said: "God gave us His Word to teach us the supernatural truths of religion, not to anticipate the results of the study of nature. The Scriptures in no wise ever teach natural science. The Bible makes statements concerning the phenomena of nature in the words of everyday, popular speech, 'The sun rises and sets,' the world has 'four corners,' etc., and these expressions are never used in a scientific sense, or with scientific accuracy."

This is the Confessional position of the *Shorter Catechism*, which states: "The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man."

The Bible consists of some thousand pages, printed usually in double columns and containing upwards of twenty-five thousand verses. Of these verses only about twenty-seven deal with matters that can in any strict sense be called scientific, and these twenty-seven odd verses describe phenomena covering we know not how many ages; certainly, when we consider the heavens as well as the earth

(Gen. 1: 1-5), many millions of years. To treat such a compressed statement of the history of the beginning of the universe as "scientific," in any intelligible use of the word, is an absurdity; and the Bible itself, even in these twenty-seven verses, professedly teaches not science, but religion.

Paul puts the matter succinctly when he writes: "Every Scripture inspired of God is profitable"—not for teaching science but—"for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be rounded in his character, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

A FATAL MISTAKE

A dangerous thing it is to attempt to make the Bible teach science, and it is an historic fact that "whenever the Church has expressed an opinion on matters of science it has taught error, discredited the Word of God and alienated the students of science."

It is a pathetic story, whose lesson we should have learned long ago. The Church made such an attempt when it declared that the Bible taught that the earth was flat. Galileo was condemned as a heretic by the theologians, who would not even look through his telescope. Copernicus was condemned by the Roman Catholic hierarchy for teaching that the earth is not the centre of the universe. Luther called him "a fool," and John Calvin asked:

"Who would put Copernicus above the Holy Ghost?" Of course, no Christian would do this, but Calvin made the mistake of confusing his own views on science with the teachings of the Holy Spirit. It is to his honor that he was manly enough to acknowledge afterwards that he was wrong. John Wesley said that Copernicus' doctrine "led to heresy." Even to this day we must admit that Wesley was right, provided we insist that the Scriptures use scientific terms in speaking of physical phenomena, for how could the earth have "four corners," and how could Joshua have "made the sun to stand still," if Copernicus was right in saying that the sun does not move? Assuredly such a doctrine leads to heresy!

When Newton announced the law of gravity Voltaire declared that he had destroyed the Bible, which says that "God holds the world in the hollow of his hand." Many Christian people, like John Wesley, believed with Voltaire that Newton's theory would destroy the Word of God, and for this reason they stated that Newton was wrong. There is a familiar ring, therefore, in the words of a distinguished defender of the faith, that were flashed around the world a few weeks ago: "If Evolution wins, Christianity is lost." Within the memory of many persons still living it was considered heresy and denial of Scripture to believe that the world was not created in six literal days of twenty-four hours each.

The tragedy of the present situation is not in the assaults of infidels on the Word of God, but in the fact that many Christian preachers and laymen, with the best intentions, have told our boys and girls that "if Evolution," not this or that sort of Evolution, but "if Evolution is true, the Bible is false." Then these boys and girls have been sent to school and college—it makes no difference whether a Church institution, or some "godless" state institution—and they have learned that Evolution, as a mode of operation of nature, is true. It is not strange, therefore, that many a one of them has gone back home ready to say boldly that mother's Bible is false, and utterly hopeless about the Church and his minister, who had told him: "There is nothing to Evolution."

If we are to hold our young people today, we must teach them to have faith in a Bible that is not dependent on the decisions of human courts or on the changing theories of men of science, whether of Ptolemy, Copernicus, Newton or Darwin, and to know that the Word of God written in star and stone and cell, when properly interpreted, will never conflict with God's Word written in His Book, which is indeed the Word of the living God who liveth and abideth forever.

Evolution as a Philosophy

The great enemy of religion is not science, but a naturalistic philosophy, "dealing not with facts,

but causes, explanations and speculations about facts." This philosophy has indeed "literally turned the world upside down, has blighted the faith of our youth, poisoned the springs of moral and spiritual life, and set the world on fire with war." Against such a philosophy every man who values what civilization has wrought, and holds dear the faith of the fathers, should protest with all the earnestness of his soul.

It is true, as was said recently in *The Looking-Glass*, though it was due to no fault of the noble man of science whose patient research has gained him imperishable honor, that "Darwinism has been made not only to justify the sensualist at the trough, and fashion at the glass, but Prussianism at the cannon's mouth, and Bolshevism at the prison door."

"THE GREAT PAGAN RETROGRESSION"

It was this philosophy of evolution that produced what Benjamin Kidd has called "The Great Pagan Retrogression"—the return to savagery—and: "The consequences have been felt through every fibre of civilization. . . . Within half a century the origin of the species has become the Bible doctrine of the omnipotence of force."

For Evolution as a philosophy has been applied ruthlessly to every problem of civilization, and the voice of the desert and the jungle has been heard again in the haunts of men. The result has been

the deification of paganism, baptized and blessed by the high priests of a spurious science.

In England and America this tendency early found expression in the philosophy of Herbert Spencer, which "rejected the Christian duty of the sacrifice of the individual for something higher and better, for there is nothing higher than the individual."

In Germany it spoke with a voice of confidence and command that found an echo in every gymnasium and university in which German philosophy had been accepted as the final word of truth. It expressed itself on this wise: "The Christian duty of sacrifice for something higher does not exist, for there is nothing higher than the state." Thus, to lie for the state, to steal for the state, to ravage and murder and ravish for the state, was not only not wrong, but was a solemn duty of the loyal citizen. This philosophy marked the return of primitive man to the stage with spear dripping in blood, demanding that the law of the jungle be made the law of society.

"I impeach," said Nietzsche, "that greatest blasphemy in all time, the law of love, which has enchained and softened us. It is good for cows, women and Englishmen. A new table I set over you. O my brethren, 'Become hard.' For the best things belong to us, the best food, the purest sky, the fairest women, the strongest thoughts; and if men do not give us these things, we take them."

“Let us worship not Jehovah, but Wotan, the god of power.”

Thus was developed the German “superman,” the cave man of the twentieth century. He was terribly real, however we may doubt the Neanderthal and Heidelberg specimens. Thus was the ethics of the jungle made the code of a whole nation.

It was the negation of morality, the negation of religion and the negation of true science. Science deals with phenomena, facts; the new philosophy deals with speculation, inferences, deductions proclaimed as true and causal in the name of science. It was the hoax of the ages, this proposal to identify a philosophy of causation with science, to dethrone God by an exposition of the processes of geology, biology and chemistry.

A REDUCTIO AD ABSURDUM

It was Herbert Spencer himself who all unconsciously brought this philosophy to a *reductio ad absurdum* in an essay published shortly before his death, in which he said, in substance: “If I am allowed to postulate force only, I will explain the universe.”

I can only summarize the cold, convincing logic with which George Romanes, Christian philosopher and man of science, replied: “If we allow you to postulate ‘force only,’ you will explain nothing. Force alone produces not a cosmos, but chaos.

Undirected force can produce nothing, and as soon as we introduce into the concept of 'force' the concept of 'direction,' we have introduced a concept that, by the very constitution of our mental being, we are compelled to associate with Intelligence, Personality."

This is the sanest, most terse and complete answer ever made to a philosophy that supposed it had explained causation, when it had merely disclosed processes—a philosophy that sought to deck itself in the robes of science, and sit upon the throne of God. Here it is that the Bible speaks with an authority that is insistent and imperious: "In the beginning *God*."

INVADING OUR SCHOOLS

This pagan, sensuous, devilish philosophy of Evolution, which has undermined the morals of a whole generation, and enshrined itself in erotic, filthy literature that threatens to destroy all modesty and virtue, has invaded our American schools and colleges to an extent we are only beginning to realize.

The *Journal of Social Forces*, issued in the name of a great Southern university supported by the state, makes appeal for a new moral code that would provide a place for the eccentricities of the genius of such men as Byron and Burns and, while upholding monogamy as the ideal in marriage, would insist that place also be found for free love.

A representative of such naturalistic philosophy, a professor in one of America's largest universities, quotes one of his colleagues as "bravely" teaching his students that "man is a mere accident, immortality a sheer delusion," and that "there is practically no evidence for the existence of God. . . . The ideas of God, heaven, immortality, as John Smith thinks of them, and as he and his family, worship, sing, pray and build churches to them, are well-nigh eliminated from critical philosophy."

Another, a professor in America's oldest university, is quoted as saying: "Ideas such as the soul, conscience, God and immortality are merely mistakes of the older psychology."

Again, a distinguished American professor is said to teach his students that "religious symbols, such as salvation, the Heavenly Father, angels, and the like, differ but little from the delusions of the paranoic."

These statements are taken not from the opponents of the new philosophy, but from some of its most distinguished exponents, and were made by them merely as statements of facts. Evidence is not wanting that there has been a sort of conspiracy, organized under the protection of "academic freedom," to perpetuate and extend this philosophy to all our schools and colleges.

It is not merely that certain men do not believe the Bible—that is no new phenomenon—but that men placed in positions of authority to teach the

youth of the land, claim the protection of academic freedom to teach without let or hindrance a philosophy that is destructive of the life of civilization as well as of the Church.

WHAT IS THE REMEDY?

What is the remedy for this false teaching which has already done so much to wreck moral and spiritual life even in America, through undermining the faith of youth in school, college and university?

Certainly not the adopting of laws forbidding the teaching of science, and submitting the doctrines of Scriptures to the decision of human courts. We need no new laws. Laws have their loop-holes, and adopting them usually acts as a narcotic administered to the people. State-controlled colleges and universities supported by the taxes of the people, having no right to teach religion, are by the same token forbidden to teach irreligion. When an awakened public conscience is aroused to an appreciation of the situation not only in state educational establishments but in not a few Church schools, it will drive out of such places this insidious, deadly philosophy masquerading as science that is a menace to every cherished institution of civilization, the state, the Church, the home.

For the Church the remedy for this situation, as for all other evil in state, society and individuals, lies ready to hand. It is the preaching of the Word

of God, which teaches not only what man may know about God and what duty God requires of man, but the fact that this knowledge can be translated into character, and duty translated into conduct, by the power of the Holy Spirit through the blood of the Son of God.

There is good cheer in the numerous evidences of returning sanity. The voice of reason is again being heard throughout the land. Man, made in the image of God, in the midst of a world of order, proportion and beauty is finding God, not only in the long processes of nature's working, but in the mystery of the invisible world of electrons and atoms, far beyond the ken of microscope, and all governed by law.

*"God is law, say the wise, O soul,
And let us rejoice,
For if He thunder by law,
The thunder is yet His voice.
Then speak to Him, thou, for He hears,
And Spirit with spirit may meet,
Closer is He than breathing,
And nearer than hands or feet."*

After all has been said, God has been taking care of His truth. His outstretched hand of judgment has fallen upon the worshipers of force, and the sensualism that has robbed the world of its beauty, and taken love out of the hearts of men.

Meanwhile the Christian may look with new confidence on a world, never so wonderful as today,

crying aloud in reverent awe: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork." The believing soul, watching the swift homing of the water-fowl, may still humbly sing:

*"He who from zone to zone
Guides through the boundless sky thy
certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone,
Will lead my steps aright."*

"In the beginning, God."

III

CHRIST'S INTERPRETATION OF GOD

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."—JOHN 1: 18.

THE world of modern thought is revolving around the problem of the existence of God. It is not a problem born of ecclesiasticism, nor indeed is it primarily the problem of Christianity; it is the problem of all life. Wherever the minds of men have turned to the issues of life and immortality they have longed to find Him who is Himself the Life.

THE PROBLEM

In the nomenclature of even the most advanced science, this has been preëminently a religious age. We have been treated by turns to a religion of humanity, in which man, "blind to his follies, insensible to his weaknesses and given over to the madness of a boundless vanity, has raised an altar and burned incense to his own image;" to the religion of cosmism, and to the religion of the unknowable.

Such terms, however, are seen to be meaningless

when we recognize that they have at one blow stripped the conception of God of the one element that makes it possible for us to entertain toward Him any of those sentiments inseparably associated with the idea of religion; namely, that of personality. However ardent a devotee one may be of these new religions, with their virtual negation of a personal God, the universe, as one confesses, "has lost its loveliness," and the soul is left to "face, godless and alone, the gray, awful waste of waters whose horizon is eternity, with no star in the infinite night for a pole, and no hope of a haven at any time."

Particularly is this statement true of that form of unbelief which has taken the first affirmation of my text, and carved it upon its altar erected to the "unknown God": "No man hath seen God at any time."

A HALF TRUTH

Here we have, at the very core of the spirit of doubt of the age, a great truth that God is unknowable. I wish to emphasize its scriptural character for a moment lest, in the overweening confidence of religious enthusiasm, in our boasted familiarity with the counsels of the Almighty, we should overlook its import. It is the affirmation of the oldest poem of the Hebrew literature, the grandest of the ancient dramas. "Canst thou by searching find out God?" cries Eliphaz in the book of Job.

“Canst thou know the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? Deeper than hell, what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth and broader than the sea.” “God,” exclaims Paul, “is the King, eternal, immortal, invisible, dwelling in light which no man can approach unto, Whom no man hath seen, nor can see.”

Thus in its affirmation that, in the infinite perfection of His being, God is beyond the range of human vision—is a God that hideth Himself—agnosticism is at one with the statement of the text: “No man hath seen God at any time.” But, like all error, it masks itself behind a half-truth. When it affirms that because man cannot know the Almighty unto perfection, cannot stand unveiled in the presence of glory such as never fell on land or sea, he cannot therefore know God at all, cannot accept Him as his Saviour, nor give Him the adoration of his soul, my text, which is at one with this premise of agnosticism, pronounces an everlasting nay to its conclusion: “No man hath seen God at any time—the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath interpreted him.”

COMPREHENDING THE PREDICATE

The demand that we accept this infinite God as our God and Saviour, that we love Him with all our heart and soul and strength and mind, is not an unreasonable one. It has been well said that to

“ assent to any proposition it is the predicate and not the subject which must be comprehended.” A stranger comes into the home, and asks the little five-year-old girl: “ What is it that lights your house? ” Though she knows nothing about electricity as a science—who does know anything of it, beyond the laws of its manifestations?—the child answers readily and truly enough: “ Electricity lights our house, sir.”

And so when God's Word declares that “ God is love,” while we cannot comprehend in its infinite scope the subject, this word “ God,” we do know what love is, and so far we know what God is. When Christ draws nearer still to our needs, and whispers, “ God is your Father,” though we know not all that this wondrous subject contains, we do know the meaning of this name lisped from childhood's earliest hours and more and more precious to every careworn, troubled heart, and to this extent we know what God is, as we look up and say: “ Our Father, who art in heaven.”

THE PROVINCE OF REVELATION

It is thus the province of revelation to reveal God to man by a series of predicates concerning Him, through which we are able, not indeed to comprehend Him in the immensity of His being, but to know Him in so far as He reveals Himself more and more fully not merely to us but, as we shall also see, within us.

We shall consider this self-revelation of the unseen God as made through the only begotten Son, as He reveals God in nature, in the Old Testament Scriptures and in the incarnation, the Word made flesh and dwelling among men.

GOD REVEALED IN NATURE

In our delight over the discovery of the reign of law in nature, in the thrill of the emotions aroused by the revelations opened to our gaze by scalpel, microscope and telescope, we have forgotten for the time that law is not an entity. That, after all, it is only a formula by which is expressed the mode of operation of force, not even force itself; that the uniformity and so-called immutability of natural law are but the fidelity of the will of God to His plan devised in infinite wisdom, and thus never needing revision or change.

Biology, with its unfolding of the "subtlety and delicacy of adjustment of part to part, and part to whole, and whole to its surroundings in the organic world"; chemistry, with its doctrine of definite proportions; astronomy, with its revelation of the persistence of the law of order and adjustment, throughout space; geology, disclosing the reign of law throughout time—all have combined to strengthen the argument for a controlling, formative intelligence at work throughout the universe.

We are gradually being brought back to a recognition of the immanence of God in nature, are com-

ing to understand that lying back of the power that makes itself known in the world about us and above us, there is Intelligent Personality. The universe is not orphaned.

Here in the world of nature, indeed, we touch but the outer works of God, as it were the hem of His robes, but as we come to understand more fully His plan in redemptive grace, we learn that every token of a controlling mind at work in nature is a revelation of God through Christ, by whom all things were made. "By him who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature," by Christ, says Paul, "were all things created that are in heaven, and in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers—all things were created by Him and for Him, and by Him all things consist." "No man hath seen God at any time—the only begotten Son hath interpreted him"—revealed His power and divinity in the universe of matter that sparkles above us, and waits in ministry of fruit and flowers, stored treasures of land and sea, upon the needs of man.

GOD REVEALED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

This revelation of God made by Christ in the realm of nature is surpassed by that which crowns the Old Testament Scriptures. Here also we must be satisfied with that which but imperfectly reveals Him whose being is forever beyond the grasp of

finite mind; any revelation concerning God must of necessity bear the marks of imperfection, because of the infinite perfection of the subject, the imperfections of the language which is the medium of revelation, and the finite character of the mind to which the revelation is made.

There is thus a confessed accommodation of the revelation to our faculties, when the Scriptures ascribe to God the parts and passions of a man. We read of the outstretched hand of God, of the wings of the Almighty, under which His people find refuge; His strong arms are their defence. When God speaks to them He comes in fashion as a man, lodges with them by night, leads them in safety by day. In all their afflictions His heart is afflicted for them. He is the shepherd that feeds His people like a flock, makes them to lie down in green pastures and leads them beside the still waters.

INTERPRETED IN THE INCARNATE SON

Place these figures of speech, these revelations of God's grace and love together, and they form a picture of Him, the only begotten Son, by Whom the invisible God is made known unto men. That which is prefigured in nature and prophecy is realized in the incarnation.

The one great purpose of the incarnation is to make God known to man. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father"; and though Christ brings

His message in the languages of earth, "He speaks with the accents of Heaven."

We dare not pass lightly over the fact that in this revelation of God by the incarnate Son there is still that which we do not comprehend. Translate this message of the Gospel of a living Person into the simplest of creeds, bow humbly at His throne, saying, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into hell, the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen"—the incarnation, the atonement, the resurrection, the ascension, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the Trinity, all face us, even here, with a mystery of grace that can be neither avoided nor explained away. Thus the very revelation of the unseen God presents its own problems to the mind and heart.

THE PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN THE INTERPRETATION

What shall we do with these mysteries of redemptive grace? To some persons, they are a mat-

ter of no more concern than would be the question why they were born in America rather than in India. They accept these mysteries in religion from habit and without reflection. Their religious complexion troubles them as little as does that of their bodies.

With others, religious convictions are changed with the changing modes of thought. They put them off and on as they do different styles of dress; their beliefs belong no more literally to them than do the garments they wear. Their religious life feels every swell of the tide of current thought.

THE RELIGION OF AUTHORITY

Many persons, however, are facing bravely the tremendous issues involved in the blessed Credo, "I believe in God the Father Almighty," and to those seeking in earnestness of soul an answer to these mysteries of life, the Gospel comes with its demand upon one's faith. Christ speaks with authority, an authority which is absolute, imperial, divine: "No one knoweth who the Son is save the Father, and who the Father is save the Son and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." "There is no provision in the philosophy of Christ's mission for a demonstrative proof of its truth, but everywhere in clear tones the divine call speaks to the individual heart with the uncompromising authority of eternal omnipotence."

The offer of life made to us, with an infinite tenderness of appeal, comes also with an unmistakable significance, and with the claim of absolute infallibility. It sets squarely before us the way of life and the way of death. "If ye believe not I am he, ye shall die in your sins." "He that believeth is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

NOT UNREASONABLE

This summary claim of Christ to our assent to the truth upon authority seems to many persons an unreasonable thing; as if we were asked to break away from all those great loyalties of our rational life, those certitudes of facts to which we are accustomed in science and philosophy; as though we were expected to be thoughtful, practical men and women in every other relation of life except that which concerns us most intimately, our relation to the life to come.

However plausible such a view may seem at first to the unreflecting, it is out of harmony with the principles of those very spheres of thought which are laid under tribute to support the complaint. It is a matter of the simplest demonstration that we do not comprehend the most fundamental facts of existence. "The mysteries of the Church," said Professor Huxley, "are child's-play compared with the mysteries of nature. The doctrine of the Trin-

ity is not more puzzling than the necessary antinomies of physical speculation."

How do I know, for example, the world that lies around me in its beauty of spring or in its glory of the harvest season? Yea, how do I know myself? How do I know that I know? "Seeing," we say, "is believing"—but how do I know that I see?

Philosophy has but one answer to these questions: We cannot transcend our faculties, but we can trust them. We cannot get behind our consciousness, but can accept its authority—nay, we must accept it. The word of philosophy is: Believe on authority. Depart from this fundamental creed of all sound reasoning; deny, if you please, the credibility of this authority that makes itself heard in the testimony of the senses and the voice of consciousness; and the universe becomes a mirage in the desert of a disappointed and deluded humanity.

THE AUTHORITY OF A PERSON

Christianity, however, presents to our faith the authority not of a philosophy, nor of a creed, but of a living Person.

Christ presents Himself as the object of faith and love, the bright morning star of a world's hope. We are asked to accept not an abstraction of human speculation, not a philosophy, nor a theory of life, but Himself, God as revealed in Him.

This is not to undervalue the place and function of theology—of a formulated system of doctrine—either in its preservation and coördination of the truth, or in its relation to Christian character and experience. But the claim of the Gospel, its first, great claim, is that we accept it as the revelation of the mind and will of God in Him upon whose royal brow God has set the diadem of truth.

In accepting any truth upon authority there may be, as has been well pointed out by a great English thinker, “the spirit of formalism with the pretence, but without the reality, of assent.” There is, on the other hand, that spirit which humbly confesses: “I do not understand, but accept on authority.” It is the spirit of faith, the faith of credulity, superstition, or the highest and noblest exercise of the faculties of the soul, according as the authority to which we yield assent is or is not worthy.

THE AUTHORITY OF ONE WORTHY TO BE TRUSTED
AND QUALIFIED TO TESTIFY

The faith of the Christian rests upon the authority of One infinitely worthy to be trusted, upon Him who is the Lord of Truth, the “true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.”

Christ's qualification to speak with authority is found in the fact that He is the only begotten Son. He is in the bosom of the Father, and He knows.

“No man hath seen God at any time; he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.” “Ye know not God, but I know him, for I am from him, and he hath sent me.” “We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen.”

In the thrilling story of his rescue of Emin Pasha, Stanley gives a vivid description of the great African forest, through whose gloom he and his followers toiled month after month, buried alike from civilization and the sun; that vast primeval forest through which the tempest roars, the lightnings flash, and the giants of centuries' growth wage daily, deadly conflict with the elements. He tells us how, after journeying painfully for months through this awful wilderness, his men captured some of the natives of the forest tribes, and asked them eagerly how far it was to the plain country, where the sun was ever shining and the cattle grazing on the green pasture-lands. “There is no such land as this,” replied the forest people. “Neither we nor our fathers nor our fathers' fathers have ever heard of this wonderful land of which you tell us. Should you journey on and on, for the remainder of your lives, you will find nothing but the forest and the gloom.”

“But,” said Stanley, coming up, “I have seen this wonderful land of which my men have told you. I come from this land, and am leading my people to this land of sunshine and flowers, where the rich pasture-lands are grazed by thousands of

cattle, the cool breezes sweep over it from the sea and the blue heavens arch it like a curtain of light. Come with us, and we will lead you, also, to this land of beauty."

For answer the jungle people shook their heads and, turning from him, plunged once more into the dark recesses of the trackless forest; for it was the only land they had ever known.

So Christ has come into this trackless waste of sin and suffering and death, to tell us of that other land, His own home-country, the land of endless day. Shall we not take Him at His word—accept the revelation He brings us of its glories, its mysteries of beauty, and trust Him who knows the way to lead us safely home?

SUCH AUTHORITY CONVINCING

The character of the assent to this testimony of Christ certifies to us its reality: This acceptance of truth on the testimony of One who knows, One whom we know and love, is even more complete and absolute than that which we give to abstract propositions expressed in terms of severest logic. Peradventure for the truth of dialectics and philosophy a man would stake his good name and fortune, but to this truth which comes to us in the Gospel of the living Christ there is a completeness and absoluteness of assent for which men have indeed staked their lives. It is in respect not merely of its simplicity, but of its tremendous reality, that

it is said, we must "receive the kingdom of heaven as a little child."

The mother responds to the eager questioning of her boy, as he looks out in wonder upon the heavens saying, "Mother, what makes the sun move?" by answering: "The sun does not move, my boy, but the earth moves round the sun."

The lad looks with unabated interest and wonder, but ask him about this mystery of his little world of thought, and the young astronomer, wise in another's knowledge, trusting in a mother's truth, will pour into your ear his store of world-wisdom with the confidence of the sage. "The mother's veracity is to him no abstract truth, nor item of general knowledge, but is bound up with that image and love of her person which is part of himself, and makes direct claim upon him for his summary assents to her teaching."

The years roll round, and the man of science with his tables of logarithms, his charts, and telescope that sweeps the vault of heaven, looks out upon a world glistening with the heavenly hosts. Though his range of vision has been enlarged beyond calculation, the contents of his knowledge grown greater with each passing year, the reality of the assent he yields to the truth proclaimed by logarithm, chart and telescope has not surpassed in its certitude the assent of the little child, when he accepted what mother told him because she said so, and mother knew.

CHRIST'S INTERPRETATION OF GOD 61

A PROCESS OF EDUCATION

We have spoken of this faith in Christ as offering the highest character of certitude known to the soul; the strong vigorous manhood that treads with unfaltering step the highway of life walks not more surely nor safely than the child that treads an unknown path, in confidence in the strong hand and loving care of his father. But this word of God in Christ has not merely its message of assurance; it has also its word of instruction. It offers its word of faith to the simple and learned alike, and opens vistas of boundless knowledge to satisfy every intellectual craving of the soul. Its message of grace is also: "Grow in knowledge."

"Does it indeed refuse to limit itself to the circle of a syllogism, to the methods of a school of philosophy? It offers in exchange the wisdom of God. It belongs to no school, in order that seekers after truth might in every age find the answer to their needs in the truth Himself."

As van Dyke says in *The Gospel for an Age of Doubt*, "This Gospel fits the spiritual needs of the twentieth century as closely as it fitted the needs of the first. It stands out as clearly from the later as it did from all the earlier philosophies. It finds the soul as inevitably today as it did at the first; and the men of this age who hear Christ can only say, as His disciples did long ago: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

One explanation, at least, of the shipwreck which

so many are making of their faith today is to be found in the fact that the content of their spiritual knowledge has not kept pace with their growth in secular knowledge. As one of the greatest scientists of the last century lamented of his own life, so is it true of many others today, there has been a neglect of the metaphysical and spiritual for the physical and material. Men have come to look upon the certitude of their childhood days in spiritual things as the faith of superstition, because they have not grown in the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus.

A recent writer has eloquently said of Christ: "He was like one standing on a high peak, and reporting of the sunrise to men in some dark valley. They heard His words, but they saw also upon His countenance the glow of dawn, and the incommunicable splendors of a new day."

A CONVICTION THAT BECOMES AN EXPERIENCE

Christ brings us, however, more than the mere report of that glory which He saw and which He reflected from His countenance upon the sons of men. It is not merely as though He stood upon the peaks and called to us of the splendors of the glory that falls upon His face, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; but He comes down into the dark valley and, winning our love and faith in His message of the land that lies beyond, He leads us through the

“dark gorge” and on and up and out, till the “far light is won,” and we, too, stand with Him upon the “shining table-lands to which our God Himself is moon and sun.”

Here is reached the climax of this revelation of God; Christ becomes, in the soul of the Christian, an indwelling fact of personal experience. The authority authenticating the truth to us is identified with our own consciousness of its reality, so that we can now say: “One thing I know—whereas I was blind, now I see.”

This inner revelation of God in Christ places our faith beyond the mere trick of the logician; the “treasury of such faith cannot be stolen from us by any mere intellectual burglary.” The God whom Jesus reveals to us is no longer, in the consciousness of the Christian, an “absentee God, sitting since the creation upon the circle of the universe, and watching it go.” He is not only the Father watching with tender, protecting love over the lives of His children, and numbering the very hairs of their heads; He is the indwelling Spirit. “If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him.”

IV

THE FOUNDATION OF FAITH

“And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.”—I COR. 2: 4, 5.

THE church at Corinth to which Paul addressed this message was torn by internal divisions. Various groups within it rallied around party names, one group taking to itself the name of Paul, another that of Apollos, another that of Cephas, and still another the holy name of Christ. Here was an ecclesiastical phenomenon—one with which, alas, we ourselves have become only too familiar; yet it may shock us to realize that in the United States there are thirteen different kinds of Presbyterians, fourteen of Baptists, and eighteen of Methodists. And now it is proposed that there shall be a new line run through all these churches, dividing them into “Modernists” and “Fundamentalists.”

This result is due to controversy concerning the great essentials of the Christian religion, which has raised again the whole question as to what is the basis and object of faith.

THREE GREAT POSITIONS

The Roman Catholic Church finds such basis in the authority of an infallible Church. This basis provides an exceedingly convenient and attractive method of disposing of all religious problems, by relegating them to others. Unfortunately, however, this so-called infallible Church is composed of fallible men; the foundation is thus built upon sand.

The so-called Modernist exalts human wisdom, and requires rational evidence for every position accepted. He will not believe what he cannot prove by processes of logic. Of course, as a matter of fact, in every relation of life he does believe scores of things that can never be proved, but he declines to accept religion upon authority, human or divine. Pressed to a logical conclusion, in its extreme form Modernism strips Christianity of all that makes it distinctive, and robs it of all mystery of godliness. There can be no Christmas, except as a reminder of the shame of Mary and Joseph. No angels sing, no star guides to the lowly manger; there is no Saviour for our sins, and no hope of a heavenly home. The fully developed Modernist admits frankly that all these truths are involved in the Christian records, but declares that they represent the superstition of an outworn faith, which we of today are compelled to discard and reject.

Others find the basis of faith, not in an infallible Church, and not in human reason, but in an infal-

lible Book. Two real difficulties confront those who hold this position. The first is that, as a book, the Bible has been subjected to all the vicissitudes of transmission and translation; and the second is that to make it, as a book, the basis of faith is to reason in a vicious circle. The man on the street asks us: "How do you know the Bible is the Word of God?" And we answer, properly enough for us: "Because it says so." He then asks: "How do you know that what it says is true?" And we answer: "Because it is the Word of God." It has been well said: "We do not need the inspiration of the Scriptures to prove their inspiration. We cannot assume a doctrine in order to prove it." As a matter of fact, the Scriptures, according to their own teachings, are merely the means by which the object and basis of saving faith are revealed, and they never represent themselves as such object or basis.

THE SITUATION AT CORINTH

The situation of affairs in the church at Corinth, which Paul described so graphically, gave him the opportunity for a clean-cut, definite statement as to what constitutes the foundation of faith.

"The Jews" (to whom he was preaching), he says, "sought a sign." Theirs was a short and easy method of settling the whole question. It required external, supernatural evidence as a ground for faith. Many Christian men are doing the same

thing today when they expect the problems of religion to be settled once and for all by some new revelation.

Paul might have answered these Jews by performing some miracle. Such a method had been often tried, and had failed to melt a hard heart or convince a stubborn mind. Following the example of Jesus, when met by a similar demand, Paul refused to yield to the desire for a sign.

The Greeks demanded what the Modernists demand today; namely, rational proof. Paul might have answered the demand by "arguing the supremacy of the Gospel over pagan rites and ceremonies, and have endeavored to convince them of the historic truth of Christianity. The conviction thus produced would have been rational and important, but it would have been founded on human logic and reasoning-philosophy." Paul declares that such wisdom has never in itself led men to a knowledge of God; "the world through its wisdom knew not God."

It would be well for some of us who are not Modernists to realize the implications of Paul's position. When we insist upon the acceptance of doctrinal statements, with the same earnestness with which we press the claims of the Bible, we ought not to forget that while the Bible is inspired, no doctrine of inspiration is inspired, but has been arrived at by processes of reasoning. This is not in any wise to undervalue the importance of reason,

but is a warning that unless we are to be swept into the camp of rationalism, the reason must be kept in its proper place and relation. Thus, we have set before us in the context the situation with which Paul was confronted by these two demands: On the one hand, there was the demand for supernatural evidence in the form of miracles, and, on the other, for rational proof of the Christianity which he proclaimed.

HOW PAUL MET THE SITUATION

In the face of these two demands, Paul reached a fixed determination to preach Jesus Christ as the object of faith. The Christ he proclaimed was not the mystical Christ of speculative philosophy or some mere spiritual "illumination," but One of whom holy men of God had spoken as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, who had been manifested as the Christ of Bethlehem and Nazareth, the Christ of Galilee and Jerusalem, "who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried, who on the third day rose again"—the Christ who was the mystery of godliness, "God manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

This was the Christ whom Paul preached unto Jews and Gentiles alike. This was specifically Christ crucified as a propitiation for the sins of the

world—a doctrine that the Jews stumbled over, and the Greeks regarded as foolishness. “It was repellent then, as now, to a certain type of culture that will accept neither the fact of sin, nor God’s method of salvation. Nothing in the apprehension of the rationalist could be more absurd than that the blood of the cross could remove sin, promote virtue, and secure the salvation of the soul, or that the mere preaching of such a doctrine was to convert the world.” A crucified Christ was a stumbling-block to the Jew, and to the Greek, utter foolishness. It is still so.

Paul recognized this attitude frankly, and met the issue squarely. “The natural man,” he says, “receiveth not the things of the Spirit, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned.” It was the position Jesus took with Nicodemus, when He declared that “except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he can neither enter nor see the Kingdom of God.”

In dependence upon this Spirit of God Paul proclaimed the Christ of this Gospel as the power of God unto salvation. Conscious of his weakness, in fear and trembling, with style and delivery divested of enticing words of man’s wisdom, he boldly and consistently preached such a Saviour as the object of faith, in order that the basis, the foundation of all faith, “should not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God.”

" WISDOM "

By "wisdom" Paul meant what we usually mean when we speak of "reason." But it should be borne in mind that there is another and wider meaning of the word, involving not merely the processes of reasoning, but the data of consciousness, which we are compelled to use, if not indeed to trust, unless all truth be without foundation in reality.

When, for example, one reaches a stage where he no longer believes that two plus two make four, or has convinced himself that the world he sees, feels, and reacts to, is only a phenomenon of his own thinking, and has no existence beyond his thought of it, he has made impossible not only the conclusion he has reached in regard to this unreality, but all reason also. This outcome was in the mind of the author of *Hudibras* when he said, so long ago: "If what men say against reason be without reason, they deserve to be neglected; and if with reason, they disprove themselves. For they use it while they disclaim it; and with as much contradiction as if a man should tell me that he cannot speak."

But the deep and inevitable conviction of the veracity of the fundamental postulates of all reason must be sharply distinguished from the processes of logic that may be sound in their premises but, from one cause or another, false in their conclusions. There are some things we believe be-

cause we cannot help believing them, but there are others concerning which we demand adequate proof. Just here arises the question, "What is adequate proof?" What is convincing to some people, because they are qualified to sift the evidence, or because they are inclined to accept it, may be utterly unconvincing to others. Both types of mind have as a common basis of reason the ultimate and necessary truths we are all compelled to accept, because we are built that way. It is only when the process of reasoning begins to work upon common data that they reach diametrically opposite conclusions.

PAUL AND "WISDOM"

This consideration serves sharply to differentiate the position of Paul from that of all philosophies, for he had recognized the spiritual sterility of the wisdom of the schools, and had learned that something more was needed than proof of the truth of religion.

He would have yielded to none in his conviction that the religion of Jesus, whom he preached, had behind it manifestations of divine power and glory, and ancient historic documents revealing truths that could be co-ordinated and built up into an argument of tremendous cogency. Indeed, large portions of his writings disclose in him powers of dialectics that have never been surpassed, and no apologetic for Christianity shows more consum-

mate skill than is found in the brief summary of his discourse on Mars Hill.

To discard such arguments as without value would be to discredit not only the author of the text, but the Spirit who inspired his writings, and there could be no more tragic mistake made by the Church than to put a premium on intellectual indolence and cultivate a spirit of satisfaction that would be content to "live upon a pension of faith." The results would be as disastrous in the world of letters as in the sphere of religion.

So cumulative and convincing was the evidence he gathered, and so close knit the logic with which he drove it home to the mind, that Paul himself felt that only an intellect blinded by the god of this world could fail to be convinced by his argument for Christianity. Yet he knew that something more than argument was needed to bring men to Jesus Christ. He knew that something more was needed to save a soul than processes of logic.

When Bishop Butler, in his *Analogy*, proved to deists that if they accepted the fact of God, there was no logical difficulty in the way of their accepting Jesus Christ, he rendered a service that continues to hearten Christian thinkers to this day; but it is doubtful whether the *Analogy* ever led one soul to Jesus as a Saviour.

When Arthur Balfour (*Defence of Philosophic Doubt*) in his subtle style showed that science

raises quite as many problems as religion, and problems that are equally insoluble, he perhaps took the conceit out of some scientists, and established the faith of not a few earnest-minded men and women troubled by the problems of the day, but there is no evidence that he ever led one soul into the light of saving truth.

STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS OF CREEDS

Here is to be found both the strength and weakness of all Church creeds, except perhaps the briefest and most ancient. Their cultural value through training Christian people in the knowledge of God's Word is incalculable, and has strengthened many when they have been compelled to give a reason for the faith that is in them. They have been also largely instrumental in keeping the securities of faith intact.

But as conditions of Church membership, many, if not all of them, would require an intellectual acumen and trained powers of reasoning that only a few possess, and thus raise barriers at the door of the Church against all but the (s)elect few.

Of one of the greatest of these creedal statements, and perhaps the one most logically developed, it is not unjust to say that only a severe theological discipline, begun in early youth, can equip the average man to follow, much less understand, the masterly line of reasoning that links the whole document into a great system of

thought. To be trained in such a school of religion is a blessing for which any man should be profoundly grateful.

As arguments, such creeds rank with the great masterpieces of human reasoning, but *as arguments* they reveal what Paul calls the "wisdom of men," and for their intelligent acceptance they involve not only the handling of a mass of historic material, uninspired as well as inspired, but an ability to assimilate and coördinate this material such as the average man does not possess.

As a method of presenting truth so as to win the world back to God, this was not the method of Jesus, who never made an argument, nor was it the method to which Paul was led by the Spirit of God. For Paul came to recognize this method for what it is, the method of rationalism—the wisdom of men—as contrasted with a revelation of truth authenticated to the humblest believer by the Spirit of God.

That in the most orthodox communions elaborate terms of creedal subscription are no longer required of the applicant for Church membership, is apparently unknown to the popular Modernist preacher who assails a "creed-ridden Church." The excuse for his ignorance is doubtless to be found in the lamentations of those who cry aloud that "the Church has lost its Christ," because it no longer insists that the sinner must seek Him through the mazes of a system of theology.

At a period when with renewed confidence the Church is endeavoring to marshal the facts that science, archæology, psychology and philosophy have put in her hands for a new and greater apologetic, it would be well for us to read again the warning words of an old book that states with rare force and clarity the position of Paul. It is the confessional position of the fathers in one of the great branches of Protestantism:

“The Scriptures,” says the *Larger Catechism* of the Westminster Assembly, “manifest themselves to be the Word of God by their majesty and purity, by the consent of all the parts, and the scope of the whole, which is to give glory to God; by their power and light to convince and convert sinners and build up believers unto salvation”—that is, there is a strong, conclusive argument of reason for the inspiration of the Word of God, a convincing apologetic—“*but* the Holy Spirit, witnessing by and with the Scriptures in the heart of man, is alone able to convince him that they are the very Word of God.”

A CRITICAL DECISION

In the context from which the text is taken Paul apparently arrived at a new stage in his own experience, and had certainly come to a very definite decision concerning his method of reaching men. He determined to preach Christ crucified, depending on the Spirit of God to drive home the

truth he proclaimed in order that the faith of his converts "should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

The critical element in his decision was not the content of his message, for he had always preached Christ crucified, but his apparently new appreciation of the necessity of the power of the Holy Spirit to convince and convict men of the truth as it is in Jesus. Faith founded upon such conviction is divine in its origin and overwhelming in its certitude.

THE NEED OF THE HOUR

Such preaching is the need of the hour. We are not to wait for the supernatural powers associated with our Lord's return, nor should we await the decision of human courts on the truth of God's Word in His world, or in His Book, nor should we condition our message by the vagaries and theories of either science or philosophy, but we are to proclaim the grace and power of a crucified, risen and glorified Redeemer.

If men are to heed the message today, we must cease wrangling over the logic—if you please, the theology—of the plan of salvation, and our doctrinal statements of that plan, and lift up before a lost and ruined world—a world of men and women that seldom think straight, and when they do are unwilling or unable to translate their thinking into conduct—we must lift up before such a world, the

Son of God upon the cross, as the object of faith and love, the one hope of salvation.

THE DYNAMICS OF FAITH

When we shall do this, as it was done by the early Church, there will be the demonstration of power from heaven, the power of the Spirit of God redeeming and transforming the souls and lives of men.

It is the Christ of such a Gospel only that gives the dynamic for service in response to the pitiful needs of humanity. It is said that at a recent meeting of Socialists, there was sung Matheson's beautiful hymn, "O Love, that wilt not let me go." But they omitted the last verse,

*"O Cross, that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from Thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
And from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be."*

Omitting this stanza, they omitted the very power of the living God to inspire confidence, faith and hope, and to lead men into sacrificial service for their needy brothers.

Is it not time for us to believe in this power of God through the Spirit to save the world? Is it not time for us to cease our fearfulness for the safety of the ark of the covenant? Is it not time that we believed and proclaimed that God's Word in His

world, and God's Word in His Book, never contradict each other, but find their reconciliation in Him who is the Word?

Such a faith can never be shaken by the theories of science, nor the arguments of philosophy; it remains serene amidst all the conflicts of criticism and the controversies of theologians, for it "stands not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

V

CHRIST'S METHOD OF DEALING WITH THE SINNER

John, Chapter 4

THIS text is taken not from a single verse, nor from a short group of verses of Scripture, but from an entire chapter, and that a very long one (John 4). It is a chapter that has comforted many a sinner, and thrilled the heart of the Church with a passion for souls. It sets before us, not by way of dogmatic teaching but by the example of our Lord Himself, what is the real business of the Church of God in the world.

THE BUSINESS OF THE CHURCH

When we ask ourselves, What is that business? perhaps most of us would agree what it is not—that the Church is not a society for ethical culture, nor a club for social fellowship and the discussion of mutually interesting topics, nor even a moral reform society for the overturning of corrupt governments.

“Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel

to every creature." In this command lies the charter as well as the commission of the Church; and the church that would realize its divine commission must realize that its one business is to preach Jesus, and that it is a divinely ordained institution for the salvation of men, through the instrumentality of men, by the agency of the Holy Spirit, accompanying the proclamation of the Gospel.

To some the word "preach" always suggests, as some one has said, "A pulpit and a sermon, encased not only in velvet, but in superstitious solemnity," but the command to preach is addressed to all God's people, in every walk of life; and in the early Church they that were "scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word, except the apostles."

Canon Wilberforce sums up the stages of Christian life in four words—"admit, submit, commit, transmit." Admit Christ to your heart; submit your will to His will; commit your interests to His keeping; transmit His message to others.

Let us consider this last tense of the Christian life, the business of transmission, the one great business of the Church of God, not merely through its ordained ministry, but through the personal service of every believer.

THE "HOW" OF PERSONAL WORK

To the earnest Christian who accepts for himself the responsibility of telling others about Jesus,

there arises at once the practical question, "Where can I learn how to do this?" The answer is found in Christ's own method of dealing with the sinner, and it is from the Master Himself that he must learn how to do this work, for Jesus is represented here, not in His unique divinity, but in His perfect humanity. The story is opened with a picture of our Lord as He, "being weary, sat thus upon the well." The little Greek word "thus," untranslatable in English, may be best defined as a snapshot picture of our Lord, taken at eventide, sitting hungry and tired on the brink of Jacob's well.

The story is told by John, who preserves to us, as no other evangelist, the details concerning Jesus' perfect humanity. It is John alone who says of Christ that He was "athirst" upon the cross. He alone tells us that "Jesus wept"; and here he touches the very heart of humanity's physical weakness when he says: "Jesus, being weary, sat thus upon the well."

*"A weary Christ! No angel face
 Could ever show such human trace
 And yet divinest purpose tell,
 Athirst, awaiting at the well."*

CHRIST'S INTEREST IN THE INDIVIDUAL

Nothing was more characteristic of Jesus than His unfailing interest in individuals. He was often surrounded by vast multitudes, and He had compassion upon them in their needs, but He always

had time for the individual: For the blind man, feeling his way with his stick; for Matthew, heart-hungry though with money piled up on the counter; for Zaccheus with an uneasy conscience, hiding in the sycamore tree; for Nicodemus, stealing away in the night to talk to Him; for this poor sinful woman, to talk to her about her soul. No wonder she was amazed that such a man would even speak to her. A Jew speak to a Samaritan! Jesus speak to a woman of the town!

But Jesus was interested in her, first, because He knew the value of a soul. He, who knows all the mysteries of life, who made the heavens above us, and the world about us, placed above them all the value of one soul. There is no more wonderful picture in the Word of God. Yet the most wonderful thing about it all is that, while He was so interested in one poor, sinful woman's soul, we are so indifferent to the souls about us. We preachers, and Sunday School teachers, and elders, and deacons, are we really interested in what Jesus is most interested in? We parents who would do anything for our children, work for them, slave for them, are we interested in their souls? We preachers who would like to preach to great congregations, are we interested in those in whom Jesus was most interested?

Jesus was interested in this woman not merely because He knew the value of a soul, but because He knew the expansive power of the truth. This

woman, when she found Jesus, went away and told others about Him, and there were more people saved by her message than by the message of any one else before Pentecost; and after Pentecost the first great revival outside of Jerusalem began in the town where she lived.

It is all very wonderful: She went and told "the men," the companions of her guilt, the ones least likely to be influenced by anything she could do or say, and she won them to Christ. This is the thing we need to remember. It is always so. We never know how great a multitude may be reached by the one man or woman to whom we speak.

Most of us have forgotten the very name of the man who spoke to a clerk named Dwight L. Moody, who set the bells of heaven ringing, and kept them ringing, with the news of the salvation of tens of thousands of souls. Not one of us, perhaps, can recall the ignorant country preacher whose message touched young Spurgeon's heart as he was going up to London. Maybe he never knew about it himself. We go to Sunday School, and find just one little, tow-headed boy on a rainy day, and we say to the superintendent: "What's the use of teaching this class?" Yet that little boy might, by the grace of God, become a Moody or a Spurgeon.

JESUS' METHOD OF REACHING THE INDIVIDUAL

We would all like to do this work if we only knew how, and Jesus in this story tells us how.

His method is the method of simplicity and naturalness. It is the only method that really wins people. When most of us talk about religion and Jesus, there is a little different tone to our voice, just a bit of sanctimoniousness. The world calls it "cant;" but Jesus here arouses this woman's interest by asking her, "Please give me a drink of water." If we would learn how to win souls for Christ, we must learn something of this naturalness of approach, the point of contact.

Jesus awakened not only her interest, but her desire, by making the Gospel attractive to her. He told her that if she only knew who it was who was talking to her, He would make it so she would not have to come to the well with the water-pots, and carry the heavy burden so many times up the hill. If she would only ask Him, He would give her running water—we call it "living water;" but she did not see that at first. We who have a spigot in the kitchen, and in the bathroom, and in the butler's pantry, and can turn on the water when we will, it is hard for us to know what running water meant to an Eastern peasant woman. No wonder she wanted it. No wonder she was amazed that anybody could make it possible.

The reason most people do not want what we say our Master has, is because we never talk about it in such a way as to arouse their interest. We talk earnestly and enthusiastically about everything else but Jesus.

If a man advertised his business as we advertise the Church, it would be in the hands of receivers before the first of next month. If we want to learn to win men to Jesus, we must learn how to tell them who Jesus is, and what He has to give them.

But Jesus won this woman not only by the simplicity and attractiveness of His method of approach, but by touching her conscience. For, when she asked Him to make it possible that she would not have to come to draw, and haul the water way up the steep hill, He surprised her by putting His finger upon the sore spot in her life: "Go, call thy husband, and come hither," He said; and when she stammered: "I-I have no husband," Jesus told her He well knew that, and knew also her life of sin and shame.

It is a disclosure of what is at once one of the most important and one of the most difficult things in soul-winning—the ability to touch, not merely the mind with desire, but the conscience with a sense of guilt. How many of us are faithful in wounding our friends? How many of us are willing to run the risk of such fidelity? Many of us can be so harsh and censorious as to drive away those whom we would win, but how many of us have learned in the school of the Master to deal faithfully with our friend's weakness and sins?

It is a lesson that can be learned only under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, at Jesus' feet. It is a

lesson that must be learned if we would be soul winners.

Jesus, who knew how to speak naturally, attractively and faithfully, knew also how to avoid controversy. When this woman's conscience was touched, she did what every sinner is sure to do; she tried to avoid the issue. She raised with Jesus what we would call today the question of denominations; and so she tried to side-step the whole business by asking Jesus, Which was the true place of worship—at Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim, where her father worshipped, or at Jerusalem?

It is an old trick of the awakened sinner. We have all been deceived by it. Some years ago a young man came to me "troubled about the mode of baptism." I spent hours with him, with the open Bible, explaining the subject. He came back after some weeks, and I went over the ground again, patiently and fully, until he said he understood it. After some weeks he was back again; I asked him what troubled him, and he said he "Wanted to know about the mode of baptism." Then it flashed on me that what was troubling him was his sin, and he was trying to dodge the whole issue by talking to me about the method of baptism. When I pinned him down, he burst into tears, and confessed his sins.

There is a place for argument, a place for teaching the great truths of our separate churches; but no one who wants to win a soul for Christ will ever

do so by the discussion of Church government, ordination, mode of baptism, or any of the many other things that absorb so much of the Church's attention and interest. And you may be very sure that the man who wants to argue with you about denominations is perhaps unconsciously, but no less really, trying to avoid the one supreme issue, the relation of his soul to God.

There is just one other characteristic of Jesus' method that this story brings out. He is not only natural and attractive in establishing a point of contact; not only does He touch the conscience, and avoid controversy, but He reveals to this poor outcast woman of the town the deepest and most sublime truth.

The great sages of India, and the great teachers of Greece and Rome, never uttered such sublime words as did Jesus to this poor sinful woman when He said, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

We are prone to forget this truth in our teaching and our preaching. We take up precious time in anecdotes, and all sorts of stories, but what the soul is longing for is the deep things of the Kingdom of God. We try to explain away the great mysteries of the Kingdom of God, when the soul is yearning for the mysteries of a truth that is beyond logic and philosophy.

Perhaps there is nothing more needed in teaching

and preaching today than that God's people should get back to a realization of the sublime and glorious mystery of grace; as a thing not to be apologized for and explained away, but to be proclaimed as the wonder of the ages. Great indeed is the mystery of godliness; "God manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." And the heart of this woman of sin answered to this profoundest of all truth, so simple and yet so deep; answered to it as the lily turns towards the sun, as the thirsty cry out when they see the gushing fountain in the desert, and as the hungry when they sit at the table of bounty.

When you and I have learned these five things, how to talk simply and naturally about Jesus, how to make Him attractive, how to touch the conscience, how to avoid controversy and how to speak frankly and clearly of the great mystery of love, we shall have learned from our Master the secret of His method of winning a soul.

THE JOY OF PERSONAL WORK

We cannot leave the scene with its setting, the growing twilight, the tired Christ, the new light dawning upon a troubled heart, without realizing that this work was the delight of Jesus' heart. The woman went away to tell her wonderful story to others, and when the disciples came they found Him no longer hungry and weary, but as a man

who had sat at a banquet table. And when they said unto Him, "Master, eat," opening up the store they had bought in the town, He answered: "I have meat to eat that ye know not of. . . . My meat and my drink is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."

To some of us, in whom there has been awakened the longing to do this work, there is also the consciousness of it as a difficult thing and a burden; and yet if we would only take up the burden, we would find it refreshing and strengthening, as Jesus found it. There is an old legend that when the birds were first created they staggered about, under the burden of the load they carried on their shoulders, until finally one songster almost falling, stretched out one wing, and then to balance himself stretched out the other, and then, with fluttering wings, found himself lifted above the ground and, in a few moments, soaring into the blue, with a song such as the heart knows that finds itself lifted to God by service.

"But," some one says, "if I could only do this work as Jesus did it!" We can, He says. "Greater work shall you do than this, because I go to my Father." There was the secret of His skill. Some one watching a sculptor at work on a block of marble said to him: "Oh, that I might be able to shape the lives of men as you do that block of stone." He answered: "You can, sir, if you do as I do—get on your knees."

THE "WHERE?" OF PERSONAL WORK

Wanting to do this work, and willing to learn from Jesus in the school of prayer, there is one more question you doubtless want to ask: "Where can I find this work?"

The story carries the answer, the answer of Jesus to the heart seeking to win others to His love and service. For He says to His disciples: "Say not ye: 'There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest?'"—just what we so often say to ourselves. "After a while I will find opportunity"—"But I say unto you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest."

The opportunity is ours—not in some vague, indefinite time, in some spiritual awakening, but here and now in our homes, in our business, on the streets, in the fields, in the Sunday School and in the Church—the greatest of all opportunities of life, that of the winning of souls for the Master.

VI

CHRIST'S METHOD OF DEALING WITH THE MORALIST

" Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? "—MARK 10: 17.

HE preaching of Christ attracted the attention and elicited the interest of great multitudes of people. To the door of Peter's home, in which Christ was a guest, the whole city of Capernaum was gathered, at the close of His first Sabbath's ministry there. A little later, in the same city, the people filled the house in which He was speaking, until those who sought His healing touch for a palsied man could reach Him only by way of the roof. His mother and brethren, grown anxious for His health because of the incessant strain of His work, were unable to get nigh Him because of the press.

When He preached by the seashore, the people left no place for pulpit, except the deck of a small boat, pushed out a little way from the land. Exhausted by His labors, He sought a place in the desert to rest a while, only to find thousands had preceded Him to His place of retirement. In another place they " thronged Him," as Luke tells us,

until the crush was so great that men trod one another down, in their eagerness to hear and see Him who spake as never man spake. Jesus' message touched men of all classes, and the land seemed to have emptied itself of even the vilest elements; and the publicans and sinners, the outcast and reprobate, drew near to hear Him.

The heart of Jesus responded with infinite tenderness to this pathetic expression of the people's needs, and as He looked upon the multitudes "He was moved with compassion for them." Yet He was never for a moment deceived by these evidences of popular enthusiasm and interest in His preaching. When the people pressed most eagerly to hear His words, He warned His disciples against the leaven of hypocrisy; when they would take Him by force and make Him a king, He hid Himself from them. When men cried to Him as He went along the highway to Jerusalem, "We will follow thee whithersoever thou goest," He answered, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head. . . . If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow me."

It was perhaps largely for this reason that Jesus delighted to speak to men personally, winning them to Him one by one. So He gathered the first disciples, hand-picked, as it were; so He called Matthew to His service; so He revealed His heart of love in the midst of the home circle at Bethany.

It is in this relation of Jesus to individuals that we find the most striking illustrations of the terms and conditions of salvation. The text shows His method of dealing with the type of the moralist, in the attractive personality of the rich young ruler, who came to Him seeking the way of life. None should be indifferent to the lesson because, perchance, he may not be rich.

From the story as told in the Gospels, we may gather a vivid conception of the character of this young man. No one ever sought the presence of Jesus whose life was richer in promise than his. Luke describes his social and civic position by telling us he was the ruler, or president, of his synagogue, having thus the *entre* to the most select religious and social circles of his city. Added to this advantage, he possessed that which enabled him to enjoy to the fullest the privileges of his station—he was rich. All the potentialities of influence and usefulness that lie bound up in wealth were his.

Let us not misunderstand the Gospel at this point. Our Lord's teaching was never tainted with communism or socialism. He found His own earthly home at the house of Peter in Capernaum, and of Lazarus at Bethany. He shows the terrible temptations to which riches subject men, but He never declared it to be sinful to own property. Dives is found in Hell, not because he was rich, but because he missed the opportunity of service that

his very wealth afforded. The man with one talent was not saved because he happened to be limited in his means, nor the man with the ten talents cast out because he found himself charged with the vast responsibilities of wealth; and the disciples, rightly interpreting the spirit of the Master's teaching, did not reject the offer of Joseph of Arimathea because he owned a lot in the city of Jerusalem.

The young man of my text possessed, also, that which comes but once to any life—youth. With the world before him, with health and strength and the vast possibilities afforded by wealth, culture and social position, he had what was far better than all these; that, indeed, which gave them real value—a noble character. He was sincere and virtuous, with his heart fixed on righteousness. Mark tells us, in his vivid, pictorial style, that he came “running and kneeled at Jesus' feet,” and asked Him, “Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?”

There is a tendency in some quarters to minimize this type of character, as though it were a fault for one to be moral and upright. It is a grave mistake. The hope of the country is in just such men—like the young man who can look Jesus in the face while He goes over the commandments, beginning with the law of the clean life, and say, “All these have I kept from my youth up.” If we needed anything else to draw forth our admiration for such a character, we find it in the statement of

Mark that "Jesus, as He looked on him, loved him."

This rich young ruler came with the question which he instinctively felt Jesus was best qualified to answer, "What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"

To us the answer would seem simple and inevitable. We find it readily in the very essence of the Gospel, compressed into a short sentence. We should say to such a one without hesitation: "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." That is, we would take the blessed living truth, the very pith and core of the Gospel, as Paul expressed it, for one needy, conscience-smitten sinner—in its last analysis, the very Gospel itself—and make of it a formula, a short and easy method of dealing with inquirers. Not such is Jesus' method of dealing with men. He answers not according to our theological expectations, but according to the individual needs of each heart.

He answers the young man by telling him to *keep the law*: "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." He thus proclaims for this man, as He did for the lawyer who came tempting Him with a similar question, the gospel of Judaism, the "gospel of salvation by works": "This do, and thou shalt live."

The young man's answer is at once prompt, sincere and to the point: "All these have I kept from my youth up." It was an heroic attempt to climb

into heaven over the frowning battlements swept by God's law. It is scarcely too much to say that it was nearer success than any other attempt ever made, for "Jesus, beholding him, loved him!"

Let us not discount for a moment one element of this splendid type of young manhood developed in the school of the law. Would God that we all might imitate it, in its wrestling against the unclean and the false! If you please, add to the picture thus drawn; invest the young man with all other graces of moral excellence manifested in obedience to the written law, and then place over against it all the terrible fact that *it does not save!*

To the ready response that all these commandments he had kept from early youth, Jesus' answer is very brief: *Carry out the program unto perfection.* To the lawyer Jesus had given a summary of the commandments, in the phrase, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." To this young man He answers: "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and . . . come, follow me." That is, "If you love God with all your heart, follow Me; if you love your neighbor as yourself, go, sell what thou hast, and give it to the poor!"

He simply puts His finger upon the weak spot in the young man's character, that he may see his life as it is, measured by the perfect law; and the young

man sees that law which he had prided himself upon having kept, broken and shattered at his feet. He loved neither God nor his neighbor with a perfect heart.

Eternal life does not lie that way. Good, yes, but not good enough; that way is swept by the whole battery of God's law. This is Christ's method—not the method of a formula, but a method adapted to the needs of each inquiring soul. He puts His finger upon the one thing which stands between the soul and God.

With the lawyer it was uncharitableness, and Jesus tells the story of the Good Samaritan, who found the claim of the neighbor in the cry of the needy. With Nicodemus it was ecclesiastical pride and self-sufficiency, and Jesus began by saying plainly that only the new-born soul can enter or even see the Kingdom of God. When the woman that was a sinner strove to cover up her past record, by engaging in a theological controversy concerning the proper place to worship God, Jesus brushed aside the attempt and sent, deep down into her soul, the searchlight of truth, until she was ready to cry out: "He told me all that ever I did!" Her unrepented sin stood between her soul and God, and until that was put away she could not be saved.

It is always so. With you it may be pride or lust or self-sufficiency; or, as with this young man, covetousness; or, as with many young men and

women, love of the pleasures of this life. Only God knows what it is that stands between you and your Saviour, but though it be the dearest idol of your heart, Jesus comes and says, Give it up, Give it up! Make a clean, clear-cut surrender of your heart to God!

Had he stayed, Jesus would have shown the young man what he really needed. He had been like a man trying to regulate a clock by moving the hands; it is set right today, but it is wrong again tomorrow. It can be regulated only from within. Like Nicodemus, this young man needed the new heart. He needed grace and strength to surrender his heart and life to God. We can picture a different ending to the scene. I think sometimes I can see him falling at Jesus' feet, crying, "Lord, Thou knowest my heart; Thou hast put Thy finger on the sore spot of my life. O Master, I would be saved, saved in spite of my sinful, covetous heart. O Saviour, help me—help me to give my heart to *Thee!* Help me to love my God with all my heart, to love my neighbor as myself. Lord, forgive and strengthen, save me!"

Can you not hear the answer to that cry? Can you not see the outgoing of the gracious power that cleansed the leper, and gave back strength to the palsied limbs, as He stoops and lifts this man to his feet, saying, "My son, arise and walk!"

There would have been no sale of property in that young man's home that day, but he would

have gone back to his own, feeling that it was no longer his, but God's; his, indeed, in trust for God's children; his to be used for God's Kingdom and God's glory; yet not his, because he was Christ's, and Christ is God's.

But the young man made what Dante called "The Great Refusal." He turned away, within sight of the portals of heaven, away from the Lord of the Kingdom in His love and gentleness, away from a love that could not indeed lower the terms of salvation one whit, yet opens the doors of life to the sinful but penitent heart. In his breast there seems to have come at last some consciousness of the awful fact, for as the interview closes, and he goes back to his rich home, the poorest of the poor, Luke says: "He heaved a deep sigh," the cry of a soul almost saved, but lost!

Will you go, too? Go with your own unworthiness at last exposed, even to yourself? Or shall you not rather fall at His blessed feet, saying: "Lord, I see it all at last; without Thee I can do nothing. Lord, give me the new heart. Here I give myself to Thee, 'tis all that I can do."

VII

THE LAW'S FAILURE *

“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”—ROM. 8: 3, 4.

IN bringing you a message on this historic occasion, and in such a presence, I have sought for a theme that would be vibrant with the issues and problems of the hour, and filled with the spirit that is enshrined in the legend upon our banners, *In hoc signo vinces.*

Paul, writing to the church at the capital of the Roman Empire, the seat of world jurisdiction, naturally devotes a large portion of his letter to a consideration of the subject of law, and while he is speaking primarily of the moral law, he lays down certain great principles of universal application which are of intense interest today.

He begins, first of all, with the limitation of law, what it could not do.

* Preached in St. Paul's Episcopal church, Augusta, Georgia, at the encampment of the Grand Commandery of Knight Templars of Georgia, May 9, 1923.

LAW CANNOT MAKE PEOPLE GOOD

For many centuries church and state combined in the attempt to make people good by regulation. The result was the torture chamber, the horrors of the inquisition and the destruction of liberty.

Puritanism, with all its noble service to the world, was also wrecked on this rock. The contrast just here between Puritan and Cavalier is most interesting. The latter tried to make people good by forcing them to use the prayer-book and liturgy, without caring what they might do when church was out. The Puritan sought to make people morally, not ceremonially, good by laws and regulations. Both Cavalier and Puritan punished those who refused to be so regulated. It was the custom. Both Puritan and Cavalier failed.

Some modern fanatics, slow to learn the lessons of history, have likewise attempted to make people good by legislation; and the favorite narcotic for an awakened public conscience in the presence of moral evils is: "Pass a law."

OBJECT OF LAW MISUNDERSTOOD

To characterize, however, as has been done recently, all laws affecting the lives and habits of people as an attempt to make men good by legislation, is to ignore the meaning of modern social development, and to adopt the slogan of the enemies of society and civilization.

The principles of civil and religious liberty were

embedded in the organic law of this country, " by which " (to quote the words of a late distinguished justice of the Supreme Court of the United States) " were forever rent the shackles that priestly domination had been forging through centuries, and the solemn decree sent forth that henceforth no man in America should dare intercept the radiance of the Almighty, as it falls upon the individual soul." There can be no laws made " affecting the establishment of religion or the free exercise thereof." This country is in no peril from puritanism, but it faces the deadly peril of a spirit of lawlessness in high places, as well as among the masses of the people, and all this cry about " puritanism " is an attempt to deceive the ignorant and unwary—the unholy propaganda of men who, under the guise of liberty, would destroy human freedom.

LAWS DO NOT SEEK TO MAKE PEOPLE GOOD

The laws that have been stigmatized today have no such objective.

I shall name a few that have been most criticized: Pure food laws, child labor laws, laws to regulate moving pictures and similar exhibitions, and the prohibition law embodied in the Constitution of the United States.

Before showing their true objective, it is worth while to consider two closely kindred objections, with which the press and platform are ringing just now.

“ SUCH LAWS INCREASE CRIME ”

It is said that such laws increase lawlessness. This charge is undoubtedly true. There is a fundamental trait of human nature that makes people want to do what they are told they must not do. Paul states this tendency frankly when he says: “ I had not known lust, except the law said: ‘ Thou shalt not covet.’ ”

This, declares the apostle, is not the fault of the law, “ which is holy, and the commandment holy, and just and good,” but is due to the native disposition of men; “ the law is weak through the flesh.” Every court understands this fact thoroughly. That many people break the law is no argument for its repeal, for this argument would break down divine as well as human law. To repeal or modify a law because of lawlessness, such lawlessness as flaunts itself in America today, holding neither person nor property free from violence, and trampling upon the ark of a nation’s liberties, its constitution, is to put up a signboard on the road to ruin, and to hasten society toward the boneyard of social and governmental anarchy.

“ SUCH LAWS INFRINGE PERSONAL LIBERTY ”

The other objection that is pressed today is that such laws violate the freedom of the individual; that they infringe personal liberty.

Unquestionably they limit such liberty. Edmund Burke, the great apostle of modern civil lib-

erty, declared that "all liberty, to be enjoyed, must be limited." Liberty under the law is the sign manual of civilization; liberty and license can never dwell together.

When Robinson Crusoe first came to himself on his lonely island he had a perfect gorge of liberty, with none dependent on him, and none to molest him, or make him afraid. Somehow, though, it palled on him; and a glad light shone in his eyes when he found his dog, and then his parrot. But he was not so free. Then one day he almost cried for joy, when he found a human track in the sands; but his man Friday added to his responsibilities, and he was "robbed" of some of his liberties. Then, after awhile, came the mutinous crew from a stranded vessel, and the burden of leadership limited his freedom still further.

The glad surrender of this lonely man to obligations, that accumulated with the number of those dependent on him, is the lesson of the ages in the primary school of civilization.

The story closes with a picture of the untrammelled freedom of savagery—the feasting and drinking demons down on the beach munching the bones of their roasted fellows, and, over against them in the brush, Crusoe and his men, hedged in by bulwarks that protected them, and the authority of Crusoe's law making life safe. It is a dramatic setting for the most important civic lesson of all time,

THE HEART OF THE MATTER

The illustration brings us to the very heart of the matter: Legislation of the class cited has failed to make people good, because it never attempted to make people good.

Laws of this character are only an effort to regulate the predatory instinct of greed that seeks to prey upon the liberty and happiness of others.

Dairymen and manufacturers of groceries fought every attempt to pass inspection and pure food laws. "What business," they said, "is it of other people what we make and sell?" But every sane man has become convinced that the freedom of the seller must be limited by the health of the buyer, and that the state has a right to see to it that poison is not sold to babies because a farmer claims he has the right to milk dirty cows.

The right of a manufacturer to employ labor must be limited by the right of the child to enjoy the privileges of a two-year-old colt, that he may grow up strong and healthy.

The right of a working man to quit his job, and go on a strike, must be halted when he attempts to deprive others of working on the job he abandoned.

The right of the theatre to exhibit pictures must be limited by the right of a whole community to protect its children from contamination worse than tainted milk or poisoned food.

The right of a man to take a drink must be limited by the right of a whole nation to protect its

people from a poison that has destroyed more lives, ruined more homes, and developed a traffic that has cost more money, than all the wars of the ages.

The object of all social legislation is to provide an environment in which it is easier to do right; to free childhood and youth from the pitfalls and gilded traps set by those who traffic in human weakness; and particularly to destroy forever the organized power that, without regard to human or divine law, had corrupted municipalities, county authorities, state and national legislatures, and shamelessly trafficked in a people's liberty to rear their young in an atmosphere free from poison manufactured and sold under a license that had been purchased at the cost of the intelligence, conscience and freedom of a whole nation.

THE LAW'S LIMITATIONS

The most, then, that law can do is to attempt to provide an environment in which life is protected from the foul grip of greed, gathering its gains from the health, happiness and homes of others.

Laws that seek to furnish this protection should command the support and obedience of all sober-thinking men and women, particularly of all Knight Templars everywhere, for these laws are the bulwarks of liberty, and the basis of all civilization.

The limits of human and divine law are confined to the setting of a standard of conduct, and the throwing of an iron ring around lawless individual-

ism that would trample upon the rights of others in unholy license.

Social legislation may make possible an environment friendly to the growth of the soul, but beyond this point all law fails.

SOMETHING MORE IS NECESSARY

It is manifest that something more is necessary. Heredity, education and environment are the factors most potent in moulding life and character.

Our heredity, however, is tainted. All informed persons admit this truth today, and human depravity is no longer a dogma of a school of theology, but a pathetic fact writ large in recent history.

Education as a solvent for human needs demonstrated its failure, when the most highly educated race in history ran amuck, and attempted to batter down the gates of civilization, leaving in the pathway of the armed Huns millions of graves, devastated cities, blasted provinces, and civilization itself staggering and bleeding with wounds.

Environment is helpful, but men and women have found the path to ruin opening through a paradise of culture, wealth and sanitation, and have gone to hell from palaces where the air has been sterilized, and the food stamped as pure and wholesome.

GOD INTERVENES

An almost universal recognition of the pathos of the situation is the most outstanding fact of current

history. It has lifted religion out of the domain of theology and ecclesiastical ceremonial, has taken it out from the Church on to the streets of cities, and into the homes of all people, and revealed it as the most vital necessity for all men everywhere.

The good news of salvation is that God *has intervened*. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." This is the story of the Gospel as told by the prophet: "When there was no eye to pity, no arm outstretched to save, thine eye didst pity and thine arm brought salvation."

God has thus dealt effectively with the sinful heart of man, cleansing it by the blood of His Son. He has met man's deepest need by a redemption that delivers him from the penalty of broken law, so that "there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."

He deals effectively with man's slavery to appetite and passion, and "the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus" frees from the law of sin and death.

He thus deals effectively, also, with man's will and conduct, making him a new creature in Christ Jesus, so that "the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. . . . Against such there is no law."

It is thus the Gospel, and the Gospel alone, that

brings man into liberty, the liberty wherewith the Son has set us free, the liberty of the sons of God. This is the glorious message that is enshrined upon the banner of Knight Templars, *In hoc signo vinces*. Everywhere that this banner is uplifted, we proclaim the inadequacy of all human methods for the redemption of society, and the adequacy of the atoning sacrifice of the Son of God upon the cross. The prophetic symbolism of the lion's paw of the tribe of Judah has become a living reality for Knight Templars, through Him who died for our sins and rose again for our justification.

It is not enough, however, that Knight Templars should proclaim the Christ and His Cross. If we are loyal to Him and His message of redemption, we must also be loyal in allowing Him to have complete sway over our minds, our hearts and our wills; and this means, in this troubled age in which there is so much of lawlessness and confusion, that Knight Templars everywhere should themselves set a standard of conduct in obedience to all laws, both human and divine, that will glorify Him who can conquer through us only by first conquering us. This, after all, is the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free—the liberty of men redeemed by the cross of Christ and dedicated to the service of Christ in the world. To such proclamation of redemption, and to such warfare against sin, not only in our own souls, but in the world, I have endeavored to summon you today.

VIII

THE NEW FREEDOM

“All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. All things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.”—
I COR. 6: 12; 10: 23.

THE text is taken from two passages of three sentences, each sentence beginning with the same words, “All things are lawful unto me,” but each one qualified by terms that restrict the range of its application.

When we are tempted to wonder why such an apparently harmless and insignificant man as Paul raised such a stir of opposition wherever he spoke, we should turn to these two passages, and realize the revolutionary character of his message. It stamped him as an iconoclast with every priest, whether in Palestine or Greece, and as a menace to ordered government with every petty consul in the Roman world. If they had known the word, they would have called him a Bolshevik. The only thoughts that were then free were those that a man kept bottled up in his own soul, and the only free-

dom of action that was possible for a man who kept out of jail was action that conformed to tradition and to the orders of the minions of the emperor that swarmed in every city.

Religion had gone to seed, and in every land men were living in bondage to social and ecclesiastical traditions that were not only crystalized, but fossilized.

Among Paul's own people men were supposed to be headed for Paradise who performed this or that ceremonial duty, or to be going to Hell, because they broke some time-honored custom or tradition of the rabbis.

This spirit early crept into the infant Church, and it was against it that Paul waged a warfare that knew no truce. His opposition was due to three things that he saw with a clarity of vision that left him no middle ground:

First, that Judaism in any form destroyed the fundamental fact of the Good News that salvation is not by works, but by grace; second, that it undermined the essential principle of all progress, that it must come from within; and, third, that it left men enslaved in the bondage of priestcraft and traditionalism.

With such convictions Paul's exhortation to liberty has something of the battlecry in it, "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage." "All things are lawful to me."

“All things”—that is, all lawful things. All things that are not commanded or forbidden by the Word of God, are lawful to me.

It is a great word, and our complacent acceptance of life's freedoms today should not blind us to the fact that it is only where this Word has been made known in the world that men anywhere are free.

It has become the watchword in this “Age which has been stung by a passion for freedom. Wherever we turn we find men battering at closed doors, and sapping away the foundations of old despotisms. It is strong enough to stamp an indelible anathema upon any individual or institution that clashes with its purposes.”

It is a great word, “freedom,” but “its noble virtue has often been identified with license,” and there is a real peril in putting this new wine of life into the old bottles, a danger that license shall break down the very freedom of life itself.

In this new day in which we live, when every hour witnesses new emancipations from old habits and customs, as well as from priestcraft and tradition, there is danger lest life for many break down at its very center. This peril is all too manifest in the moral and spiritual restlessness of countless men and women who, having broken away from the old thralldom, are without guide or chart and, swept from their old moorings, are helpless in the eddying currents of greed and passion, or fall an

easy prey to the wiles of the religious fakirs that throng every market-place.

Paul recognized this peril as inseparable from the great proclamation of the New Freedom, and so he qualifies his thrice-repeated cry of freedom. If we are to preserve this freedom, three things, he says, are essential.

“ ALL THINGS NOT EXPEDIENT ”

First of all, while “ all things are lawful to me, all things are not expedient.” That is, it is not always wise, discreet or prudent to make use of my liberty. The word is an interesting one—“ expedient;” *ex pede*. Translated into our colloquial English: “ All things do not get on the ground and walk.” There is an ideal freedom that is utterly impractical, and out of touch with reality. It is a statement of pragmatism at its best, and one we are prone to miss. A thing is not necessarily right, by any means, merely because it works, otherwise we would take the crown off of righteousness and place it on the brow of success. But if a thing just won't work, the sane man has every reason to suspect that there is something radically wrong with it, and that is just what Paul here says.

Some years ago a distinguished physician was called into consultation in a difficult case. When he reached the home of the patient the other doctors took him to one side, and told him that they understood the case very well, but that the husband

of the sick woman was behaving so badly that they could not continue on the case unless something was done to shut him up, and they would like for him to talk to the man. The old doctor, with the quiet dignity and courtly manners of the old school, took the husband into the drawing-room back of the parlor and, after closing the doors, told him he ought not to interfere with the doctors, but ought to keep quiet while they handled the problems of his wife's trouble. The man turned to the physician and said: "But, Doctor, I have a right to say whatever I think!" "Yes, yes," was the quiet reply, "but it is not always expedient to say what one thinks. For instance, it would not be expedient for me to say what I am thinking of you right now."

There could be no finer illustration of the meaning of Paul's term, and yet how many people there are who, disgusted with the forms and customs of social life, become careless and even boorish among cultured people just to advertise their liberty. It is "Main Street" airing itself.

Over-indulgence in things which may be entirely right in themselves, is responsible for the breaking down of the higher impulses, for the "good is always the enemy of the best." Thus the danger for multitudes is not so much in their choice between right and wrong, as in their choice between the good and the best.

Freed from the old restrictions by which our

fathers and mothers sought to protect us, coming into the consciousness of our right to do things that had before been taboo, we have cut out not only the word "don't," but this fine word of Paul, "expedient." We can read what we please, therefore pernicious literature floods our newsstands, and finds its way into our homes, and our liberty to browse through the literature of the world has resulted in polluting the imagination and poisoning the well-springs of life. Amusements and recreation are no longer under the ban of the Church—sane men have recognized their lawfulness—and in a Christian land people have gone amusement-mad, and our colleges have no honors to bestow comparable to the laurel wreath to be won on the athletic field. It is the New Freedom flaunting its banners in protest against the safeguards and restrictions Paul throws around the word, when he says: "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient." The Psalmist understood it better than many of us in this twentieth century, understood how if liberty is to be preserved it must be safeguarded, when he sang: "I will walk at liberty, because I have kept thy precepts."

THE FREEDOM NOT TO DO

Paul realizes, however, that this liberty he exalts must be limited by something more than expediency, and so he says: "All things are lawful unto me, but I will not be brought under the power of

any." That is, indulgence in what may be lawful enough in itself may bring us under bondage to our appetites, as we lose the power of self-determination through the mastery of habits that gradually assume the reins of control.

The old Greeks understood this danger, and their poets preached it with passionate earnestness. When Eurydice, stung to death by the serpent, is borne away to Hades, she is followed by Orpheus, her husband, who by his exquisite music charms the dead and the keepers of the abode of the dead. They grant him permission to carry back his beautiful bride, but on one condition—he must hold himself in leash, and not dare to look upon the face of his dear one until it was at last illumined by the light of earth.

He agreed to the condition, but love cannot wait, and he snatches greedily at the joy of looking on her again—and thus sacrifices all. "When," says an acute student of this old story, "Orpheus broke the law, Eurydice faded away, and when he strove to hold her his arms closed upon empty air. Intemperance kills joy. Restraint is the guardian of all pure pleasure."

There is perhaps no lesson more needed in this age that devotes itself so passionately to pleasure-seeking. The great word for the young man is "liberty." He wants to be "free." But only he is free who is master of his tastes and appetites, and can look temptation quietly in the face, and say:

“No.” Until a man has learned how to do this, he is in danger of a greater slavery than the harshest Puritanism ever imposed. Certainly we all think we can say, “Yes,” or “No.” One is in the last stages of self-degradation when he admits even to himself that he is a bond-slave to his passions. For many of us it is still doubtless true. We can say, “Yes,” or “No,” but most of us, when we come to the real issue, only “think we can say, ‘No,’ because we never really want to say, ‘No.’”

Thus Paul, in exalting self-mastery over “our rights,” warns us that self-indulgence is the greatest peril to all true freedom, for the freedom of the son of God is not merely the liberty to do, but the freedom *not to do*. “All things are lawful unto me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.”

ALL THINGS DO NOT EDIFY

The age in which we live has become so intoxicated with the delicious new wine of freedom that we are prone to forget the danger, not merely of destroying the bottles in which we store it, but of wasting the precious wine itself.

That is the peril to whose brink we are brought by much present-day preaching, and not a little present-day living; exultation in freedom from the restraints of other periods has made us reckless of life itself, so that our highways in times of peace are strewn with human wrecks, like a forest after a storm, and our hospitals crowded with men and

women who in social and business relations are no longer able to keep up the pace. It is the utter recklessness of a freedom that is concerned only with its rights, and thus destroys where it should conserve.

True liberty has its relations, however, not merely to ourselves, but to others. What we want to do may be expedient, and carry with it no danger of the loss of self-mastery, and yet the Christian man refuses to do it, just because of something that lies deep down in his soul and makes him want to make his life count for constructive service. And so Paul says again: "All things indeed are lawful to me, but all things edify not"—all things do not build up.

Here is the dividing line between paganism and Christianity. It is a line that runs through all life in every land. Freedom, whether in the first or the twentieth century, must be self-regulated by the higher law of influence—of service. This was what Jesus meant when He said: "The Son of man came"—that is, it was His great objective in coming—"not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Not to be served, but to serve.

One who laid down his very life in the service of mankind in the closing years of the first quarter of this century, put it squarely up to the young men of the age when he spoke to them in a voice that literally rang around the world: "The only way your own powers can become great is by exerting

them outside of your own narrow, special, selfish interests. And that is the reason of Christianity. Christ came into the world to save others, not to serve Himself, and no man is a true Christian who does not think constantly of how he can lift his brother; how he can assist his friend; how he can enlighten mankind; how he can make virtue the rule of conduct in the circle in which he lives." Important as are the great doctrines of the creeds of Christendom, unless they issue in enshrining this doctrine in the hearts of men they have failed; and Christ Himself has failed in His mission, so far as we are concerned.

Thus it is that this New Freedom proclaimed by Paul leads logically and inevitably to the paradox in which he exults. Freed from all law, he yet rejoices to call himself the "bond-slave of Jesus Christ." This is the New Freedom into which Christ Himself ushers men. It announces for us a principle that settles for all time many of the most delicate and difficult problems of life, but if it finds its solution of those problems, it must be applied only in the spirit of the higher law of sacrifice and service.

Thinking no longer of its rights, it bows humbly before the cross of Him who had the right to live, but thought it a privilege to die.

And so, when we have thought out this question of our liberty, and made ourselves the champions of freedom from all priestcraft, tradition and for-

malism, and determined that so far as in us lies this world, long crushed by oppression, restricted by petty rules and enslaved by enthroned power, should be made free, let us remember that we must yet reckon with Him who came to make men free, and who challenges us at every turn of our pathway by the claims of His service upon all that we have and are.

IX

CHRISTIAN LIBERTY LIMITED BY LOVE

“Through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?”—I COR. 8: 11.

THE two prose-poems on Love and on the Resurrection in themselves are enough to make the Corinthian letters immortal, but in addition they are richer than other passages in the epistles, in their disclosure of the great principles that underlie Church and individual life.

A mere list of a few of the subjects discussed is sufficient to show how practical and “modern” are these letters to the church at Corinth: The proper relation of congregations to their ministers, of Christians to each other, of the individual Christian to the civil law, marriage and divorce, church discipline, the conduct of public worship, the relation of women to the work of the Church, the stewardship of our possessions, and the principles of Christian giving—all are treated with a directness not surpassed in any other passages of the Bible.

The fact that the subjects are discussed in relation to certain local conditions peculiarly Greek,

should warn us that here we do not have laws to be enforced, but a statement of principles which, when once understood, can guide God's people at all times and in all lands.

The entire context from which the text is taken deals in a very intimate way with the difficult problems that faced the young Christian in the midst of an environment that in its business, social and religious aspects was thoroughly pagan.

The only possible way in which the convert to Christianity could avoid these heathen contacts was by getting out of the world itself, and that was manifestly impossible (5: 9, 10). The practical question was, How should a Christian behave himself under these circumstances?

Paul finds the answer, to the whole round of relationship, in considering the very homely problem of how a Christian ought to behave when sitting down to eat at his own table, or as a guest in the home of his heathen neighbor. It is difficult for us to appreciate the seriousness of the problem. We may at least understand it a little better, if we recall that many heathen butchers understood how to combine religion and business. For most of their customers they provided just plain ordinary cuts, joints, tenderloin, roasts, etc., but for others they had special extra cuts—portions of meat that were considered better and more desirable by their customers, because the carcass from which they were cut, or the portions themselves, had been "blessed"

by the priest in the temple of the favorite idol of the city. To partake of such meat, thus sanctified, was not merely to satisfy one's hunger, but in itself, also, it was regarded as an act of worship to the idol on whose altar it had been dedicated. Ought a true Christian to eat such meat at all? Ought he not even to look into the matter at every meal, and find out if the meat served was thus "sanctified"?

Paul answers, very definitely, that a man will have enough problems on his hands without nosing around to find others. "Ask no questions," he says, "for conscience' sake," but sit down and "eat what is set before you."

"But," asks one, "suppose I really know that this is meat that had been 'sanctified' on an idol's altar, would I not be committing a sin to eat it?" Paul answers that it depends upon how much sense you have. If you have sense enough to know the real truth about idols, that an idol is a plain non-entity, "nothing at all," to use his own phrase, you can freely eat anything that is offered you.

The same question arose among the Christian converts that lived in a Jewish environment, where certain food was ecclesiastically outlawed as "unclean." In the fourteenth chapter of the letter to the Romans, Paul declares that he knows and is persuaded by the Lord Jesus "that there is nothing unclean of itself," and exhorts his readers not to judge other people in regard to such matters, as food, church days and other ceremonial require-

ments, and not to be disturbed by the judgment of others. "Let a man be fully persuaded in his own mind," and then let him go ahead in the enjoyment of his liberty irrespective of criticism.

It is all but a part of his fundamental doctrine of the liberty of conscience of the Christian in matters not commanded or forbidden by the Word of God. It runs through his letters, and determines his own conduct. Circumcising Timothy, because his mother was a Jewess, when the Jews demanded that Titus, a pure Greek, be circumcised, he cries out: "We yielded to them, no, not for an hour." Writing to the Colossians, he asks why, if delivered from bondage by Christ, they were still obeying man-made ordinances, such as "touch not, taste not, handle not."

Let us fix the principle clearly in our minds. Not only was it cardinal with Paul, but it was the very trumpet-call of the Reformation. It was the nemesis of Puritanism, that in the midst of outbreaking licentiousness, the Puritans themselves forgot the law of liberty. To surrender it at the behest of priestcraft, is to surrender one of the blessed privileges purchased for us by the blood of the Son of God, who has made us free. He, and He alone, is our Judge, and no earthly power should be able to coerce our conscience.

Paul defended it with his very life-blood, and yet he gladly yielded his rights to a principle that is higher even than that of freedom of conscience.

He exhorts us to do this also, lest through "our knowledge"—that is, our liberty—"our weak brother should perish, for whom Christ died."

Christian liberty is a glorious thing, and worth defending at any cost, but it must yield before this higher principle of "*liberty limited by love.*"

I have dwelt thus at length upon the principles involved in this critical passage because to understand them is to find the solution for the most delicate and difficult problems of our own lives.

There are many things concerning which the earnest Christian can find no clear, explicit statement in the Bible. Things for which there is no "Thus saith the Lord" available. Take, for, example, the matter of dancing, playing cards, taking a glass of wine, etc. Now, there are plenty of man-made rules—rules of Church discipline, and Church councils—concerning these things, but no plain Bible statement. Paul teaches that we should not allow anything to control our conscience but the Word of God, illumined by the Holy Spirit in our hearts. We must settle these problems for ourselves, and the history of the Christian Church shows the fallacy of Church courts trying to settle these problems. I trust I shall not hurt the feelings of any deeply spiritually minded man or woman who deplores the prevalence of worldliness in the Church, when I say I have never known any one who gave up any of the things mentioned, because of a promise made to some pastor or evangelist or

the decree of some Church court, who was the better for the surrender.

When, however, we have defended successfully our right of private judgment, our freedom of conscience on such matters, we have by no means settled the question. I call you to face the logic of a higher principle, the limitation of our personal liberty by a consideration of our relation to the lives of others. It is vastly harder to live by principle than to live by rule, and yet I summon you to a rigid and prayerful application of what is the very climax of all Paul's teaching concerning liberty.

Some years ago, while the minister was teaching a Bible class on this subject, a sweet young woman, daughter of one of the elders of the church, and rapidly becoming a leader in the "society set" of her city, looked up and, with eyes brimming with tears, said to him: "If you will tell me not to dance, or play cards, or even to go to the theatre, I will never do these things again as long as I live." The minister wisely answered: "That would be too easy, my dear, and not help you a great deal, after all. Will you promise the Master this morning that you will never do anything that you believe would injure your influence with anyone else?" She answered at once: "That is too hard!" It is indeed too hard, unless there be in our souls the mastering passion of love that was in the heart of Jesus when He died to save others.

QUESTIONS WE MUST ANSWER

So when we face such problems let us ask ourselves several questions. First of all: "Is this thing I want to do wrong in itself, or is it forbidden by the Word of God?" Doubtless for many things we can answer promptly, and sincerely enough, "No."

Then we must ask also: "Does this thing I want to do stand in the way of my personal consecration and loyalty to Jesus Christ?"

If we are in any doubt about it, there is no room for debate, no ground for hesitation; we must give it up. "For whatsoever is not of faith is sin." That is a hard word and perhaps an illustration may help us understand it. Some years ago two little girls were playing in the front yard when the father, a busy pastor, went swiftly out of the gate toward his waiting car. As he passed them his little daughter asked: "Papa, may I go down town with Marion?" The father called back, as he cranked up the car, "Yes, my dear," and drove off. Coming back after some time, he found the girls still playing in the yard, and asked Margaret why she had not gone down town, as he told her she might go. She answered: "I could not hear just what you said, when you started the car, and I did not know whether it was 'yes,' or 'no,' and could not make you hear me, to ask you again. I knew it would be all right to stay, and thought maybe you had said I couldn't go." That child understood Romans 14: 23: "Whatsoever is not of

faith is sin." She knew that if she had gone, she would have felt that she might be disobeying her father. If, then, we cannot do a thing with a clear conscience, let us not do it at all.

Let us suppose, however—and it is the case with many Christians concerning not a few questions—that we have a clear conscience in the matter at issue, and can say perfectly sincerely that, so far as our own spiritual life is concerned, we do not believe a certain thing stands in the way of our consecration to the service of our Master; what then? Well, we have not yet settled the question; we have only gotten to the very heart of it.

LIBERTY LIMITED BY LOVE

We must ask, with the same frankness and the same prayerfulness: "Will my example tend to lead others astray?" For "none of us liveth to himself," and our influence, through the exercise of our freedom, may cause our weak brother to perish, and defeat the atonement of Christ Himself.

I hear one answer, however: "I see this but, so far as I am concerned, I have no influence, and so what I do does not really matter." No influence! A Christian in the twentieth century, and no influence? The salt of the earth, and no influence? The light of the world, and no influence!

If you really believe it, then get down on your knees before God, and ask Him to forgive you for a misspent life; for abusing the grace of His Son,

who redeemed us just in order that we might be used of Him in saving others.

It is not true. You know, deep down in your heart, that it is not true. You have influence—influence for good or evil, such as no one else has, over certain other people.

Let me urge you to take to your heart the ringing words of Carlyle in the Introduction to his essay on *Voltaire*. “The influence,” he writes, “of each and every one, though he were the meanest of us, which has had a beginning will never have an end. What is done, is done, has already linked itself with the ever-living, the ever-boundless, the ever-working universe of God. And will also work there for good, or for evil, openly or secretly, throughout all time.” Hear Tennyson’s echo of these great words in the Bugle Song in “The Princess”:

*“O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on field or hill or river;
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow forever and forever.”*

We have influence, and should use it for Jesus Christ. This is the supreme motive that should lie back of all Christian conduct. When we sin against our weak brother and wound him, we sin against Christ. We cannot do it; every heart-throb in the passion of Jesus cries out against it. We will not give up our liberty at the command of any human authority, but we will gladly limit it by the love for others, inspired by love for Jesus.

It is the supreme paradox of Christian literature, this freedom under bondage to love. Paul delights to call himself Christ's "bond-slave," and yet he exults in his freedom.

Some years ago a Sunday School teacher wished to explain this great paradox to her class. She called up two little girls and, taking a strong cord, bound the hands of one of them together, tying the knots tight. She then told the other child to put her hands together and, binding them with a slight, golden thread, she said to her: "Mary, if you love me, you will not break that thread."

Turning to the first child, whose hands were bound by the strong, heavy twine, she said: "Free your hands." The girl struggled, until the cords cut into her wrist, and finally, giving up, said that she could not do it.

Then, turning to the other, the teacher said: "Mary, free your hands." Mary stood without moving a muscle. The teacher repeated the command. Still she stood motionless, making no effort to break the tiny thread of gold. When the teacher asked why she did not try to get loose, she answered: "Teacher, you just now told me if I loved you, I would not break this thread; and, teacher, I do love you." There it is, this wondrous love of Christ that, free, still constrains us—constrains us to do what no earthly authority has right to ask us to do, to limit our liberty by love.

X

VISIONS AND VISIONARIES

"Your young men shall see visions."—ACTS 2: 17.

THE text is a fragment of the prophecy of Joel, which Peter declares was fulfilled in literal terms in the phenomena connected with the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. But the words have a wider meaning, and may be considered as a proverb applicable to every age; old age will dream its dreams of a golden past, which to the old man must always be the best period of history, for it was his own age, the period of his youth and enthusiasm. As he looks back upon it, he sees it through glasses that have softened every harsh feature, and transfused its most sombre scenes with a radiance of glory.

It is the young man who sees the vision, the man whose future beckons him on, and bids him gird himself for the task that seems to the older and more experienced man quite impossible. Yet youth is not merely a matter of the calendar, and it is not too much to say that no man can truly be called old who cherishes a vision in his heart.

The man of vision is he who is able to project his thought into the unseen realm of ideals, and trans-

late his vision for others. It may be through words that breathe and burn; by the stroke of the brush upon the canvas, or of the chisel upon the stone; by the magic touch of fingers upon the lyre; or by patient toil of brain and, it may be, muscle—through the trained powers of his life, he is able to bring to pass that which his soul has conceived.

The visionary may see, indeed, as clearly within the chambers of his mind, but the things he sees never come to pass. Many of us have had visions of forms of rare beauty, but it takes a Phidias or a Michelangelo to translate the vision into sculptured marble. Many of us are awed by the vision of landscapes of entrancing beauty, but only a Praxiteles or a Turner can transfer them to canvas. Deep tones of diapason or lighter lyrics well up within our souls, but only a Handel or a Beethoven can catch them, and preserve them for future generations in the musical score of symphony or oratorio.

The vision of a waterway across the isthmus connecting two great western continents had lured hundreds in every age, and a multitude of graves across that narrow strip of land is a monument to those who attempted its conquest; but at last—

*“ A man went down to Panama
Where many a man had died,
To slit the sliding mountains,
And lift the eternal tide,
A man went down to Panama,
And the mountains stood aside.”*

It is part of life's perpetual tragedy that the man of vision has almost without exception been regarded by his own age as a visionary. Some, indeed, receive the crown of fame, but most of them have the laurels entwined about their monuments. Our Lord had just this tragedy in mind when He charged His generation with building the tombs of the prophets, and garnishing the sepulchres of the righteous whom their fathers had slain.

IN INVENTIONS AND DISCOVERIES

The tragedy is strikingly illustrated in the history of the inventors and discoverers whose visions of lands across the seas, and of secrets jealously guarded by Nature have made possible the modern world.

Those men, who set out in several fishing smacks to find a way around the world, were mocked as fools; Adams, the great English mathematician, who saw, with a trained imagination guided by charts and logarithmic tables, a world many times larger than our planet, was not able to induce the Royal Astronomer to take the trouble even to turn his telescope toward the place of its shining.

Morse and Bell almost starved on the steps of the capitol at Washington while statesmen joked or jeered at their appeals for aid, and capital regarded them as grown men playing with toys. Yet in the end they made the round world a neighborhood.

Langley died of a broken heart amidst the sneers

of the men of science who had demonstrated the impossibility of flight by a heavier-than-air machine; and the Wright Brothers at Dayton were the example to their community of the visionary atmosphere of a Methodist parsonage; while Marconi and De Forest literally peddled their stock among credulous people, who were "foolish" enough to believe in the impossible.

In the face of the triumphs of these men of vision in spite of the ridicule of their contemporaries, it would seem that all of us might learn to "cultivate a more tolerant and receptive attitude of mind toward the ideas of a new age," remembering also that common sense in the presence of realities is not inconsistent with the highest idealism.

IN POLITICAL AND SOCIAL RELATIONS

The same tragic fate that dogs the steps of inventor and discoverer haunts the career of the man of vision in the realm of political and social relations.

William Pitt died of a broken heart on the defeat at Austerlitz, but he had laid the mine that destroyed Napoleon. Frances Willard did not live to see the vilest yoke ever put upon a free people broken forever from their necks, but she awakened the consciences of millions who finally threw off that yoke. Though she was scoffed and sneered at by the Sadducees of her day, the pure, white statue of the only woman in America's true Hall of Fame is a silent tribute to the vision that led her on.

There is no more tragic picture in American history than that of the gaunt, lonely man who paced up and down the rooms of the White House from 1861 to 1865, bearing in his heart the sorrows and burdens of a whole nation; and only the crown of martyrdom lifted Abraham Lincoln above the spite of his colleagues, and placed him among the immortals.

Robert E. Lee signing the articles of surrender at Appomattox was an outstanding example of visions that had allured and faded forever, but history has placed him above those who triumphed over him. The world will never forget the spirit of the war-worn veteran who in the halls of Washington and Lee University translated to the youth of the South a vision of duty that nerved her people to activities in the paths of peace, and more than any other single factor made of a divided country a united people.

Woodrow Wilson, commander-in-chief of the heroes who at the last made possible the saving of civilization from the fury of the Huns, fell in the larger struggle to save humanity from its own selfish passions—stricken down, not by the bullets of the Germans, but by the more deadly malice of his own countrymen, who sacrificed him upon the altar of political ambition and personal spleen.*

I cannot better translate the vision that inspired

* These words were penned in the atmosphere of the old Manse in Savannah, so intimately associated with the happiest and holiest hours of the life of Woodrow Wilson.

his soul than in phrases of his own simple statements: "It seems to me," he said, "that this is a day of infinite hope, of confidence in a future greater than the past has been. The century that lies behind us has brought us a long way toward . . . the final uplands, where we shall get our ultimate view of the duties of mankind. We shall presently come out upon those great heights where there shines unbroken the light of the justice of God."

And again: "America has lifted high the light which will shine unto all generations, and guide the feet of mankind to the goal of justice, liberty and peace. . . . You can see that age by age . . . often mistaking the path and losing its way in mire, mankind is yet—sometimes with bloody hands, and battered knees—struggling step by step up the slow stages to the day when man shall live in the full light which shines upon the uplands where all the light that illumines mankind shall shine direct from the face of God."

These are not the words of one who sought to dominate mankind by force, not to bring in peace by the compromises of diplomacy, but of one who saw behind the shifting panorama of world events a vision of God—God seeking to save humanity from its own selfish passions by the sway of the eternal principles of justice, liberty and truth, incarnate in the person and ministry of His Son, Jesus Christ.

I would apply to Woodrow Wilson the closing

words of Tennyson's "Ode to the Duke of Wellington," whose music rings through the passages just quoted:

*"Such was he—his work is done;
But while the races of mankind endure,
Let his great example stand
Colossal, seen of every land,
And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure,
Till in all lands and through all human story,
The path of duty be the way to glory."*

It is the supreme tragedy of the present hour that no prophetic voice is lifted in England or America to point the way for this pleasure-loving, money-mad, passion-driven generation. "Where there is no vision the people perish."

IN THE SPHERE OF RELIGION

In the sphere of religion the same contrast may be found between the visionary and the man of vision, and the same fate has often awaited the man of vision, mistaken for the idle dreamer of dreams.

Isaiah, with the song of peace upon his inspired lips, died in the midst of a world at war. Paul, singing the immortal song of love, was broken upon the wheel of the world's hate, and laid down his neck upon the block.

Jesus, seeing Satan cast down from heaven, was Himself dragged to the cross. It is ever so, and the man of vision must be prepared to travel a lonely and often dark pathway.

Bernard Shaw, in his play *Joan of Arc*, represents the Maid of Orleans bound to the stake, crying out to her persecutors: "Yes, I am alone on earth; I have always been alone. My father told my brothers to drown me if I would not stay to mind the sheep, while France was bleeding to death—France might perish if only our lambs were safe.

"I thought France would have friends at the court of the kings of France, and I found only wolves fighting for pieces of her poor torn body.

"I thought God would have friends everywhere. . . . Do not think you can frighten me by telling me I am alone; France is alone, and God is alone. What is my loneliness, before the loneliness of my country and my God! I see now that the loneliness of God is His strength; what would He be if He listened to your jealous little counsels?

"Well, my loneliness shall be my strength, too: It is better to be alone with God. His friendship will not fail me, nor His counsel, nor His love. In His strength I will dare, and dare, and dare until I die."

David Livingstone died alone in a tent in darkest Africa, but they carried the body of the Scotch-weaver's son and laid it to rest in Westminster Abbey, with the kings of the realm.

Men heard with unfeigned wonder the story that came out of China when the Boxer rebellion was over, and communication once more established with the western world. Of how, before they tor-

tured him to death, Pitkins asked to speak to his Chinese friend who had somehow escaped the fury of the mob. And when they granted his request he whispered in his friend's ear a message to his own precious wife in America. This was the message, that she should rear their boy to preach the Gospel of God's love, and when he became a man tell him that it was his father's last wish that he go to China and preach Jesus to those who had slain him. The story touched many a heart in America, but behind many such emotions was a conviction of the visionary nature of this dying martyr's bequest to China. Yet today there stands a church of God where they slew him, and a great Christian University has been reared on the soil drenched with Pitkins' blood.

Cary, Morrison, Livingstone, Pitkins, and the host that follow in their train—visionaries all, in the judgment of their generation. But the history of civilization in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has no story of triumph that compares with the victories of the cross in every land; and the new century has no hope that lies outside the confines of the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“These all died in the faith, not having received the promise, God having reserved some better thing for us, that they without us should not be perfect.” It is a prophecy and a promise: “Your young men shall see visions; your old men shall dream dreams.” It is not the mere inane repetition of a truism, here is a prophecy to be fulfilled: The spirit

of conservatism and the fiery zeal of youth are to be reconciled in the golden day of God's grace—the old man's dream shall be filled with the fire of youth, and youth's vision shall be inspired and hallowed by the services and sacrifices of the past.

*“Waft, waft, ye winds, His story,
And you, ye waters, roll,
'Till, like a sea of glory,
It spreads from pole to pole.
'Till o'er our ransomed nature
The Lamb for sinners slain,
Redeemer, King, Creator,
In bliss returns to reign.”*

XI

WHAT GOD CAN DO WITH A MAN

“This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain.”
—ZECH. 4: 6, 7.

HERE is a passage whose opening words have been used as a text for innumerable sermons, without regard to the message which they serve to introduce. “‘Not by might, nor by power, but my Spirit,’ saith the Lord,” has been a convenient brake for the conservative to use to slow down the zeal and enthusiasm of young progressives, who want to see things done.

So when the young missionary, with heart aflame with love for lost millions, long ago pressed upon the Scotch General Assembly the needs of a heathen world, a venerable minister sought to squelch him, saying: “Sit down, young man. When the Lord gets ready to convert the heathen He will do it without bothering with you.” Why? Because the Scripture saith: “It is ‘not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit,’ saith the Lord.”

And so in later days, when the need for aggressive forward movements, harnessing the latent power of the Church, has been urged, this passage has quieted the conscience of the Church by an appeal to Holy Writ. "Let God do it!"

AN ABUSED TEXT

There are few passages that have been so misunderstood or abused, and the peril of such abuse lies in the fact that, separated from their context, these words teach a great and vital truth that finds abundant expression in many other passages. For after all has been said, the great forces are not material, but spiritual, and this assurance has been the reliance of the Church in all ages. Here indeed is taught her first great lesson in the primary school of experience. In the accomplishment of her task she has realized that a recognition of the power of the Spirit of God is the essential factor in the solution of all her great problems. The means upon which she must depend are spiritual and not material. Not in her culture, nor her wealth nor numbers, not in alliance with secular governments, does she find her true strength, but in the power of the indwelling Spirit of God. It is indeed not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of God, she goes forth conquering and to conquer.

To detach these words from their context, however, is to mistake a half truth for the whole truth, and to miss the message the Spirit of God seeks to

convey just here. It is like a man mistaking the vestibule for the house, or a gateway for the garden.

When God wants to get a thing done in the world He raises up instruments through whom He expresses His will and power; and this passage teaches not what God can do, but what God can do with a man. An illustration from the nineteenth century sets its meaning clearly before us. When Dwight L. Moody was a young man Henry Varley, of London, said to him one day: "Moody, the world has never seen, since Jesus Christ, what God can do with a man wholly devoted to His will." Young Moody went back to his room and, falling on his knees, cried out: "O God, I devote here and now my whole self to Thee. Ignorant, weak and helpless, take me, and use me for Thy glory." The story of evangelism in the latter part of the nineteenth century was God's answer to that prayer.

A STUPENDOUS TASK

"'Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit,' saith the Lord. Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain." It is the word of the Lord through the prophet Zechariah to a man struggling under the burden of a stupendous task. Zerubbabel knew what difficulties were, long before this. He had led the remnant of Judah back to the land of promise, through desert wastes and over mountains and rivers. He had seen them established in the land, and

a city grown out of its ruins, but through it all he had the backing of Cyrus the Great, and the wealth and power of that vast empire. Then Cyrus had died; his successors, under the influence of the enemies of Judah, withdrew their support; and for years the leaders of the people had been assailed by persistent, insolent foes. Worse than all this, however, the people themselves had become absorbed in building their homes, establishing themselves in business and making money, while the house of the Lord lay in ruins.

To thwart the schemes of his enemies, to arouse the people out of their selfishness and sloth, to inspire them with the spirit of sacrifice and service, this was a task before which the bravest might falter, and the most optimistic become discouraged. No wonder that Zechariah calls these difficulties a "great mountain." It was a striking phrase. Nothing can so forcibly bring to a man the consciousness of his weakness and littleness as to stand him by a great mountain that lifts its head into the sky. Yet this mountain must be gotten out of the way, and Zechariah summons Zerubbabel to the task of accomplishing the impossible, heartening him with the assurance from the Lord that what a man could not do, God could do through a man.

And Zerubbabel removed the mountain. Yet he did not do it, after all. It was God—God, who showed what He could do with any man that yields himself as a willing instrument into His hands.

GOD'S WAY OF GETTING THINGS DONE DOWN HERE

It is the supreme lesson of history. Moses learned it when God answered his unwillingness to assume the leadership of Israel, saying: "Surely I will be with thee." Elisha taught his young servant the lesson when, compassed about by the horses and chariots of his enemies at Dothan, he said: "They that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, saying: 'Lord, open his eyes, that he may see.' And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."

It was the "sword of the Lord and of Gideon" that brought deliverance to Israel from the Midianites. It was the five barley loaves and two small fishes from a lad's picnic basket that fed the five thousand men, besides the women and children, by the Sea of Galilee.

As some one has said: "God can do as little without us as we can do without God. God cannot do some things unless we think. He never blazons truth in the sky that men may find it without seeking. God cannot do some things unless we work. Will a man say that when God wants bridges and tunnels, when He wants lightning harnessed, and cathedrals built, He will do the work Himself? This is idle fatalism. God stores the hills with marble, but He never built a Parthenon. He fills the mountains with ore, but He never built a needle or a locomotive."

Consecration has a two-fold side. It humbly looks Godward, and cries: " 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit,' saith the Lord." It looks within, and cries: "Here am I; send me." "These are the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth."

"Launch out into the deep," speaks the word of command. Our answer may come haltingly, but if it comes at all, we must say that while we have failed hitherto, "nevertheless, at Thy word, we will let down the net."

We need more men and women who will let God have His way with them, who will put Christ in control of their lives and do what He tells them. We need to learn the lesson in our business, if we are really to succeed; and in our social and home life, if we are ever to be effective in our service, and truly happy.

THE TASK OF THE IMPOSSIBLE

Here is God's answer to the challenge of duty in the face of obstacles. "Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel, thou shalt become a plain." Zerubbabel learned the answer that God makes to our difficulties when, in response to the appeal of the prophet, he set about the task that found its completion in the rebuilt Temple of God on Mount Zion. Paul learned the answer when, facing the sensualism and the entrenched vested interests of paganism, backed by the power of the

Roman Empire, he faltered at Corinth, until Jesus came to him in a vision of the night, saying: "Be not afraid, but speak, for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee; for I have much people in this city." Luther learned it when, at Worms, he defied the forces of hell leagued against him, crying out: "Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me. Amen." Morrison learned it when he labored for nearly forty years in China, with scarcely a convert yet knew, deep down in his heart, that God had sent him to win China for Christ. Carey learned it when he cried out to God in India: "Oh Rock, Rock, when wilt thou break!" Yet he labored on with unfaltering faith. Guerrant learned it when, for years, he faced the stolid spirit of the feudist and the moonshiner in the mountains of Kentucky. A young elder and his wife in a cultured, wealthy congregation in North Carolina learned it when they heard the call to go out to the weak, struggling Sunday School in the suburbs, and help found a church. Every one said: "It cannot be done. Presbyterianism is not adapted to that type of people." Their answer was: "If Presbyterianism has a Gospel to preach that is not adapted to all men, it is not the Gospel of the grace of God to any man." A vigorous church is a monument to the spirit God put into their hearts.

God is speaking to you this morning. There is a work He wants done. He cannot do it without you.

You can do it with Him. Will you do it? Will you let Him use you? All you have, and all you are, in His service?

WHY THE KINGDOM TARRIES

The Kingdom of God waits on the consecrated man. It requires little marshalling of statistics to demonstrate that the task the Church faces in her missionary work at home and abroad is beyond all her resources of men or money. It is an impossible task—a mountain of difficulty she cannot remove.

It will never do, however, for us to lie down on the job; to say that the condition of the world is hopeless, the Church itself in the days of its last great apostacy, and that only the coming of the Son of Man in the majesty of His power can save even the elect.

He is coming again, personally, visibly, gloriously, and His coming waits on us (Matt. 24: 14).

He has but one program, but one plan for bringing in His Kingdom among men, and the plan is summed up in His command to us to carry His message, and in His promise to be with us. When He comes back then, it will be to celebrate the triumph of His plan, and not its failure. If God had expected to work out things by force, He could have done it long ago. Jesus rejected Satan's offer to give Him a world so conquered. He would have none of it. He wants men's hearts, and He sends

us to win them to Him. When we have told the story of His love to all nations and peoples and tongues, He is coming back, and not till then.

WILL WE DO IT?

The question for us to decide is: "Will we do it?" Will we stop measuring ourselves by the great mountains of difficulties, and give God a chance to use us to the glory of His name, by the power of His Spirit?


When the Church of God is willing for this, all its problems will have been solved, and the Kingdom of God shall come in.

For " 'It is not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit,' saith the Lord. Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain."

XII

THE PEACE OF GOD AND THE GOD OF PEACE

“Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.”—PHIL. 4: 6-9.

 **A**T this time in which men are seeking to make war forever impossible by destroying the engines of warfare, it has become increasingly manifest that the fundamental needs of humanity can, after all, be met only through agencies that will reach the souls of men; that the problem of peace is essentially a problem of the individual, rather than of society as a whole; and that in the last analysis the solution is to be sought not so much in a change of circumstances, as in a change of mind. This, for those of

us who know the stubbornness of the human heart, means nothing less than old-fashioned conversion, a change of mind, based on a change of heart—that is, of the man himself.

Thus, irrespective of the decisions of conferences, or even of a man's creed, however sound it may be, there can be no real peace in the souls of men, and none in the world in which the soul lives, so long as a man is at enmity with his Maker.

Peace of conscience thus lies at the basis of all genuine tranquillity of spirit; and this is the first and fundamental proclamation of the Gospel, that which makes it good news of peace. Christ's name was called "Jesus" because He saves from sin, and a man must be justified by faith if he is to have peace with God.

One may have a genuine religious experience, however; by faith he may lay hold on Jesus Christ for salvation, and believe with all his heart that he is a saved sinner; yet he must continue to live in a world crowded with cares, and vexed by problems that often baffle him at every turn. Having peace with God in relation to his sins, how can such a man have peace with relation to the circumstances of his life?

This is the practical question that Paul answers in verses 6 and 7 of the text. God, he says, stations a sentinel of peace to stand watch-guard over the hearts and minds of those that put their trust in Him. "Be worried about nothing, but in every-

thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God, and the peace of God shall keep" (Greek, "stand guard over") "your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

THE PEACE OF GOD

This is the peace of God, the peace of commitment; the commitment of a faith that thanks God for all His goodness, tells Him all our troubles, and trusts Him to provide everything we really need. It makes no difference, according to Paul, what may be our problems or our difficulties; in "everything" God will take care of us. Be grateful for His banner of love that has been over you all these years, ask Him to look after your interests, and you need not worry, for His sentinel of peace stands watch-guard over your heart and your mind.

It is almost a paraphrase of the beautiful old word of the Psalmist: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee"; and again: "Cast thy burden on the Lord, and he will sustain thee."

Isaiah
26:3

It is the Gospel remedy for worry. Hard work never hurts people. It is worry that kills. Even so conservative a group of scientists as the faculty of the Hopkins Hospital, issued a formal statement to the effect that many cases of appendicitis are due to worry—people's just fretting over things.

Paul says this all is unnecessary, if we commit

our interests to the Lord. Let us be thankful and prayerful, and we need not be care-full.

A recent sketch of that great and good physician, Doctor Noble Wymberley Jones, of Georgia, tells us of his discovery, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, of the "law of physical necessity," by which everything that affects the body affects the mind also. Dr. Jones "tracked down the 'monster sensation,' that under the mask of indulgence, pleasure, delight and ecstasy, had laid waste the fairest portion of creation, subverting the moral sense, and the sense of deity, the main pillars of that noble edifice the mind, ambuscading the walks of life with disease, deformity and premature death." On these considerations, it is said that in an age of universal dissipation, Dr. Jones "derived the reason of his temperance that led him to reject vinous and spirituous fluids." He was thus fashioning the keystone to the bridge that modern science has attempted to lay, over the slough and morass of intemperance which has destroyed more victims than war itself.

But in the completed text, ages before the discoveries of modern science and psychology, Paul expounds an even more fundamental doctrine; namely, not merely the reaction of the body on the mind, but that of the mind on the body.

THE GOD OF PEACE

The whole passage must be taken together, if we

are to grasp the apostle's full meaning. Verses 6 and 7 are among the familiar passages of the Bible, so also are verses 8 and 9, but somehow they have got detached from each other. If you doubt this, stop the best informed Bible student you know, and quote verses 6 and 7: "Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God, and the peace of God that passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Then ask him to continue the quotation. You will find he cannot do it. Give him a start by quoting the opening words of verse eight, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true—" and he will instantly pick it up, and continue through the wonderful passage, but will stop again, when he gets to verse nine. Yet it is all one connected, closely-knit statement of the doctrine of peace.

I think one reason for this separation of the two passages is to be found in our translation of the opening words of verse 8, "finally." The Greek here does not mean "finally," as though Paul were summing up the whole argument of the epistle, but "moreover," and does not introduce the conclusion to the letter, but links the thought of the peace of God—the peace of commitment—with the thought of the indwelling God of peace.

Let us read the entire text together: "Be anxious about nothing, but in everything by prayer and

supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God, and the peace of God that passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

“Moreover, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. . . . and the God of peace shall be with you.”

It is splendid to be free from worry; to have the peace that comes from committing all our interests to the loving care of our heavenly Father. Yet a man may do that, and still miss something that is vital to true peace. We must have hearts and minds not only free from anxiety, but filled with high, holy and loving thoughts, that God, the God of peace, may not only watch over us, but dwell in us.

Some years ago, a young woman met Maltbie D. Babcock on Fifth Avenue one morning, and asked him if he had the peace of God in his heart. Doctor Babcock answered: “I have something far better than that.” The young woman, in astonishment, said: “Why, Doctor Babcock! What could be better than the peace of God?” He said: “My dear, I have the God of peace.”

This is the very heart of it all. We have the peace of God when we commit our interests to His loving care; we have the God of peace dwelling in

us when our hearts make room for His presence by loving, holy thoughts.

In contrast with the faddism of modern cults, which are so dangerous because of the half truth they contain) this passage is remarkable for its sanity of statement. Here is no esoteric doctrine for the elect only; no abstruse metaphysics, deluding simple souls with vain words; no delving into telepathy and mental healing; no denial of the reality of God's world and no mockery of the sufferer with the negation of pain; no vague wanderings into the mysteries of the infinite; but a plain, simple statement of tremendous practical importance:

God has adapted the mind of man to truth, righteousness, justice, purity and love, and when we fill our minds with unholy thoughts we destroy the basis and possibility of all genuine peace. There is left no room for the God of peace.

In the midst of all the wild vagaries of current teaching, it is well for us to get this thing firmly fixed in our thinking—this great and fundamental postulate of the quiet heart.

A man fills himself with liquor, and quite naturally expects to get drunk. But we fill our minds with impure thoughts, even solicit them by obscene literature, and lewd pictures, fill our hearts with envy, jealousy, gossip, slander and scandal, and then naïvely wonder why we have to sing:

*“Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I saw the Lord?”*

*Where is the soul refreshing view
Of Jesus and His Word?"*

We wonder why we do not want to go to church; why we loiter around until it is too late to dress the children for Sunday School; why when we finally go to church the very hymns of praise seem full of sentimentalism, which moves us while we resent it, and then why we go home irritable, worn out and tired of it all!

It is not strange that in certain social circles it is no longer "good form" to go to church, or that certain devotees of society turn so greedily to the glass of wine and other forms of dissipation. They blame it on prohibition, but the plain fact is that they are trying to drown the discontent of restless, unhappy lives.

Paul brings us here a great positive truth, as he points the way out—the only way out. The things that disturb our peace will disappear in the presence of the true, the beautiful, the good.

"To live," says one, "in the atmosphere of truth and love is to maintain antiseptic conditions against the germs of doubt, worry and all pain-producing emotions." "The joy of the Lord is your strength," and "love never faileth." These gripped by the mind bring true gladness of heart, for a "merry heart doeth good like a medicine."

"Cultivate a cheerful frame of mind," advises a recent writer. "Move over on the sunny side of the street. Live in rooms with sunny exposure.

Whistle when you feel like whining. Get interested in some one else. Organize yourself into a committee of one, and go into the cheering up business. Lay aside your veil, and let your face shine. Go ahead doing good, thinking good, and you will feel good." It is a cheerful philosophy of life well worth while, but it needs to be interpreted in the light of this Philippian text, or we shall find ourselves like men trying to lift themselves by their boot-straps.

I never hear a group of business men, at a club luncheon, singing: "Pack up your troubles in your old kit-bag and smile, smile, smile," without wondering what some of them will do when the kit gets so full its weight will break their backs. The stoic can smile in the face of trouble, and it is a heartening, brave thing to do; but if a man is to have peace, he must have a heart cleansed by the blood of Jesus, and a mind filled by His Spirit with holy thoughts, and thus made fit for the indwelling of the God of peace.

There is, on the other hand, a type of Christianity that in unconscious mock modesty is always prating about "poor, frail, worms of the dust." Let us get down to the real truth of this business. We are not "poor worms of the dust;" we are sons of God, children of the King, joint heirs with the King's Son.

The Christ through whom God ministers peace is not the head but the living One, enthroned in glory,

with the marks of His sufferings indeed upon Him, but in His pierced hand the sceptre of Almightyness.

Such a Christ is calling us out of our mire of selfishness, out of our sloughs of sensualism, into the great sun-lit plains of His blessed truth.

When that great Japanese preacher and evangelist, Paul Kanamori, was in this country, he told me that, in his traveling from place to place in many lands, people would try to tell him of the evil things in their villages or cities, but that he had covenanted with the Master not to listen to anything except what was true and pure and good; and this covenant, he said, had kept him strong and cheerful in many a trying experience. This was in part, at least, what Paul meant when he wrote to the Corinthians that he brought "every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ"—this is indeed to have the "mind of Christ" that harbors no unholy thought.

Such an attitude as this has a helpful reaction on the health of our body. It helps to empty hospitals and sanatoriums; but we are prone to think too much about being healthy. Some Christians seem even willing to barter the precious heritage of their faith, on the promise that they can be cured of all the ills flesh is heir to—following this *ignis fatuus* of hope into the quagmire of error and delusion.

God wants us to be healthy and happy, but above all He wants us to be good; and He holds open to us the gateway of peace, that may be en-

tered only with the marks of the cross, sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise.

Is your conscience troubled by sin? Come to the fountain of cleansing and forgiveness through His blood. Is your life harassed by problems and difficulties? Commit thy way unto Him, and He will give you the desires of thine heart. Is your mind full of unrest and discontent? Fill it with truth and love, and your life with service. Make your heart by His grace a fit dwelling-place for His Spirit, and the God of Peace shall be with you.

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