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REVIEW SECTION.

I.—GREAT PREACHERS.

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II. JEAN BAPTISTE MASSILLON, THE STAR OF FRANCE.

BEYOND all doubt, Massillon stands foremost in reputation in the roll of French preachers, altho some might be disposed to give Bourdaloue a higher place. Massillon was a native of the town of Hières, in Provence, not a very distinguisht place in his time, but now, with the other towns on the southern border of Provence, famous as one of the stations of the Riviera—the most delightful of all regions as a winter residence. Of a thoroughly retiring disposition, Massillon as a priest was disposed to slip through life in the quietest way possible and in the most obscure situation. But his marvelous pulpit gifts could not be hid, and he was called to devote himself to the pulpit. And in that sphere his achievements were quite marvelous.

When he preacht at court, Louis XIV. heard him, and made the remark that when he heard other preachers he was satisfied with them; when he heard Massillon he was dissatisfied with himself. Massillon, however, appears to have had too much faithfulness and to have been too outspoken in rebuking sin for the royal taste, for he was not called to preach at court often, and the King did not promote him to a bishopric. It was, indeed, a strange text he chose to preach from before the King: "Blessed are they that mourn." How did he justify the choice? Very cleverly. He said:

"Sire, if the world were here addressing your Majesty, it would not say, Blessed are they that mourn. It would say, Blessed is the Prince who never fought but to conquer; who has filled the world with his name; who during a long and prosperous reign has enjoyed with fame all that men admire, the greatness of his conquests, the love of his people, the magnificence of his works, the wisdom of his laws, and the hope of a numerous progeny; and who has now

NOTE.—This periodical adopts the Orthography of the following Rule, recommended by the joint action of the American Philological Association and the Philological Society of England:—Change d or ed final to t when so pronounced, except when the e affects a preceding sound.—PUBLISHERS.

I can not have you here; come, go home with me. You man with the muck-rake: oh, is it quite worth while for you, with such a parentage, to be spending all your energies for that? You poor trifier, chasing the bubbles of vanity, isn't there better business for us who live in the Father's house, with His truth to study and His beauty to feast on and His love to know and make known?" This is the true evangel; how long it has taken the Church to learn it! If we can only get its light into our thoughts and its music into our souls, the world will soon see the dawn of a new day.

For this truth stops not short on the frontiers of theology, if theology has frontiers; it follows man wherever he goes, and gives law to all his life. If God is the Father of all men, all men are brethren; and there can be but one law for home and school and shop and factory and market and court and legislative hall. One child of the common Father can not enslave another nor exploit another; the strong and the fortunate and the wise can not take advantage of the weak and the crippled and the ignorant, and enrich themselves by spoiling their neighbors; each must care for the welfare of all, and all must minister to the good of each. This is the law of brotherhood which directly follows from Christ's doctrine of Fatherhood, and which is beginning to be seriously considered, all over the world, as the only solution of the problems of society. It is destined to effect a reconstruction here in the realm of fact, not less thorough than that which it has wrought in the realm of theory.

III.—THE GREAT WANT OF THE AGE.

BY ROBERT F. SAMPLE, D.D., NEW YORK CITY.

THERE are some who believe that the spiritual condition of the Church gives evidence of a serious decadence. While they see much in the numerical strength, alliances for Christian work, possibilities of usefulness, and the general diffusion of religious knowledge for which to be thankful, yet their doxology is set to a minor key, and former times are declared to have been better than the present. There is ground for the opinion, but it is perhaps unduly emphasized. History is a record of virtues rather than of moral delinquencies. It throws a mantle of charity over the latter, and either hides or obscures them. Memory does the same; and by a process which is not wholly to be condemned, clothes the receding years, as distance robes the mountains, in an azure hue. We are apt to regard the Pilgrims and Puritans of New England, and the Huguenots, noted cavaliers of the Carolinas, as sporadic saints, with scarce a moral blemish, and to insist that the incense of worship in the homes of our own childhood was fragrant as the breath of Lebanon. If there are any Whitefields, Tennents, Wesleys, and Paysons in our day, and such believers as

suffered martyrdom in Piedmont and were burned at Smithfield, yet personal religion, we are told, is sadly deficient, and the Church is largely shorn of her power.

Another class insists that the Church of the present is more Scriptural, more spiritual, more consecrated to the true ends of life, and more efficient in every department of Christian work, than the Church of any period since Pentecost.

Comparisons are fallacious, hurtful. We make none. But there is certainly a great want about much of the piety of the present. The urgent need of the age is the baptism of the Holy Ghost. We may insist upon this in terms that are strong, in a spirit that is sad, and in deep personal humiliation, without being chargeable with the sin of pessimism, the dread of which often muffles the voice of needful warning. We recognize with thankfulness the strength and usefulness of the Church of the present. We have an unwavering hope for the future. The truth will prevail. Jesus shall reign from sea to sea, and His kingdom reach from the river to the ends of the earth. But there must be a quickening of spiritual life, a profounder sense of obligation to God, a more comprehensive consecration to our expected King, before this end can be attained.

There are conditions which indicate the urgent need of revival. Such was the state of the Church of Great Britain in the middle of the seventeenth century. When there came to the ministry a realizing sense of their low spiritual estate that prepared the way for the great spiritual refreshing that followed, they drew up a formal confession of their sins which was numerously signed, especially in Scotland. We may find in the present experiences of the Church at least an approximation to the defection of that day. I quote from the printed document:

"Ignorance of God; want of nearness to Him, and taking up little of God in reading, meditating, and speaking of Him. Exceeding great selfishness in all we do; acting from ourselves, for ourselves, and to ourselves. Not caring how unfaithful and negligent others were, so being it might contribute a testimony to our faithfulness and diligence, and being rather content, if not rejoicing at their faults. Least delight in those things wherein lieth our nearest communion with God; great inconstancy in our walk with God, and neglect of acknowledging Him in all our ways. In going about duties, least careful of those things which are most remote from the eyes of men. Seldom in secret prayer with God, except to fit for public performances; and even that much neglected, or gone about very superficially. Glad to find excuses for the neglect of duties. Neglecting the reading of the Scripture in secret, for edifying ourselves as Christians; only reading them in so far as may fit us for our duty as ministers, and oftentimes neglecting that. . . .

"Confession in secret much slighted, even of those things whereof we are convinced. . . . Accounting of our estate and way according to the estimation that others have of us. Estimation of men, as they agree with or disagree from us. Neglect of prayer after the Word is preached, that it may receive the first and latter rain; and that the Lord would put in the hearts of His people what we speak to them in His name. Speaking of Christ more by hearsay than from knowledge and experience, or any real impression of Him upon the heart, . . .

Too much eying our own credit and applause; and being taken with it when we get it, and unsatisfied when it is wanting. Timorousness in delivering God's message; letting people die in reigning sin without warning."

There have been later periods of declension which may be described in somewhat different terms. Take it all in all, the Church of the present is no doubt better than the Church before the times of Baxter, Flavel, and Bunyan; or even in their day. God's work advances with the generations. Yet there may be interruptions to this advance, and we may even drop for a time to a lower plane. I think the present furnishes an example of the latter. What I am now about to say is not the conclusion of personal observation simply, but of inquiry, and of correspondence with different parts of our country. I will give the results of this investigation, chiefly in my own words, yet adhering closely to the conditions as stated—with this single remark that the most encouraging statements come from the South and from the valley of the upper Mississippi.

The ministry of our time embraces many servants of God who preach the Word as they are bidden. This may be true of the larger number. Yet there is a sadly prevalent lack of faithfulness, fervor, and power from on high. To tell Christless souls that they are spiritually dead, and must be born again; that they are sinners, and must repent; that they are without God and without hope, and must believe in Christ, or perish,—and to do this with far less than a moiety of Paul's solemnity, of Whitefield's tenderness, and of Nettleton's unction, would be a novelty in many places that might offend polite ears, decimate the fashionable church, and terminate the preacher's popularity, if not his work. We need more preaching of the humbling and solemn doctrines of revelation. The divine sovereignty, justice, and holiness should receive more emphasis, constituting as they do the spiritual background of the cross. The eternal consequences of sin, of which Christ often spoke with a solemnity that should have awaked a slumbering world, to deny which were to impugn the authority of the Scriptures and the veracity of our Lord, to doubt which would be to cut the nerve of pulpit power, should be declared in faithful love, with due regard to the proportions of truth; but these infinitely serious facts of revelation have little or no place in the public ministrations of to-day. The old sermon address to the conscience; direct, pungent, tender; preacht when God was nigh, seems out of place, and if repeated, produces little or no salutary impression. The announcement of secular or controversial subjects attracts for a little, but soon the spectacle of death is more painful than before. Various expedients may be resorted to that a fair showing may be made in the annual statistical tables of the Church. The standard of piety is lowered, religion is made easy, unconverted people are gathered into the Church, and the public press is solicited to report whatever may seem to indicate external progress and ministerial success. Meanwhile, in answer to the prayers of a faithful few, some

souls are born again, and some Christians are brought nearer to God. But the spiritual results are meager. Few converts come to the solemn feasts. I close this part of the discussion with a single quotation:

"The accessions are from the humble chapel rather than from the parent church; and from other and weaker churches, outwardly less attractive, rather than from the world. It is not even a time of breaking up of fallow ground and the sowing of precious seed, except in remote corners of the field."

Meanwhile the Church grows in conformity to the world. The clear, broad line of demarkation which should separate Christians from unbelievers has in many instances ceased to exist, or has largely disappeared. In many places public worship is sadly cold and formal. Little spiritual benefit is sought, and little is received. Prayer loses much of its earnestness and power. Family religion declines. Morning and evening devotions are omitted, or are mechanically conducted. The Word of God receives little attention beyond that which is professional, or critical, or for polemic purposes. Spiritual life is on the down-grade.

Wealth may increase, but benevolence is not proportionately advanced. The ancient Hebrews, their privileges greatly inferior to ours, their religious efforts restricted to the little Canaan shut in by the Arnon and the sea called Great, fulness of power held in abeyance, awaiting the consummation of redemption—gave in tithes and free-will offerings one third of their income to religious purposes. But the Church in our day, tho making some advance in benevolence, contributes far less than one tenth of her income to the Lord. Many who might give half, or a larger proportion, or all, as did Nathaniel Cobb, adopt a lower measure than the minimum of the tithe, claiming the *liberty* of the later dispensation. For want of consecrated service and substance, the relative number of heathen increases. The appeal of perishing need at home and abroad moves only a few hearts to personal sacrifice, tho the Church is sitting in the shadow of Calvary and under an open heaven—continents and islands waiting, the while, for the salvation of God.

At the same time brotherly love falls far below the Bible standard. Judah vexes Ephraim, and Ephraim envies Judah. Coldness, suspicion, criticism, disparagement of each other's worth and work, are common, and it seems a matter of little or no concern to Christians that the Canaanite and the Perizite are looking on. Here and there in the kingdom of the Prince of Peace are repeated such scenes as occurred during the Peninsular War, when battalions, pouring forth shot and shell, smote down a regiment stationed in a wood near by; their *own* Ninety-ninth.

On the other hand a false charity fills the niches of God's temple with the divinities of heathen philosophy, content if Christ receives a little larger space than Buddha, and Christianity is regarded the best

form of religion, while it is claimed that all other religions contain essential truths.

This condition is by no means universal. There remain a multitude that have not bowed the knee to Baal. There is much earnest wrestling with God for His presence and for manifestations of His power. There are spiritual gardens distributed like the islands of the archipelago, which will yet bind continents to the cross. But is the Church at large filled with the Holy Spirit? We do not inquire so much whether there is more Bible study and greater Scriptural intelligence, more forms of religious activity, or even more accessions to the Church, than in the past. But is there much vital godliness among us? Is truth translated into the life? Are there abounding evidences of spiritual growth, love to the brethren, fellowship with God, sincere and habitual concern for His glory? We do not ask whether there are holy men and women in every community, pastors who preach a pure Gospel with power, missionaries who have the self-sacrificing spirit of Carey, Morrison, and Duff. Such there undoubtedly are. But we anxiously inquire what is the *prevailing* state of the church, the *general* tone of the ministry, and the ordinary tokens of power.

If we read history aright, there have often been spiritual conditions much worse than the present. But that there is a great and urgent need for revival in our day, is apparent. This is evident whether we consider the decline in many places of Scriptural piety; the neglect of family prayer, and of religious instruction in the home; Sabbath desecration; devotion to gaiety, pleasure, and worldly amusements, which unfit for serious duty and create a distaste for spiritual worship; the state of the heathen world; the prevalence of unbelief in lands nominally Christian; the infidelity of materialism, indifferentism, and of science, falsely so called; the tendency of rationalism, minifying the authority of the Scriptures, denying the absolute necessity of the cross, and of faith in Christ as an unalterable condition of salvation, and the fact that multitudes everywhere make void God's law. It is time for us to awake and entreat God to return, saying with Habakkuk: "O Lord, revive thy work, in the midst of the years made known, in wrath remember mercy."

We need a genuine work of grace; the baptism of the Holy Ghost; power from on high. Great excitement may not be needed. The evangelist may not be required to supplement the labors of the pastor. There may be neither whirlwind, nor earthquake, nor fire. But we need power from on high. It is not ours to dictate the time or manner of its bestowment, nor all the means by which it is to be secured, continued, and improved. When the Holy Ghost comes He will lead the way.

The age has been crowded with great possibilities. The world has opened all her gates, and has bidden us enter and possess it for Christ. The elements of nature have waited to be yoked to Immanuel's tri-

umphal chariot. To be living has involved tremendous responsibility; has been solemn and sublime. But the Church in travail has not had power to bring forth nor to possess what lies a little further on.

This judgment may be regarded unwarranted, injurious, and severe. If it were publicly made, no doubt many would say: "We are rich and increase in goods, and in need of nothing." But I can not believe that this is God's estimate. Many of us who occupy pulpits feel that we need a fresh baptism of the Holy Ghost; more charity, more humbleness of mind, more self-forgetfulness, more love of the truth, more faith in God, more prayerfulness, more hungering for souls, more likeness to Christ, and a fuller consecration to the true ends of our calling, thereby attaining greater power with God and with men.

Oh! for one day of John the Baptist; for a cloud, big with promise, on the horizon of infinite grace; for more of the spirit of Christ, who yearned and prayed and labored and died for the salvation of men; of Paul, who counted not his life dear unto him, if by any means he might save some; of John Knox, whose night-cry still lingers on the air, "Give me Scotland, or I die!"; of John Welsh, of Ayr, whose Scotch plaid protected him when, in tearful concern for souls, he rose before the dawn to pray; of Joseph Alleine, who went from prolonged communings with God to the pulpit, and besought men with tears to flee from the wrath to come; of Gilbert Tennent, who wore the prophet's rough mantle, under whose preaching in Boston a multitude of souls were converted in a single week; or of Elisha Swift, the "Old Man Eloquent," nearer our day, of whom this is the record: "For many years he had four seasons of secret prayer, which he sacredly observed each day. Often on Sabbath evenings, after his labors were completed, he would spend long periods in the retirement of his study in audible intercession for his people. He belonged to a race of men now seldom found, but sometimes read about in the annals of the past." Such a ministry would itself declare that God was come; and we who live in these last days might see the pencillings of light which would betoken the breaking of that universal Sabbath which shall last a thousand years. The Lord hasten it in His time. And let all the people say, Amen.

IV.—PRESENT THEOLOGICAL TENDENCIES.

By J. H. W. STUCKENBERG, D. D.

I. DOMINANT FACTORS OF THE AGE WHICH AFFECT THE THEOLOGICAL TENDENCIES.

THEOLOGY is here used in its broadest sense, as when we speak of a student of theology or of a theological faculty. It is not therefore confined to the doctrine of God or dogmatics, but includes the entire intellectual basis of religion. Not every phase of theological movement can be indicated. There are, however, certain currents in the theology of our day which are typical of its general character, and mark it as distinct from past theological tendencies. By empha-