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EDITORIAL NOTES.

The world's greatest need today is "the comfort of the Holy Ghost." In the midst of the distressing world events that we see all about us, the human heart needs divine comfort and strength. We must not allow ourselves to think that such expressions as "the comfort of the Holy Ghost" are mere figures of speech. They are intended to bring to us a message concerning the work of God's Holy Spirit in the midst of the conflicts of life so fierce and real.

Every life that is lived in the fear of God and in the power of the Holy Spirit must come into collision with some things in this world. The antagonisms of Satan against those who serve God are real and genuine. No Christian life can be lived without conflict. The very purpose of conflict and struggle is to strengthen and deepen the soul's experiences of God and His grace.

Pressure will be brought to bear upon the National Congress to secure immediate statutory enactment of national prohibition as a war measure. Such a measure would be a tremendous asset in the way of moral preparedness. Saloons are always closed in any community in case of a riot. Surely it is the part of wisdom to close saloons in case of war. Russia found this imperative; England and France have recognized that restraints of the liquor traffic are essential to the effective prosecution of the war. If saloons are allowed to continue their traffic during times of war, frequent disturbances and riots may be expected. The International Reform Bureau is prosecuting a vigorous campaign for the statutory enactment of national prohibition as a measure of national defense.

Events fraught with far-reaching consequences are pressing so rapidly upon each other in these stirring days of the world war that it is almost impossible to appreciate their effect upon the world's history. The revolution in Russia; the triumph of democracy; the prohibition of the curse of opium in China; the restrictions placed in practically every country of the world on the liquor traffic; the growth of democratic sentiment and tendencies among Teutonic peoples; the stirring of all nations to greater enjoyment of liberty; all these indicate an astonishingly rapid transformation of the entire world. In connection with this ferment of freedom we are glad to present on page 3 a thoughtful address by Dr. J. A. Macdonald, editor of the "Toronto Globe," Canada, on "The Law of the World's Good Will." Dr. Macdonald is a Christian statesman with a world-wide outlook and a world-embracing love.

China at last is free from the curse of the opium traffic. On April 1, all holdings of opium by private interests in China were ended. There will be no further dealings in opium in the open market in the Orient. The Chinese Government has taken over the entire stock in the country and will use it only for the extraction of morphine for medical purposes. For years China fought against the terrible slavery of this drug which began to be imported in large quantities from British

India nearly a century ago. The Hague Conference, some years ago, adopted an international agreement for the suppression of the opium traffic. The birth of the Chinese Republic made the enforcement of this agreement easier. The opium interests offered the Government large sums of money to delay the date for the prohibition of the traffic in opium, but the Government refused. Christian missionaries were largely influential in developing the sentiment against opium in China. The late Dr. DuBose, of our Southern Presbyterian Mission in China, rendered large service in this connection. China free from the course of opium will be more easily converted to Christianity.

A new pamphlet on Brazil has been issued by the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions in which Rev. H. F. Williams, D. D., details the story of his recent visit to that field. Dr. Williams spent several months visiting each of the stations of the Brazil Mission, and his book is therefore the latest word published in reference to this work. Missionary societies and mission study classes will find this pamphlet of great interest and value. Copies can be secured from either the Foreign Mission Committee, 216 Union St., Nashville, Tennessee, or the Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 6-8 Sixth Street, Richmond, Virginia. The price is ten cents a copy.

The plan of holding "Simultaneous Meetings" in a city or community is receiving hearty commendation from all those who have engaged in such meetings. Valuable suggestions concerning the conduct of such simultaneous meetings will be found in a small pamphlet by Rev. William Crowe, D. D., and published by the department of Evangelism of our Southern Presbyterian Church. This pamphlet grew out of Dr. Crowe's own personal experience after taking part in several such campaigns. The suggestions will be of great value and stimulus to those who are contemplating such meetings and to all who desire to assist in hastening the coming of the Kingdom. Another valuable pamphlet issued by the Department of Evangelism is one by Rev. J. Layton Mauze, D. D., entitled, "Program of Intensive Evangelism." This is a reprint of the article that appeared in the "Christian Observer" several weeks ago. These two pamphlets should be in the hands of every earnest pastor and layman in the Church. Copies will be sent free to those who request them of the department of Evangelism, 1522 Hurt Building, Atlanta, Georgia.

An epoch making event in the history of Protestant missions in Mexico was the session of "The National Convention" of Protestant missionaries held in Mexico City, March 21-April 1. This convention was one of the regional conferences arranged by the Panama Congress to be held at various important centers throughout Latin America. The Protestant constituency of Mexico is over 100,000, and delegates came from every part of the Republic. A unified co-operative program for Mexican missionary work was formulated, including one common church name—"The Mexico Evangelical Church"—to be used for all Protestant denominations, the denominational characterization to be added if

The following epigrams taken from the margins of Mary Slessor's Bibles, several of which are filled with such comments, are literary gems:
"God is never behind time."
"If you play with temptation, do not expect God will deliver you."
"No gift or genius or position can keep us safe or free from sin."
"Good is good, but it is not enough; it must be God."
"The secret of all failure is disobedience."

Mid-Week Prayer Meeting

BY REV. JOHN M. VANDER MEULEN, D. D.

"WHOM HAVING NOT SEEN YE LOVE."

Topic for Wednesday, April 25.

Suggested Scripture: I Peter 1:1-9.

The topic, which in this case is identical, with the text, naturally divides itself into two discussions:

I. "Whom Ye Love."

The first discussion is of the object of the believer's love. This, the apostle tells us in the immediately preceding verse, is Jesus Christ. There are two reasons why He should be the object of our love.

1. The first is for what He is. For that is the first reason why we may and ought to love any one of our fellows. He may never have done anything for us. He may not even know us. But we have seen him and know something of him. We have watched his conduct and his career and his character. And all that in us can be thrilled by the noble and true and beautiful rises up in us to give him a place in our hearts. Even romantic love may start that way.

And that is our first reason for loving Jesus Christ. The Bible exhausts language and metaphor to describe His loveableness. He is one "Chiefest among ten thousand" and one "Altogether Lovely." He is "the Lily of the valley," and "the Rose of Sharon." He is "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" and He is "the Bright, the Morning Star." His Name is called, "Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." And the account of Him in the Gospels justifies all these tributes to Him. If a man can carefully read the account there and not fall in love with Jesus, it must be because there is nothing in him that can thrill at the exhibition and incarnation of the true, the beautiful, and the good.

2. But the second reason for loving Him is for what He is to us. Sometimes you may feel a sense of gratitude for one you do not greatly reverence or respect. But when these two things, reverence and gratitude, blend in your feeling for one and the same person then you have the possibility of love at its best. And the difference is like unto the difference in the feeling of a lover when he not only loves from afar, but when he first knows that his love is reciprocated. In fact it is akin to his feeling when he knows that he was loved even before he began to love. It is a personal relationship now. That is what we mean by asking men to accept Him into a personal relationship as their "personal Saviour."

Paul Gerhardt has beautifully expressed in verse the believer's attitude to Jesus as the object of this new personal relationship:

"A homeless Stranger amongst us came
To this land of death and mourning;
He walked in a path of sorrow and shame,
Through insult, and hate, and scorning;
A Man of sorrows, of toil and tears,
An outcast Man, and lonely;
But He looked on me, and thro' endless years
Him must I love—Him only!

"Then from this sad and sorrowful land,
From this land of tears He departed,
But the light of His eyes and the touch of His hand
Had left me broken-hearted;
And I clave to Him as He turned His face
From the land that was mine no longer;
The land that I loved in the ancient days,
Ere I knew the love that was stronger;
And I would abide where He abode,
And follow His steps forever,
His people my people, His God my God,
In the land beyond the River;
And where He died would I also die,—
Far dearer a grave beside Him
Than a kingly palace 'mongst living men,
The place which they denied Him.

"Then afar and afar did I follow Him on
To the land where He was going,
To the depths of the glory beyond the sun,
Where the glowing fields were glowing:
The golden harvest of endless joy.
The joy He had sown in weeping;
How can I tell the blest employ,
The songs of that glorious reaping,
The recompense sweet, the full reward
Which the Lord His God has given;
At rest beneath the wings of God,
At home in the courts of Heaven."

We have quoted the poem in full, though its ending is not as strong as it should have been. But the point we mean to emphasize is expressed in the beautiful lines:

"But He looked on me, and through endless years
Him must I love—Him only."

II. "Having Not Seen."

The second discussion concerns Love's Handicap. Jesus recognized this as a handicap to faith when He said to Thomas: "Because thou hast seen

Me, thou hast believed: Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." But it is also a handicap to love, as the apostle here plainly indicates. The Apostle John, also, the apostle of love, seems to imply the same thing when he looks forward to the time when "we shall see Him even as He is."

There are two reasons why this should be love's handicap. The first is that we are encased in this flesh mesh of the material and are such creatures of the senses. It is a great test of the depths in the earthly love of any soul when the one we loved has been taken from us by death and we then continue still to love him through the years, though we can no longer see the dear face or hear the dear voice. But even then the love has had this advantage over that of the believer for Jesus that we have once known and loved the departed one in the flesh. It is rare indeed when any one begets a lively love for some other human whom we have never either seen or heard or handled through the senses of our body, say a mother or father who died before we could remember them.

And the second reason for the handicap is that what we know of Jesus has come to us refracted and obscured by our own human conceptions and the human conceptions of others who have taught us of Him. That is one reason why many an unbeliever has turned away from Jesus. What he knows of Jesus has come to him so wretchedly mediated through the imperfect lives and the small conceptions of those who profess to know Him. And that is also the reason why the believer often does not love Him as much as else he would. The Apostle John looked forward with joy to the time when "we shall see Him as He is."

And yet the Apostle felt as Jesus felt that this handicap to both faith and love could be and would be overcome in the hearts of men. There are two ways to overcome it.

The one is through a diligent study of the person and work of Jesus as it is found in the New Testament. That is the main and central value of God's inspired Word that it gives us the true account and picture of Jesus. And it is every believer's privilege not only but his duty to build up his conception of Jesus, not at second hand but from these first hand sources.

But the second and sovereign way to overcome this handicap to the love of Christ is through actual communion with Him. For we do not love a memory. We love a living person. Moreover, it is a person who is in daily touch with us, whose unseen presence is at our right hand and at our left.

"Speak to Him thou, for He hears, and spirit with Spirit can meet—

Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet."

And as we thus speak to Him there will come a time when we shall feel that He also is speaking to us, not merely through the Bible but directly to our souls. To attain to that is to attain the supreme experience of a life. It is for that He came and died and lives again and has given us His Spirit and the means of grace that through it all we might be brought into the communion of love and friendship with Himself and through Him with the Father. In all this His unseen presence will help us. So He has promised. And it is in this way that the believer overcomes love's handicap and rises to that blessed height where he can truly say of Jesus Christ: "Whom having not seen I love."

Louisville, Ky.

For the Christian Observer.

A RAINY DAY.

BY REV. P. D. COWAN.

"Hath the rain a father?"—Job.

The curtains of the sky are drawn,
And dim the sunlight struggling through,
A ghostly mist creeps up the lawn,
And darkens all to one gray hue.

And so, at times, athwart life's way
Gray shadows fall, and mists of care;
Each life must have its rainy day,
Each heart some darkening mantle wear.

In either case, a shadowy veil
Is all that hides the Master's face,
And faith can see the Holy Grail
On every day, in any place.

Darkness and light own Him as Lord,
His are the shadows and the storm,
They only wait upon His Word.
Darkness is love in mystic form.

And so all days are one to me,
If dark or bright, 'tis all the same.
The pattering rain's by love's decree,
As is the sunshine's golden flame.

In swishing rain I only hear
The music of the Master's voice,
When sunshine-flashes flood the air,
They bring to me His word, "Rejoice!"
Summit, N. J.

Young People's Societies

BY REV. WM. M. ANDERSON, D. D.

MISSIONARY OPPORTUNITIES IN LATIN AMERICA.

Topic for the Week Beginning April 29, 1917.

Isaiah 60:1-5.

DAILY READINGS.

M., Apr. 23. Educational opportunities. Acts 19:13-20.
T., Apr. 24. Religious example. 1 Pet. 2:9-20.
W., Apr. 25. Ready to listen. Acts 17:10-14.
Th., Apr. 26. Opportunities to serve. Rom. 12:17-21.
F., Apr. 27. Reconstruction. Zech. 3:1-7.
S., Apr. 28. The power that saves. 1 Cor. 1:17-25.

Isaiah had an enthusiastic missionary spirit. His prophecy has been called "The Gospel of Isaiah." He sees the glorious access of the Gentiles in large numbers flocking into the Church. The light of the Gospel shall cover the darkness of heathenism; and the sons and daughters of the race shall come into the Kingdom.

God is light as well as love, and light dwells where He dwells. Light is both heat and power, and attracts men. A nation that turns its eyes toward God receives the light; and the nation that blinds its eyes from God enters darkness and goes on deeper.

Gladstone said: "The Lord Jesus Christ is the one hope for the poor lost race."

Latin America.

This is a much larger and much more needy field for missionary endeavor than one might think at first. They seem to have religion, and the Christian at that; but the Bible is withheld or misinterpreted so greatly that the people are ignorant of the plan and duties of salvation.

Every missionary to these lands brings back a unanimous report, that not only is the truth withheld, but that all efforts to teach the truth plainly are opposed most bitterly.

Many things in these lands show their need of a clearer idea of the truth. The unstable government, their small idea of education, the basis of their business, their idea of justice, all go to show their mistaken ideas of religion. Their condition shows the character of their religion.

"A police officer in Cavite province, Philippine Islands, states that the influence of one Christian there was of more value in pacifying the people than a regiment of soldiers."

In many of these lands when a truth-seeker gets a Bible, it is to him a new book, and he calls in his friends and neighbors, and they read it and copy it, and it leavens the whole community.

Mexico shows how the Christianity of that country has failed, and the people starving for bread are also starving for the truth. Revolutions have multiplied by the hundreds, the law is avoided and defied, and might has come to be right. "The Mexicans need Bibles instead of bullets."

The Mexican is a very good worker after he is fed up and gets his strength, and a still better worker after he gets moral character through faith in a living present God and His Son, Jesus Christ.

"The school is the Church's opportunity in Latin America," and this is true in all missionary lands. The next generation is the best hope of the Church. "Reform must come through the rising generation. If we fail to reach the children, we postpone our aid for a generation."

Protestantism offers the largest liberty to these lands. It will help overcome ignorance, superstition and prejudice. It will bring them large and varied development. It will emancipate the women from the prison house of the confessional, and bring them into the activities of Christian work, where they have been found to be very helpful.

Let us pray for these lands.

Let us show them every kindness.

Let us send them every help.

Quotations.

If we wish to make the most of ourselves for God and our brothers in Latin America, with its mighty future, we may profitably invest our lives.—J. C. Robbins.

Think of some of the fields awaiting missionaries. There are no missionaries in the Amazon valley west of Manaus and none from Manaus clear up to the Andes. There is the state of Goyaz in Central Brazil, with no established work as yet. There is the city of Iquitos, one of the most important cities in Peru, where there is not a single missionary at work. Then there is Colombia, with four millions of people—passed by.—Robert E. Speer.

In Central America there are at least one hundred towns with a population of from eight thousand to one hundred thousand souls, still to be occupied, as indeed there are more than a thousand villages where the Gospel has never been preached.—Senor Castells.

Dallas, Texas.

We must not conceive of prayer as an overcoming of God's reluctance, but as a laying hold of His highest willingness.—Archbishop Trench.