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SERMONIC.

ALL THINGS MADE NEW.

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And He that sat on the throne said, Behold I make all things new.—Rev. xxi: 5.

THERE is a good time coming for this world. We call it, variously, the millennium, the latter-day glory, the Sabbath of the earth. Amid the darkness and gloom which arise from the contemplation of human woe, the Church in every age has been taught to look with fond anticipation to the future, when the mischiefs of the fall in Adam will be retrieved by the renovation of all things in Christ.

In the wonderful visions vouchsafed to the exiled apostle in Patmos was a prophetic view of this renewed and glorified world, under the figure of the New Jerusalem, descending from God out of heaven, accompanied by the Divine proclamation cited in the text—“Behold, I make all things new.” It is the promise of a day fairer than any that has yet been seen on earth, when the evils which have hitherto afflicted it shall be abolished, and universal peace and holiness shall bless the world.

In considering a promise of so much interest, toward whose fulfilment we now seem to be making some visible and rapid progress, let us direct our view to three points:—

1. The methods by which God will effect the purpose mentioned.
2. The progress which has already been made in it.
3. The outlook as to its completion.

I. The methods by which God will fulfil His purpose to make all things new.

Two theories prevail. The first we may call the *miraculous*. It is assumed that the prophetic language relating to it is to be taken literally. Christ now, ere long, is suddenly to burst into view in a visible and bodily form, in the clouds of heaven. The righteous dead are to be raised in the bodies which had been laid in the grave. The earth is then to be set on fire and all the evil in it burned up, as if it were a mass of material filth. The sun, moon and stars, with all the mighty universe above and around us, are to pass away with a great noise. The earth and the heavens are then to be re-created. In that new world the mountains will be found

[* The first several sermons are reported in full; the remainder are given in condensed form. Every care is taken to make these reports correct; yet our readers must not forget that it would be unfair to hold a speaker responsible for what may appear in a condensation, made by another of his discourse.—ED.]

THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL SERVICE.

The True Basis of Instruction.

AN ADDRESS BY CHANCELLOR HOWARD CROSBY, D.D., LL.D., OF NEW YORK UNIVERSITY, BEFORE THE BROOKLYN S. S. UNION.

THE apostle Peter says that he will not be negligent to put Christians in memory of what they already know, though they be established in the truth. My aim to-night is, not to state new things, but "to stir up your minds" (the original word means "to wake up from sleep"), and to go back to first principles, even to the true basis of our instruction of the young. We often lag behind our convictions and do not live up to our knowledge. We ought to "go on to perfection" in knowledge. Wherever there is want of faith in the Sunday-school, or wrong management of its affairs, we may trace the difficulty to defective ideas of the nature and aim of the Church.

1. *What is the Church?*—I answer, It is the "body of Christ." Spiritual, you say? Yes; but it has also visibility as well, and so organization. Man is a spirit, but a body too; so we must care for its functions. The Sunday-school is an integral part; the training of youth, a special function. The Church is an edifying power—that is, it is to build up character, as well as merely to save souls from death. It is to provide regular, systematic, continuous training for its members, old and young.

You say that the parents at home should prosecute the religious training of their children? True; they ought. But how many are there who are unable to do this in an orderly and systematic way, even if they be Christian parents. They may teach the A B C, but the Church should take up the labor of a more ample furnishing of the child's mind and heart; should carry him along and upward, as youth in school and college are carried, year after year, through a wisely-arranged curriculum of study. "Let all things be done decently and in order," is a

favorite maxim of mine. Raikes was wrong in thinking that the Sunday-school was only for the ragged and ignorant. It is needed for all. This leads to a second point:—

2. *What is the school to teach?*—Some parents think that the Sunday-school is only a place where children are to be kept quiet during a part of Sunday. They are glad to be relieved of that responsibility. Some teachers—and I confess to this error and sin committed in my earlier years—come to their work under the spur of conscience rather than under the impulse of love. They work in a perfunctory way; they teach in a haphazard style. Now, this is as wrong as it would be for the pastor to come to his pulpit unprepared.

The school is to teach that which God has taught us—His HOLY WORD, the character of God, the Gospel of Christ, His mediatorial character and work—in short, all that goes to build up our life in truth and holiness, that we may be partakers of God. The truth is the instrument which the Holy Ghost uses; therefore make the Bible the text-book, and the Sunday-school a circle of Bible classes. I approve of catechisms as useful compends, adapted to mature minds, and to be committed to memory, *ipsisssima verba*. But don't teach the catechism to the little ones! Why not? Because, in the first place, you cannot spare the time from Bible study. We should not allow too much time for singing and other exercises. There should be a prayer to God and a hymn of praise; but the time should be mostly given to God's Word. I speak from jealousy of that Word. In the second place, the little ones cannot understand the philosophic statements of these compends of theology. But it is said, "They will, some day, if they do not now." Why not, then, in mathematics teach them Euclid by rote, and so other higher studies? We do not reason so on any other topic. But the Scriptures are plain in narrative and illustration. We need not go outside them for grotesque similes. Study specially the four Gospels and Christ in the Old

Testament. The latter is plainer to us ; more valuable, therefore, than it was to the Jews. Had one seen the fine pictures which now adorn the Capitol at Washington, twenty years before the Revolution, he would have had some dim idea that a body of men were to declare some great truth ; that a leader was to be commissioned, was to fight, was to receive the capitulation of an enemy, and, finally, to be inducted into office. We have more adequate ideas, looking back on these accomplished facts. So the Jews looked for a leader, and had some conception of his character and his work ; but we are better qualified to understand and to teach. Let me now add three corollaries, or inferences :—

1. Every teacher must be a Bible student. He should no more go to his class unprepared than should the preacher go into the pulpit unprepared. Hurrried study, mere reading over the lesson, will not suffice. The avenue to a spiritual understanding of the Word is through the letter. There must be examination and comparison of the language used, the geographical, ethnographical and historical facts. These are the setting of the gem. The diggings up and out of ancient cities, and the progress of research, pour a flood of light on the volume. A fund of illustrations, as well as of precepts, is found by diligent exposition.

2. As the memory is the chief hand of the mind, grasping the truth, the memory of the pupil should be most carefully trained and filled with God's Word. The memory of a child will not break down. Use it.

3. Do not let the Sunday-school run away from this cardinal idea. Let not the effort to "please the children" interfere with this training any more than in the public schools. Rooted and grounded in Christ, built up in knowledge and holiness, characters will be proof against irreligion and scepticism. Thus we are made secure against the irruption of false doctrine. This method is wiser than that of fencing in the arena, or assaulting error from

behind walls. Teach the young to add to faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity, that they be neither barren nor unfruitful. Then shall they never fail.

Nature of Sin.

A SUNDAY-SCHOOL ADDRESS, IN OUTLINE,
BY J. BANVARD, D.D., BOSTON, MASS.

CHILDREN: The word sin is very short, but it expresses something very fearful. Indeed, it is the seed from which has sprung that mighty tree, the fruit of which is seen in all the crimes and sorrows known upon the earth or in eternity. Let me describe to you its nature :—

Sin is attractive. It clothes itself in the most beautiful manner possible. Balls, parties, picture-books of vice, races, attractive drinking-saloons, gambling-dens, theatres, etc.

Sin is deceitful—like the rainbow, beautiful at a distance, but vanishing as you approach it ; like the apples of Sodom, golden without, but dust within. How attractive to Achan were the wedge of gold and the costly Babylonian garment ! He seized them, contrary to orders, and they destroyed himself and all his family. The throne of his father was very attractive to Absalom, but his attempt to seize it resulted in his own death. It attracted only to betray.

Sin is corrupting. As some diseases affect the blood, the flesh, the brain, the nerves, the whole nature—so sin pollutes the mind, filling it with evil thoughts ; the affections, filling them with evil passions ; the will, inducing it to form evil purposes, and to be governed by the vilest motives, until, as the Bible says, "the whole head is sick and the whole heart faint." When a sinful course is first commenced, it is like a decayed spot in an apple, which enlarges, until the whole mass is corrupt. It is like leaven. Judas, who betrayed the Saviour, was once a little innocent boy ; but how thoroughly depraved he was when he became a man !