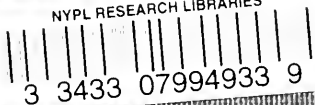


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# DRUMMOND'S ADDRESSES.

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*Pax Vobiscum.*

*The Changed Life.*

*"First!" — A Talk with Boys.*

*How to Learn How.*

*What is a Christian?*

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF PROFESSOR DRUMMOND.

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THE author of these remarkable addresses was born in Scotland in 1851, and studied for the University of Edinburgh in private schools in his native city of Stirling. After graduation here he continued his studies in Tubingen, Germany. He early gave signs of special promise, and it was decided that he should enter on the career of the ministry; and after his ordination he was appointed to a mission station at Malta. It was in the leisure of this rather solitary work that he was enabled to find time to turn his thoughts more entirely to the subject he has since treated in lecture and book, although it was not until long afterward that these efforts were made public.

On his return to Scotland he was appointed a lecturer in science at the Glasgow Free Church College; and it was at this period that his first book, "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," made its tremendous sensation, running through endless editions at home and abroad and in every language. The first edition of this book bears the imprint of 1883, and led to his promotion to a professorship in the same college.

The success of the opening address in the present volume, when reprinted, was as instantaneous, and even wider, than that of his first book.

Professor Drummond never seemed to have been troubled with any absorbing ambition to publish his work, and the list of volumes which bear his name is small; at least one of them being the result of finding a stenographer's incomplete notes printed and for sale in a bookstore.

Doubtless part of the secret of his success is his simplicity and clearness of style, and the fortunate choice of subjects which, at the moment of publication, were absorbing the



thinking world. He has something to say, and knows how to say it, and does so without any reference to the number of pages it will make, should it ever be put in type. In this way he can take up even a commonplace subject and discuss it with an original style and infuse freshness into it.

There is no better example of this than the first two addresses in this book, the text of which is the oft-quoted eulogy of St. Paul's for the love that never faileth and the promise of Christ of rest for the heavy-laden. Many a preacher would hesitate to select these well-known sentences for his sermon, but Professor Drummond has found the happy art of making them seem like new truths; and originality, after all, is only the art of saying better what has been said before.

Professor Drummond is an ordained minister in the Free Church of Scotland, and is engaged Sundays, during the University sessions at Edinburgh, in religious work among the students, where his meetings have been attended often by as many as five or six hun-

dred; and while at home or abroad, his work has done much to help the cause of Christian living among young men, the University Settlement School being the outgrowth of his words and example. During the week he is teaching science from his professor's chair at Glasgow, which is a peculiar attachment for a divinity school, and one not found in America; but scientific study is earnestly pursued in such schools in Scotland.

In the former work he has had as great success as in the latter, and has been the right-hand man of the evangelist, Mr. Moody, in many of his mass meetings, which shows the deep interest he takes in spreading evangelical truth.

Professor Drummond's appearance and manner are well known in this country; and, indeed, it was at Northfield that the first address in the present volume was delivered. A great scholar and divine has given the following analysis of the elements of his success:—

“He has a certain magnetic quality, both as a writer and a speaker, but it can be analyzed.

He has a style, — not a style to move ‘the lonely rapture of lonely minds,’ but one which arrests the busy crowd, — clear, pleasant, flowing with faint hues of poetry. He is never allusive, superior, strained; he does not condescend; he is always himself, — a courteous, unaffected gentleman, with a sincere respect for his audience. He is an adept in the art of translating scientific ideas into common English, and can impart the touch that redeems the familiar from platitude. Then he has a message, a secret. No one can hope long to touch men by mere cleverness or rhetorical skill. Can he guide me? comes to be the question at last. Those who find the right road from the blows they receive on the right hand and the left when deviating into wrong roads are grateful for a wisdom which comes more easily; and Mr. Drummond is nothing, if not practical. He has a system as well as a message. The man of one idea is not so powerful as he used to be. The age dreads nothing so much as the Bore, but it does not always discriminate. But a man with a system, provided he is not continually rattling the skeleton, is the

man of influence. A brilliant preacher of the day humorously compares his sermons to little heaps of earth flung up by a mole: they made a track. In the same way, Mr. Drummond's ideas have a continuity. That one-half of his scheme of thought is studiously kept out of sight does not lessen the interest taken in it; and, like all men whose ideas are coherent, he gives the impression of being at peace in thought."

THE GREATEST THING  
IN  
THE WORLD.

guage. It will take you years to speak in Chinese, or in the dialects of India. From the day you land, that language of Love, understood by all, will be pouring forth its unconscious eloquence. It is the man who is the missionary, it is not his words. His character is his message. In the heart of Africa, among the great Lakes, I have come across black men and women who remembered the only white man they ever saw before—David Livingstone; and as you cross his footsteps in that dark continent, men's faces light up as they speak of the kind doctor who passed there years ago. They could not understand him; but they felt the love that

“THOUGH I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not Love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not Love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not Love, it profiteth me nothing.

Love suffereth long, and is kind ;  
Love envieth not ;  
Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,  
Doth not behave itself unseemly,  
Seeketh not her own,  
Is not easily provoked,  
Thinketh no evil ;  
Rejoiceth not in iniquity,  
but rejoiceth in the truth ;  
Beareth all things, believeth all things,  
hopeth all things,  
endureth all things.



Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, Love, these three; but the greatest of these is Love." — 1 COR. xiii.



## THE GREATEST THING IN THE WORLD.

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EVERY one has asked himself the great question of antiquity as of the modern world: What is the *summum bonum*—the supreme good? You have life before you. Once only you can live it. What is the noblest object of desire, the supreme gift to covet?

We have been accustomed to be told that the greatest thing in the religious world is Faith. That great word has been the key note for centuries of the

popular religion; and we have easily learned to look upon it as the greatest thing in the world. Well, we are wrong. If we have been told that, we may miss the mark. I have taken you, in the chapter which I have just read, to Christianity at his source; and there we have seen, "The greatest of these is love." It is not an oversight. Paul was speaking of faith just a moment before. He says, "If I have all faith, so that I can remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing." So far from forgetting he deliberately contrasts them, "Now abideth, Faith, Hope, Love," and without a moment's hesitation the decision falls, "The greatest of these is Love."

And it is not prejudice. A man is apt to recommend to others his own strong point. Love was not Paul's strong point. The observing student can detect a beautiful tenderness growing and ripening all through his character as Paul gets old; but the hand that wrote, "The greatest of these is love," when we meet it first, is stained with blood.

Nor is this letter to the Corinthians peculiar in singling out love as the *summum bonum*. The masterpieces of Christianity are agreed about it. Peter says, "Above all things have fervent love among yourselves." *Above all things*. And John goes farther, "God is love." And you remember

the profound remark which Paul makes elsewhere, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Did you ever think what he meant by that? In those days men were working the passage to Heaven by keeping the Ten Commandments, and the hundred and ten other commandments which they had manufactured out of them. Christ said, I will show you a more simple way. If you do one thing, you will do these hundred and ten things, without ever thinking about them. If you love, you will unconsciously fulfill the whole law. And you can readily see for yourselves how that must be so. Take any of the commandments. "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me."

If a man love God, you will not require to tell him that. Love is the fulfilling of that law. "Take not His name in vain." Would he ever dream of taking His name in vain if he loved him? "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Would he not be too glad to have one day in seven to dedicate more exclusively to the object of his affection? Love would fulfill all these laws regarding God. And so, if he loved Man, you would never think of telling him to honor his father and mother. He could not do anything else. It would be preposterous to tell him not to kill. You could only insult him if you suggested that he should not steal — how could he steal

from those he loved? It would be superfluous to beg him not to bear false witness against his neighbor. If he loved him it would be the last thing he would do. And you would never dream of urging him not to covet what his neighbors had. He would rather they possessed it than himself. In this way "Love is the fulfilling of the law." It is the rule for fulfilling all rules, the new commandment for keeping all the old commandments, Christ's one secret of the Christian life.

Now Paul has learned that; and in this noble eulogy he has given us the most wonderful and original account extant of the *summum bonum*. We may divide it into three parts. In the



beginning of the short chapter, we have Love *contrasted*; in the heart of it, we have Love *analyzed*; toward the end, we have Love *defended* as the supreme gift.

## THE CONTRAST.

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PAUL begins by contrasting Love with other things that men in those days thought much of. I shall not attempt to go over these things in detail. Their inferiority is already obvious.

He contrasts it with eloquence. And what a noble gift it is, the power of playing upon the souls and wills of men, and rousing them to lofty purposes and holy deeds. Paul says, "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am

become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." And we all know why. We have all felt the brazenness of words without emotion, the hollowness, the unaccountable unpersuasiveness, of eloquence behind which lies no Love.

He contrasts it with prophecy. He contrasts it with mysteries. He contrasts it with faith. He contrasts it with charity. Why is Love greater than faith? Because the end is greater than the means. And why is it greater than charity? Because the whole is greater than the part. Love is greater than faith, because the end is greater than the means. What is the use of having faith? It is to connect the soul

with God. And what is the object of connecting man with God? That he may become like God. But God is Love. Hence Faith, the means, is in order to Love, the end. Love, therefore, obviously is greater than faith. It is greater than charity, again, because the whole is greater than a part. Charity is only a little bit of Love, one of the innumerable avenues of Love, and there may even be, and there is, a great deal of charity without Love. It is a very easy thing to toss a copper to a beggar on the street; it is generally an easier thing than not to do it. Yet Love is just as often in the withholding. We purchase relief from the sympathetic

feelings roused by the spectacle of misery, at the copper's cost. It is too cheap — too cheap for us, and often too dear for the beggar. If we really loved him we would either do more for him, or less.

Then Paul contrasts it with sacrifice and martyrdom. And I beg the little band of would-be missionaries — and I have the honor to call some of you by this name for the first time — to remember that though you give your bodies to be burned, and have not Love, it profits nothing — nothing! You can take nothing greater to the heathen world than the impress and reflection of the Love of God upon your own character. That is the universal lan-



beat in his heart. Take into your new sphere of labor, where you also mean to lay down your life, that simple charm, and your lifework must succeed. You can take nothing greater, you need take nothing less. It is not worth while going if you take anything less. You may take every accomplishment; you may be braced for every sacrifice; but if you give your body to be burned, and have not Love, it will profit you and the cause of Christ *nothing*.

THE ANALYSIS.  

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AFTER contrasting Love with these things, Paul, in three verses, very short, gives us an amazing analysis of what this supreme thing is. I ask you to look at it. It is a compound thing, he tells us. It is like light. As you have seen a man of science take a beam of light and pass it through a crystal prism, as you have seen it come out on the other side of the prism broken up into its component colors — red, and blue, and yellow, and violet, and orange, and all the



colors of the rainbow — so Paul passes this thing, Love, through the magnificent prism of his inspired intellect, and it comes out on the other side broken up into its elements. And in these few words we have what one might call the Spectrum of Love, the analysis of Love. Will you observe what its elements are? Will you notice that they have common names; that they are virtues which we hear about every day; that they are things which can be practiced by every man in every place in life; and how, by a multitude of small things and ordinary virtues, the supreme thing, the *summum bonum*, is made up?

The Spectrum of Love has nine ingredients :

- Patience . . . "Love suffereth long."  
Kindness . . . "And is kind."  
Generosity . . . "Love envieth not."  
Humility . . . "Love vaunteth not itself,  
is not puffed up."  
Courtesy . . . "Doth not behave itself  
unseemly."  
Unselfishness . . . "Seeketh not her own."  
Good Temper . . . "Is not easily provoked."  
Guilelessness . . . "Thinketh no evil."  
Sincerity . . . "Rejoiceth not in iniquity,  
but rejoiceth in the  
truth."

Patience ; kindness ; generosity ;  
humility ; courtesy ; unselfishness ;  
good temper ; guilelessness ; sincerity  
—these make up the supreme gift, the

stature of the perfect man. You will observe that all are in relation to men, in relation to life, in relation to the known to-day and the near to-morrow, and not to the unknown eternity. We hear much of love to God; Christ spoke much of love to man. We make a great deal of peace with heaven; Christ made much of peace on earth. Religion is not a strange or added thing, but the inspiration of the secular life, the breathing of an eternal spirit through this temporal world. The supreme thing, in short, is not a thing at all, but the giving of a further finish to the multitudinous words and acts which make up the sum of every common day.

There is no time to do more than make a passing note upon each of these ingredients. Love is *Patience*. This is the normal attitude of Love; Love passive, Love waiting to begin; not in a hurry; calm; ready to do its work when the summons comes, but meantime wearing the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. Love suffers long; beareth all things; believeth all things; hopeth all things. For Love understands, and therefore waits.

*Kindness.* Love active. Have you ever noticed how much of Christ's life was spent in doing kind things — in *merely* doing kind things? Run over it with that in view, and you will find that He spent a great proportion of His

time simply in making people happy, in doing good turns to people. There is only one thing greater than happiness in the world, and that is holiness; and it is not in our keeping; but what God *has* put in our power is the happiness of those about us, and that is largely to be secured by our being kind to them.

“The greatest thing,” says some one, “a man can do for his Heavenly Father is to be kind to some of His other children.” I wonder why it is that we are not all kinder than we are? How much the world needs it. How easily it is done. How instantaneously it acts. How infallibly it is remembered. How superabundantly it pays

itself back — for there is no debtor in the world so honorable, so superbly honorable, as Love. “Love never faileth.” Love is success, Love is happiness, Love is life. “Love I say,” with Browning, “is energy of Life.”

“For life, with all it yields of joy or woe  
And hope and fear,  
Is just our chance o’ the prize of learning  
love, —  
How love might be, hath been indeed,  
and is.”

Where Love is, God is. He that dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God. God is Love. Therefore *love*. Without distinction, without calculation, without procrastination, love. Lavish it upon the poor, where it is very easy; espe-

cially upon the rich, who often need it most; most of all upon our equals, where it is very difficult, and for whom perhaps we each do least of all. There is a difference between *trying to please* and *giving pleasure*. Give pleasure. Lose no chance of giving pleasure. For that is the ceaseless and anonymous triumph of a truly loving spirit. "I shall pass through this world but once. Any good thing therefore that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer it or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

*Generosity.* "Love envieth not." This is love in competition with others.

Whenever you attempt a good work you will find other men doing the same kind of work, and probably doing it better. Envy them not. Envy is a feeling of ill-will to those who are in the same line as ourselves, a spirit of covetousness and detraction. How little Christian work even is a protection against un-Christian feeling. That most despicable of all the unworthy moods which cloud a Christian's soul assuredly waits for us on the threshold of every work, unless we are fortified with this grace of magnanimity. Only one thing truly need the Christian envy, the large, rich, generous soul which "envieth not."

And then, after having learned all



that, you have to learn this further thing, *Humility*—to put a seal upon your lips and forget what you have done. After you have been kind, after Love has stolen forth into the world and done its beautiful work, go back into the shade again and say nothing about it. Love hides even from itself. Love waives even self-satisfaction. “Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.”

The fifth ingredient is a somewhat strange one to find in this *summum bonum*: *Courtesy*. This is Love in society, Love in relation to etiquette. “Love does not behave itself unseemly.” Politeness has been defined as love in trifles. Courtesy is said to be

love in little things. And the one secret of politeness is to love. Love *cannot* behave itself unseemly. You can put the most untutored persons into the highest society, and if they have a reservoir of Love in their heart they will not behave themselves unseemly. They simply cannot do it. Carlisle said of Robert Burns that there was no truer gentleman in Europe than the ploughman-poet. It was because he loved everything—the mouse, and the daisy, and all the things, great and small, that God had made. So with this simple passport he could mingle with any society, and enter courts and palaces from his little cottage on the banks of the Ayr. You

know the meaning of the word "gentleman." It means a gentle man—a man who does things gently with love. And that is the whole art and mystery of it. The gentle man cannot in the nature of things do an ungentle, an ungentlemanly thing. The ungentle soul, the inconsiderate, unsympathetic nature, cannot do anything else. "Love doth not behave itself unseemly."

*Unselfishness.* "Love seeketh not her own." Observe: Seeketh not even that which is her own. In Britain the Englishman is devoted, and rightly, to his rights. But there come times when a man may exercise even the higher right of giving up his rights.

Yet Paul does not summon us to give up our rights. Love strikes much deeper. It would have us not seek them at all, ignore them, eliminate the personal element altogether from our calculations. It is not hard to give up our rights. They are often eternal. The difficult thing is to give up ourselves. The more difficult thing still is not to seek things for ourselves at all. After we have sought them, bought them, won them, deserved them, we have taken the cream off them for ourselves already. Little cross then to give them up. But not to seek them, to look every man not on his own things, but on the things of others — *id opus est*. “Seekest thou

great things for thyself," said the prophet; "*seek them not.*" Why? Because there is no greatness in *things*. Things cannot be great. The only greatness is unselfish love. Even self-denial in itself is nothing, is almost a mistake. Only a great purpose or a mightier love can justify the waste. It is more difficult, I have said, not to seek our own at all, than, having sought it, to give it up. I must take that back. It is only true of a partly selfish heart. Nothing is a hardship to Love, and nothing is hard. I believe that Christ's "yoke" is easy. Christ's yoke is just his way of taking life. And I believe it is an easier way than any other. I believe it is a

happier way than any other. The most obvious lesson in Christ's teaching is that there is no happiness in having and getting anything, but only in giving. I repeat, *there is no happiness in having or in getting, but only in giving*. And half the world is on the wrong scent in pursuit of happiness. They think it consists in having and getting, and in being served by others. It consists in giving, and in serving others. He that would be great among you, said Christ, let him serve. He that would be happy, let him remember that there is but one way — it is more blessed, it is more happy, to give than to receive.

The next ingredient is a very re-

markable one: *Good temper*. "Love is not easily provoked." Nothing could be more striking than to find this here. We are inclined to look upon bad temper as a very harmless weakness. We speak of it as a mere infirmity of nature, a family failing, a matter of temperament, not a thing to take into very serious account in estimating a man's character. And yet here, right in the heart of this analysis of love, it finds a place; and the Bible again and again returns to condemn it as one of the most destructive elements in human nature.

The peculiarity of ill temper is that it is the vice of the virtuous. It is often the one blot on an otherwise

noble character. You know men who are all but perfect, and women who would be entirely perfect, but for an easily ruffled, quick-tempered, or "touchy" disposition. This compatibility of ill temper with high moral character is one of the strangest and saddest problems of ethics. The truth is there are two great classes of sins — sins of the *Body*, and sins of the *Disposition*. The Prodigal Son may be taken as a type of the first, the Elder Brother of the second. Now, society has no doubt whatever as to which of these is the worse. Its brand falls, without a challenge, upon the Prodigal. But are we right? We have no balance to weigh one another's sins, and



coarser and finer are but human words ; but faults in the higher nature may be less venial than those in the lower, and to the eye of Him who is Love, a sin against Love may seem a hundred times more base. No form of vice, not worldliness, not greed of gold, not drunkenness itself, does more to un-Christianize society than evil temper. For embittering life, for breaking up communities, for destroying the most sacred relationships, for devastating homes, for withering up men and women, for taking the bloom of childhood, in short, for sheer gratuitous misery-producing power, this influence stands alone. Look at the Elder Brother, moral, hard-working, patient,

dutiful — let him get all credit for his virtues — look at this man, this baby, sulking outside his own father's door. "He was angry," we read, "and would not go in." Look at the effect upon the father, upon the servants, upon the happiness of the guests. Judge of the effect upon the Prodigal — and how many prodigals are kept out of the Kingdom of God by the unlovely character of those who profess to be inside? Analyze, as a study in Temper, the thunder-cloud itself as it gathers upon the Elder Brother's brow. What is it made of? Jealousy, anger, pride, uncharity, cruelty, self-righteousness, touchiness, doggedness, sullenness — these are the ingredients of

uns dark and loveless soul. In varying proportions, also, these are the ingredients of all ill temper. Judge if such sins of the disposition are not worse to live in, and for others to live with, than sins of the body. Did Christ indeed not answer the question Himself when He said, "I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the Kingdom of Heaven before you." There is really no place in Heaven for a disposition like this. A man with such a mood could only make Heaven miserable for all the people in it. Except, therefore, such a man be born again, he cannot, he simply *cannot*, enter the Kingdom of Heaven. For it is perfectly certain --

and you will not misunderstand me — that to enter Heaven a man must take it with him.

You will see then why Temper is significant. It is not in what it is alone, but in what it reveals. This is why I take the liberty now of speaking of it with such unusual plainness. It is a test for love, a symptom, a revelation of an unloving nature at bottom. It is the intermittent fever which bespeaks unintermittent disease within; the occasional bubble escaping to the surface which betrays some rottenness underneath; a sample of the most hidden products of the soul dropped involuntarily when off one's guard; in a word, the lightning form of a hundred

hideous and un-Christian sins. For a want of patience, a want of kindness, a want of generosity, a want of courtesy, a want of unselfishness, are all instantaneously symbolized in one flash of Temper.

Hence it is not enough to deal with the Temper. We must go to the source, and change the inmost nature, and the angry humors will die away of themselves. Souls are made sweet not by taking the acid fluids out, but by putting something in—a great Love, a new Spirit, the Spirit of Christ. Christ, the Spirit of Christ, interpenetrating ours, sweetens, purifies, transforms all. This only can eradicate what is wrong, work a chem-

ical change, renovate and regenerate, and rehabilitate the inner man. Will-power does not change men. Time does not change men. Christ does. Therefore "Let that mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." Some of us have not much time to lose. Remember, once more, that this is a matter of life or death. I cannot help speaking urgently, for myself, for yourselves. "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones, which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." That is to say, it is the deliberate verdict of the Lord Jesus that it is better not to live than

not to love. *It is better not to live than not to love.*

*Guilelessness* and *Sincerity* may be dismissed almost without a word. Guilelessness is the grace for suspicious people. And the possession of it is the great secret of personal influence. You will find, if you think for a moment, that the people who influence you are people who believe in you. In an atmosphere of suspicion men shrivel up; but in that atmosphere they expand, and find encouragement and educative fellowship. It is a wonderful thing that here and there in this hard, uncharitable world there should still be left a few rare souls who think no evil. This is the great unworldli-

ness. Love "thinketh no evil," imputes no motive, sees the bright side, puts the best construction on every action. What a delightful state of mind to live in! What a stimulus and benediction even to meet with it for a day! To be trusted is to be saved. And if we try to influence or elevate others, we shall soon see that success is in proportion to their belief of our belief in them. For the respect of another is the first restoration of the self-respect a man has lost; our ideal of what he is becomes to him the hope and pattern of what he may become.

"Love rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." I have called this *Sincerity* from the words rendered



in the Authorized Version by "rejoiceth in the truth." And, certainly, were this the real translation, nothing could be more just. For he who loves will love Truth not less than men. He will rejoice in the Truth—rejoice not in what he has been taught to believe; not in this Church's doctrine or in that; not in this ism or in that ism; but "in *the Truth.*" He will accept only what is real; he will strive to get at facts; he will search for *Truth* with a humble and unbiassed mind, and cherish whatever he finds at any sacrifice. But the more literal translation of the Revised Version calls for just such a sacrifice for truth's sake here. For what Paul

really meant is, as we there read, "Rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth," a quality which probably no one English word — and certainly not *Sincerity* — adequately defines. It includes, perhaps more strictly, the self-restraint which refuses to make capital out of others' faults; the charity which delights not in exposing the weakness of others, but "covereth all things;" the sincerity of purpose which endeavors to see things as they are, and rejoices to find them better than suspicion feared or calumny denounced.

So much for the analysis of Love. Now the business of our lives is to have these things fitted into our char-

acters. That is the supreme work to which we need to address ourselves in this world, to learn Love. Is life not full of opportunities for learning Love? Every man and woman every day has a thousand of them. The world is not a playground; it is a schoolroom. Life is not a holiday, but an education. And the one eternal lesson for us all is *how better we can love*. What makes a man a good cricketer? Practice. What makes a man a good artist, a good sculptor, a good musician? Practice. What makes a man a good linguist, a good stenographer? Practice. What makes a man a good man? Practice. Nothing else. There is nothing capricious about religion.

We do not get the soul in different ways, under different laws, from those in which we get the body and the mind. If a man does not exercise his arm he develops no biceps muscle; and if a man does not exercise his soul, he requires no muscle in his soul, no strength of character, no vigor of moral fibre, nor beauty of spiritual growth. Love is not a thing of enthusiastic emotion. It is a rich, strong, manly, vigorous expression of the whole round Christian character—the Christlike nature in its fullest development. And the constituents of this great character are only to be built up by ceaseless practice.

What was Christ doing in the car-

penter's shop? Practicing. Though perfect, we read that He *learned* obedience, and grew in wisdom and in favor with God. Do not quarrel therefore with your lot in life. Do not complain of its neverceasing cares, its petty environment, the vexations you have to stand, the small and sordid souls you have to live and work with. Above all, do not resent temptation; do not be perplexed because it seems to thicken round you more and more, and ceases neither for effort nor for agony nor prayer. That is your practice. That is the practice which God appoints you; and it is having its work in making you patient, and humble, and generous, and unselfish, and kind,

and courteous. Do not grudge the hand that is moulding the still too shapeless image within you. It is growing more beautiful, though you see it not, and every touch of temptation may add to its perfection. Therefore keep in the midst of life. Do not isolate yourself. Be among men, and among things, and among troubles, and difficulties, and obstacles. You remember Goethe's words: *Es bildet ein Talent sich in der Stille, Doch ein Charakter in dem Strom der Welt.* "Talent develops itself in solitude; character in the stream of life." Talent develops itself in solitude—the talent of prayer, of faith, of meditation, of seeing the unseen; character grows

in the stream of the world's life. That chiefly is where men are to learn love.

How? Now, how? To make it easier, I have named a few of the elements of love. But these are only elements. Love itself can never be defined. Light is a something more than the sum of its ingredients—a glowing, dazzling, tremulous ether. And love is something more than all its elements—a palpitating, quivering, sensitive, living thing. By synthesis of all the colors, men can make whiteness, they cannot make light. By synthesis of all the virtues, men can make virtue, they cannot make love. How then are we to have this transcendent living whole conveyed into

our souls? We brace our wills to secure it. We try to copy those who have it. We lay down rules about it. We watch. We pray. But these things alone will not bring love into our nature. Love is an *effect*. And only as we fulfill the right condition can we have the effect produced. Shall I tell you what the *cause* is?

If you turn to the Revised Version of the First Epistle of John you will find these words: "We love because He first loved us." "We love," not "We love *Him*." That is the way the old version has it, and it is quite wrong. "*We love* — because He first loved us." Look at that word "because." It is the *cause* of which I have



spoken. "*Because* He first loved us," the effect follows that we love, we love Him, we love all men. We cannot help it. Because He loved us, we love, we love everybody. Our heart is slowly changed. Contemplate the love of Christ, and you will love. Stand before that mirror, reflect Christ's character, and you will be changed into the same image from tenderness to tenderness. There is no other way. You cannot love to order. You can only look at the lovely object, and fall in love with it, and grow into likeness to it. And so look at this Perfect Character, this Perfect Life. Look at the great Sacrifice as He laid down Himself, all through life, and

upon the Cross of Calvary ; and you must love Him. And loving Him, you must become like Him. Love begets love. It is a process of induction. Put a piece of iron in the presence of an electrified body, and that piece of iron for a time becomes electrified. It is changed into a temporary magnet in the mere presence of a permanent magnet, and as long as you leave the two side by side, they are both magnets alike. Remain side by side with Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us, and you too will become a permanent magnet, a permanently attractive force ; and like Him you will draw all men unto you, like Him you will be drawn unto all

men. That is the inevitable effect of Love. Any man who fulfills that cause must have that effect produced in him. Try to give up the idea that religion comes to us by chance, or by mystery, or by caprice. It comes to us by natural law, or by supernatural law, for all law is Divine. Edward Irving went to see a dying boy once, and when he entered the room he just put his hand on the sufferer's head, and said, "My boy, God loves you," and went away. And the boy started from his bed, and called out to the people in the house, "God loves me! God loves me!" It changed that boy. The sense that God loved him overpowered him, melted him down, and began the

creating of a new heart in him. And that is how the love of God melts down the unlovely heart in man, and begets in him the new creature, who is patient and humble and gentle and unselfish. And there is no other way to get it. There is no mystery about it. We love others, we love everybody, we love our enemies, because **He first loved us.**

THE DEFENCE.

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NOW I have a closing sentence or two to add about Paul's reason for singling out love as the supreme possession. It is a very remarkable reason. In a single word it is this: *it lasts*. "Love," urges Paul, "never faileth." Then he begins again one of his marvelous lists of the great things of the day, and exposes them one by one. He runs over the things that men thought were going to last, and shows that they are all fleeting, temporary, passing away.

“Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail.” It was the mother’s ambition for her boy in those days that he should become a prophet. For hundreds of years God had never spoken by means of any prophet, and at that time the prophet was greater than the King. Men waited wistfully for another messenger to come, and hung upon his lips when he appeared as upon the very voice of God. Paul says, “Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail.” This book is full of prophecies. One by one they have “failed;” that is, having been fulfilled their work is finished; they have nothing more to do now in the world except to feed a devout man’s faith.

Then Paul talks about tongues. That was another thing that was greatly coveted. "Whether there be tongues, they shall cease." As we all know, many, many centuries have passed since tongues have been known in this world. They have ceased. Take it in any sense you like. Take it, for illustration merely, as languages in general—a sense which was not in Paul's mind at all, and which though it cannot give us the specific lesson will point the general truth. Consider the words in which these chapters were written—Greek. It has gone. Take the Latin—the other great tongue of those days. It ceased long ago. Look at the Indian language. It is

ceasing. The language of Wales, of Ireland, of the Scottish Highlands is dying before our eyes. The most popular book in the English tongue at the present time, except the Bible, is one of Dickens's works, his *Pickwick Papers*. It is largely written in the language of London street-life; and experts assure us that in fifty years it will be unintelligible to the average English reader.

Then Paul goes farther, and with even greater boldness adds, "Whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." The wisdom of the ancients, where is it? It is wholly gone. A schoolboy to-day knows more than Sir Isaac Newton knew. His knowledge



has vanished away. You put yesterday's newspaper in the fire. Its knowledge has vanished away. You buy the old editions of the great encyclopædias for a few pence. Their knowledge has vanished away. Look how the coach has been superseded by the use of steam. Look how electricity has superseded that, and swept a hundred almost new inventions into oblivion. One of the greatest living authorities, Sir William Thompson, said the other day, "The steam-engine is passing away." "Whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." At every workshop you will see, in the back yard, a heap of old iron, a few wheels, a few levers, a few cranks,

broken and eaten with rust. Twenty years ago that was the pride of the city. Men flocked in from the country to see the great invention; now it is superseded, its day is done. And all the boasted science and philosophy of this day will soon be old. But yesterday, in the University of Edinburgh, the greatest figure in the faculty was Sir James Simpson, the discoverer of chloroform. The other day his successor and nephew, Professor Simpson, was asked by the librarian of the University to go to the library and pick out the books on his subject that were no longer needed. And his reply to the librarian was this: "Take every text-book that is more than ten

years old, and put it down in the cellar." Sir James Simpson was a great authority only a few years ago: men came from all parts of the earth to consult him; and almost the whole teaching of that time is consigned by the science of to-day to oblivion. And in every branch of science it is the same. "Now we know in part. We see through a glass darkly."

Can you tell me anything that is going to last? Many things Paul did not condescend to name. He did not mention money, fortune, fame; but he picked out the great things of his time, the things the best men thought had something in them, and brushed them peremptorily aside. Paul had no

charge against these things in themselves. All he said about them was that they would not last. They were great things, but not supreme things. There were things beyond them. What we are stretches past what we do, beyond what we possess. Many things that men denounce as sins are not sins; but they are temporary. And that is a favorite argument of the New Testament. John says of the world, not that it is wrong, but simply that it "passeth away." There is a great deal in the world that is delightful and beautiful; there is a great deal in it that is great and engrossing; but it will not last. All that is in the world, the lust of the eye, the lust of

the flesh, and the pride of life, are but for a little while. Love not the world therefore. Nothing that it contains is worth the life and consecration of an immortal soul. The immortal soul must give itself to something that is immortal. And the only immortal things are these: "Now abideth faith, hope, love, but the greatest of these is love."

Some think the time may come when two of these three things will also pass away — faith into sight, hope into fruition. Paul does not say so. We know but little now about the conditions of the life that is to come. But what is certain is that Love must last. God, the Eternal God, is Love. Covet

therefore that everlasting gift, that one thing which it is certain is going to stand, that one coinage which will be current in the Universe when all the other coinages of all the nations of the world shall be useless and unhonored. You will give yourselves to many things, give yourself first to Love. Hold things in their proportion. *Hold things in their proportion.* Let at least the first great object of our lives be to achieve the character defened in these words, the character — and it is the character of Christ — which is built round Love.

I have said this thing is eternal. Did you ever notice how continually John associates love and faith with

eternal life? I was not told when I was a boy that "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should have everlasting life." What I was told, I remember, was, that God so loved the world that, if I trusted in Him, I was to have a thing called peace, or I was to have rest, or I was to have joy, or I was to have safety. But I had to find out for myself that whosoever trusteth in Him—that is, whosoever loveth Him, for trust is only the avenue to Love—hath everlasting *life*. The Gospel offers a man life. Never offer men a thimbleful of Gospel. Do not offer them merely joy, or merely peace, or merely rest, or

merely safety; tell them how Christ came to give men a more abundant life than they have, a life abundant in love, and therefore abundant in salvation for themselves, and large in enterprise for the alleviation and redemption of the world. Then only can the Gospel take hold of the whole of a man, body, soul, and spirit, and give to each part of his nature its exercise and reward. Many of the current Gospels are addressed only to a part of man's nature. They offer peace, not life; faith, not Love; justification, not regeneration. And men slip back again from such religion because it has never really held them. Their nature was not all in it. It offered no



deeper and gladder life-current than the life that was lived before. Surely it stands to reason that only a fuller love can compete with the love of the world.

To love abundantly is to live abundantly, and to love forever is to live forever. Hence, eternal life is inextricably bound up with love. We want to live forever for the same reason that we want to live to-morrow. Why do you want to live to-morrow? It is because there is some one who loves you, and whom you want to see to-morrow, and be with, and love back. There is no other reason why we should live on than that we love and are beloved. It is when a man

has no one to love him that he commits suicide. So long as he has friends, those who love him and whom he loves, he will live, because to live is to love. Be it but the love of a dog, it will keep him in life; but let that go and he has no contact with life, no reason to live. He dies by his own hand. Eternal life also is to know God, and God is love. This is Christ's own definition. Ponder it. "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent." Love must be eternal. It is what God is. On the last analysis, then, love is life. Love never faileth, and life never faileth, so long as there is love. That is the

philosophy of what Paul is showing us ; the reason why in the nature of things Love should be the supreme thing— because it is going to last ; because in the nature of things it is an Eternal Life. It is a thing that we are living now, not that we get when we die ; that we shall have a poor chance of getting when we die unless we are living now. No worse fate can befall a man in this world than to live and grow old alone, unloving, and unloved. To be lost is to live in an unregenerate condition, loveless and unloved ; and to be saved is to love ; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth already in God. For God is Love.

Now I have all but finished. How

many of you will join me in reading this chapter once a week for the next three months? A man did that once and it changed his whole life. Will you do it? It is for the greatest thing in the world. You might begin by reading it every day, especially the verses which describe the perfect character. "Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself." Get these ingredients into your life. Then everything that you do is eternal. It is worth doing. It is worth giving time to. No man can become a saint in his sleep; and to fulfill the condition required demands a certain amount of prayer and meditation and time, just as improvement

in any direction, bodily or mental, requires preparation and care. Address yourselves to that one thing; at any cost have this transcendent character exchanged for yours. You will find as you look back upon your life that the moments that stand out, the moments when you have really lived, are the moments when you have done things in a spirit of love. As memory scans the past, above and beyond all the transitory pleasures of life, there leap forward those supreme hours when you have been enabled to do unnoticed kindnesses to those round about you, things too trifling to speak about, but which you feel have entered into your eternal life I have seen

almost all the beautiful things God has made; I have enjoyed almost every pleasure that he has planned for man; and yet as I look back I see standing out above all the life that has gone four or five short experiences when the love of God reflected itself in some poor imitation, some small act of love of mine, and these seem to be the things which alone of all one's life abide. Everything else in all our lives is transitory. Every other good is visionary. But the acts of love which no man knows about, or can ever know about — they never fail.

In the Book of Matthew, where the Judgment Day is depicted for us in the imagery of One seated upon a

throne and dividing the sheep from the goats, the test of a man then is not, "How have I believed?" but "How have I loved?" The test of religion, the final test of religion, is not religiousness, but Love. I say the final test of religion at that great Day is not religiousness, but Love; not what I have done, not what I have believed, not what I have achieved, but how I have discharged the common charities of life. Sins of commission in that awful indictment are not even referred to. By what we have not done, *by sins of omission*, we are judged. It could not be otherwise. For the withholding of love is the negation of the spirit of Christ, the proof that we

never knew Him, that for us He lived in vain. It means that He suggested nothing in all our thoughts, that He inspired nothing in all our lives, that we were not once near enough to Him to be seized with the spell of His compassion for the world. It means that —

“ I lived for myself, I thought for myself,  
For myself, and none beside —  
Just as if Jesus had never lived,  
As if He had never died.”

It is the Son of *Man* before whom the nations of the world shall be gathered. It is in the presence of *Humanity* that we shall be charged. And the spectacle itself, the mere sight of it, will silently judge each one. Those will be there whom we



have met and helped; or there, the unpitied multitude whom we neglected or despised. No other witness need be summoned. No other charge than lovelessness shall be preferred. Be not deceived. The words which all of us shall one Day hear sound not of theology but of life, not of churches and saints but of the hungry and the poor, not of creeds and doctrines but of shelter and clothing, not of Bibles and prayer-books but of cups of cold water in the name of Christ. Thank God the Christianity of to-day is coming nearer the world's need. Live to help that on. Thank God men know better, by a hairsbreadth, what religion is, what God is, who Christ is, where

Christ is. Who is Christ? He who fed the hungry, clothed the naked, visited the sick. And where is Christ? Where?—whoso shall receive a little child in My name receiveth Me. And who are Christ's? Every one that loveth is born of God.

PAX VOBISCUM.



“COME unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”



## PAX VOBISCUM.

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I HEARD the other morning a sermon by a distinguished preacher upon "Rest." It was full of beautiful thoughts; but when I came to ask myself, "How does he say I can get Rest?" there was no answer. The sermon was sincerely meant to be practical, yet it contained no experience that seemed to me to be tangible, nor any advice which could help me to find the thing itself as I went about the world that afternoon. Yet this omission of the only important

problem was not the fault of the preacher. The whole popular religion is in the twilight here. And when pressed for really working specifics for the experiences with which it deals, it falters, and seems to lose itself in mist.

The want of connection between the great words of religion and every-day life has bewildered and discouraged all of us. Christianity possesses the noblest words in the language; its literature overflows with terms expressive of the greatest and happiest moods which can fill the soul of man. Rest, Joy, Peace, Faith, Love, Light — these words occur with such persistency in hymns and prayers that an



observer might think they formed the staple of Christian experience. But on coming to close quarters with the actual life of most of us, how surely would he be disenchanted! I do not think we ourselves are aware how much our religious life is made up of phrases; how much of what we call Christian experience is only a dialect of the Churches, a mere religious phraseology with almost nothing behind it in what we really feel and know.

To some of us, indeed, the Christian experiences seem further away than when we took the first steps in the Christian life. That life has not opened out as we had hoped; we do

not regret our religion, but we are disappointed with it. There are times, perhaps, when wandering notes from a diviner music stray into our spirits; but these experiences come at few and fitful moments. We have no sense of possession in them. When they visit us, it is a surprise. When they leave us, it is without explanation. When we wish their return, we do not know how to secure it.

All which points to a religion without solid base, and a poor and flickering life. It means a great bankruptcy in those experiences which give Christianity its personal solace and make it attractive to the world, and a great uncertainty as to any remedy. It is

as if we knew everything about health — except the way to get it.

I am quite sure that the difficulty does not lie in the fact that men are not in earnest. This is simply not the fact. All around us Christians are wearing themselves out in trying to be better. The amount of spiritual longing in the world—in the hearts of unnumbered thousands of men and women in whom we should never suspect it; among the wise and thoughtful; among the young and gay, who seldom assuage and never betray their thirst—this is one of the most wonderful and touching facts of life. It is not more heat that is needed, but more light; not more force, but a wiser di-

rection to be given to very real energies already there.

The Address which follows is offered as an humble contribution to this problem, and in the hope that it may help some who are "seeking Rest and finding none" to a firmer footing on one great, solid, simple principle which underlies not the Christian experiences alone, but all experiences, and all life.

What Christian experience wants is *thread*, a vertebral column, method. It is impossible to believe that there is no remedy for its unevenness and dishevelment, or that the remedy is a secret. The idea, also, that some few men, by happy chance or happier temperament, have been given the

secret — as if there were some sort of knack or trick of it — is wholly incredible. Religion must ripen its fruit for every temperament; and the way even into its highest heights must be by a gateway through which the peoples of the world may pass.

I shall try to lead up to this gateway by a very familiar path. But as that path is strangely unfrequented, and even unknown, where it passes into the religious sphere, I must dwell for a moment on the commonest of commonplaces.

## EFFECTS REQUIRE CAUSES.

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NOTHING that happens in the world happens by chance. God is a God of order. Everything is arranged upon definite principles, and never at random. The world, even the religious world, is governed by law. Character is governed by law. Happiness is governed by law. The Christian experiences are governed by law. Men, forgetting this, expect Rest, Joy, Peace, Faith to drop into their souls from the air like snow or rain. But in point of fact they do not

do so; and if they did they would no less have their origin in previous activities and be controlled by natural laws. Rain and snow do drop from the air, but not without a long previous history. They are the mature effects of former causes. Equally so are Rest, and Peace, and Joy. They, too, have each a previous history. Storms and winds and calms are not accidents, but are brought about by antecedent circumstances. Rest and Peace are but calms in man's inward nature, and arise through causes as definite and as inevitable.

Realize it thoroughly: it is a methodical not an accidental world. If a housewife turns out a good cake, it is

the result of a sound receipt, carefully applied. She cannot mix the assigned ingredients and fire them for the appropriate time without producing the result. It is not she who has made the cake; it is nature. She brings related things together; sets causes at work; these causes bring about the result. She is not a creator, but an intermediary. She does not expect random causes to produce specific effects — random ingredients would only produce random cakes. So it is in the making of Christian experiences. Certain lines are followed; certain effects are the result. These effects cannot but be the result. But the result can never take place without



the previous cause. To expect results without antecedents is to expect cakes without ingredients. That impossibility is precisely the almost universal expectation.

Now what I mainly wish to do is to help you firmly to grasp this simple principle of Cause and Effect in the spiritual world. And instead of applying the principle generally to each of the Christian experiences in turn, I shall examine its application to one in some little detail. The one I shall select is Rest. And I think any one who follows the application in this single instance will be able to apply it for himself to all the others.

Take such a sentence as this: Afri-

can explorers are subject to fevers which cause restlessness and delirium. Note the expression, "cause restlessness." *Restlessness has a cause.* Clearly then, any one who wished to get rid of restlessness would proceed at once to deal with the cause. If that were not removed, a doctor might prescribe a hundred things, and all might be taken in turn, without producing the least effect. Things are so arranged in the original planning of the world that certain effects must follow certain causes, and certain causes must be abolished before certain effects can be removed. Certain parts of Africa are inseparably linked with the physical experience called fever; this

fever is in turn infallibly linked with a mental experience called restlessness and delirium. To abolish the mental experience the radical method would be to abolish the physical experience, and the way of abolishing the physical experience would be to abolish Africa, or to cease to go there. Now this holds good for all other forms of Restlessness. Every other form and kind of Restlessness in the world has a definite cause, and the particular kind of Restlessness can only be removed by removing the allotted cause.

All this is also true of Rest. Restlessness has a cause: must not *Rest* have a cause? Necessarily. If it were a chance world we would not

expect this; but, being a methodical world, it cannot be otherwise. Rest, physical rest, moral rest, spiritual rest, every kind of rest, has a cause as certainly as restlessness. Now causes are discriminating. There is one kind of cause for every particular effect, and no other; and if one particular effect is desired, the corresponding cause must be set in motion. It is no use proposing finely devised schemes, or going through general pious exercises in the hope that somehow Rest will come. The Christian life is not casual, but causal. All nature is a standing protest against the absurdity of expecting to secure spiritual effects, or any effects, without the employment

of appropriate causes. The Great Teacher dealt what ought to have been the final blow to this infinite irrelevancy by a single question, "Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?"

Why, then, did the Great Teacher not educate His followers fully? Why did He not tell us, for example, how such a thing as Rest might be obtained? The answer is, that *He did*. But plainly, explicitly, in so many words? Yes, plainly, explicitly, in so many words. He assigned Rest to its cause, in words with which each of us has been familiar from his earliest childhood.

He begins, you remember — for you at once know the passage I refer to —

almost as if Rest could be had without any cause: "Come unto Me," He says, "and I will *give* you Rest."

Rest, apparently, was a favor to be bestowed; men had but to come to Him; He would give it to every applicant. But the next sentence takes that all back. The qualification, indeed, is added instantaneously. For what the first sentence seemed to give was next thing to an impossibility. For how, in a literal sense, can Rest be *given*? One could no more give away Rest than he could give away Laughter. We speak of "causing" laughter, which we can do; but we cannot give it away. When we speak of giving pain, we know perfectly well

we cannot give pain away. And when we aim at giving pleasure, all that we do is to arrange a set of circumstances in such a way as that these shall cause pleasure. Of course there is a sense, and a very wonderful sense, in which a Great Personality breathes upon all who come within its influence an abiding peace and trust. Men can be to other men as the shadow of a great rock in a thirsty land. Much more Christ; much more Christ as Perfect Man; much more still as Savior of the world. But it is not this of which I speak. When Christ said He would give men rest, He meant simply that He would put them in the way of it. By no act of conveyance

would, or could, He make over His own Rest to them. He could give them His receipt for it. That was all. But He would not make it for them; for one thing, it was not in His plan to make it for them; for another thing, men were not so planned that it could be made for them; and for yet another thing, it was a thousand times better that they should make it for themselves.

That this is the meaning becomes obvious from the wording of the second sentence: "Learn of Me and ye shall *find* Rest." Rest, that is to say, is not a thing that can be given, but a thing to be *acquired*. It comes not by an act, but by a process. It is not to



be found in a happy hour, as one finds a treasure; but slowly, as one finds knowledge. It could indeed be no more found in a moment than could knowledge. A soil has to be prepared for it. Like a fine fruit, it will grow in one climate and not in another; at one altitude and not at another. Like all growths it will have an orderly development and mature by slow degrees.

The nature of this slow process Christ clearly defines when He says we are to achieve Rest by *learning*. "Learn of Me," He says, "and ye shall find Rest to your souls." Now consider the extraordinary originality of this utterance. How novel the connection between these two words,

“Learn” and “Rest” ! How few of us have ever associated them—ever thought that Rest was a thing to be learned; ever laid ourselves out for it as we would to learn a language; ever practiced it as we would practice the violin? Does it not show how entirely new Christ’s teaching still is to the world, that so old and threadbare an aphorism should still be so little applied? The last thing most of us would have thought of would have been to associate *Rest* with *Work*.

What must one work at? What is that which if duly learned will find the soul of man in Rest? Christ answers without the least hesitation. He specifies two things—Meekness and Low-

liness. "Learn of Me," He says, "for I am *meek* and *lowly* in heart." Now, these two things are not chosen at random. To these accomplishments, in a special way, Rest is attached. Learn these, in short, and you have already found Rest. These as they stand are direct causes of Rest; will produce it at once; cannot but produce it at once. And if you think for a single moment, you will see how this is necessarily so, for causes are never arbitrary, and the connection between antecedent and consequent here and everywhere lies deep in the nature of things.

What is the connection, then? I answer by a further question. What

are the chief causes of *Unres.* If you know yourself, you will answer Pride, Selfishness, Ambition. As you look back upon the past years of your life, is it not true that its unhappiness has chiefly come from the succession of personal mortifications, and almost trivial disappointments which the intercourse of life has brought you? Great trials come at lengthened intervals, and we rise to breast them; but it is the petty friction of our every day life with one another, the jar of business or of work, the discord of the domestic circle, the collapse of our ambition, the crossing of our will or the taking down of our conceit, which make inward peace impossible.

Wounded vanity, then, disappointed hopes, unsatisfied selfishness — these are the old, vulgar, universal sources of man's unrest.

Now it is obvious why Christ pointed out as the two chief objects for attainment the exact opposites of these. To Meekness and Lowliness these things simply do not exist. They cure unrest by making it impossible. These remedies do not trifle with surface symptoms; they strike at once at removing causes. The ceaseless chagrin of a self-centered life can be removed at once by learning Meekness and Lowliness of heart. He who learns them is for ever proof against it. He lives henceforth a charmed life. Chris-

tianity is a fine inoculation, a transfusion of healthy blood into an anæmic or poisoned soul. No fever can attack a perfectly sound body; no fever of unrest can disturb a soul which has breathed the air or learned the ways of Christ. Men sigh for the wings of a dove that they may fly away and be at rest. But flying away will not help us. "The Kingdom of God is *within you*." We aspire to the top to look for Rest; it lies at the bottom. Water rests only when it gets to the lowest place. So do men. Hence, be lowly. The man who has no opinion of himself at all can never be hurt if others do not acknowledge him. Hence, be meek. He who is without expecta

tion cannot fret if nothing comes to him. It is self-evident that these things are so. The lowly man and the meek man are really above all other men, above all other things. They dominate the world because they do not care for it. The miser does not possess gold, gold possesses him. But the meek possess it. "The meek," said Christ, "inherit the earth." They do not buy it; they do not conquer it; but they inherit it.

There are people who go about the world looking out for slights, and they are necessarily miserable, for they find them at every turn — especially the imaginary ones. One has the same pity for such men as for the very poor.

They are the morally illiterate. They have had no real education, for they have never learned how to live. Few men know how to live. We grow up at random, carrying into mature life the merely animal methods and motives which we had as little children. And it does not occur to us that all this must be changed; that much of it must be revised; that life is the finest of the Fine Arts; that it has to be learned with lifelong patience, and that the years of our pilgrimage are all too short to master it triumphantly.

Yet this is what Christianity is for — to teach men the Art of Life. And its whole curriculum lies in one word — “Learn of Me.” Unlike most educa-



tion, this is almost purely personal; it is not to be had from books or lectures or creeds or doctrines. It is a study from the life. Christ never said much in mere words about the Christian Graces. He lived them, He was them. Yet we do not merely copy Him. We learn His art by living with Him, like the old apprentices with their masters.

Now we understand it all? Christ's invitation to the weary and heavy-laden is a call to begin life over again upon a new principle — upon His own principle. "Watch My way of doing things," He says. "Follow Me. Take life as I take it. Be meek and lowly and you will find Rest."

I do not say, remember, that the Christian life to every man, or to any man, can be a bed of roses. No educational process can be this. And perhaps if some men knew how much was involved in the simple "learn" of Christ, they would not enter His school with so irresponsible a heart. For there is not only much to learn, but much to unlearn. Many men never go to this school at all till their disposition is already half ruined and character has taken on its fatal set. To learn arithmetic is difficult at fifty — much more to learn Christianity. To learn simply what it is to be meek and lowly, in the case of one who has had no lessons in that in childhood, may

cost him half of what he values most on earth. Do we realize, for instance, that the way of teaching humility is generally by *humiliation*. There is probably no other school for it. When a man enters himself as a pupil in such a school it means a very great thing. There is such Rest there, but there is also much Work.

I should be wrong, even though my theme is the brighter side, to ignore the cross and minimize the cost. Only it gives to the cross a more definite meaning, and a rarer value, to connect it thus directly and *causally* with the growth of the inner life. Our platitudes on the "benefits of affliction" are usually about as vague as

our theories of Christian Experience. "Somehow," we believe affliction does us good. But it is not a question of "Somehow." The result is definite, calculable, necessary. It is under the strictest law of cause and effect. The first effect of losing one's fortune, for instance, is humiliation; and the effect of humiliation, as we have just seen, is to make one humble; and the effect of being humble is to produce Rest. It is a roundabout way, apparently, of producing Rest; but Nature generally works by circular processes; and it is not certain that there is any other way of becoming humble, or of finding Rest. If a man could make himself humble to order, it might simplify

matters, but we do not find that this happens. Hence we must all go through the mill. Hence death, death to the lower self, is the nearest gate and the quickest road to life.

Yet this is only half the truth. Christ's life outwardly was one of the most troubled lives that was ever lived: Tempest and tumult, tumult and tempest, the waves breaking over it all the time till the worn body was laid in the grave. But the inner life was a sea of glass. The great calm was always there. At any moment you might have gone to Him and found Rest. And even when the blood-hounds were dogging Him in the streets of Jerusalem, He turned to His disciples and

offered them as a last legacy, "My peace." Nothing ever for a moment broke the serenity of Christ's life on earth. Misfortune could not reach Him; He had no fortune. Food, raiment, money — fountain-heads of half the world's weariness — He simply did not care for; they played no part in His life; He "took no thought" for them. It was impossible to affect Him by lowering His reputation. He had already made himself of no reputation. He was dumb before insult. When He was reviled He reviled not again. In fact, there was nothing that the world could do to Him that could ruffle the surface of His spirit.

Such living, as mere living, is al-

together unique. It is only when we see what it was in Him that we can know what the word Rest means. It lies not in emotions, nor in the absence of emotions. It is not a hallowed feeling that comes over us in church. It is not something that the preacher has in his voice. It is not in nature, or in poetry, or in music — though in all these there is soothing. It is the mind at leisure from itself. It is the perfect poise of the soul; the absolute adjustment of the inward man to the stress of all outward things; the preparedness against every emergency; the stability of assured convictions; the eternal calm of an invulnerable faith; the repose of a heart set deep in God.

It is the mood of the man who says, with Browning, "God's in His Heaven, all's well with the world."

Two painters each painted a picture to illustrate his conception of rest. The first chose for his scene a still, lone lake among the far-off mountains. The second threw on his canvas a thundering water-fall, with a fragile birch tree bending over the foam; at the fork of a branch, almost wet with the cataract's spray, a robin sat on its nest. The first was only *Stagnation*; the last was *Rest*. For in Rest there are always two elements—tranquility and energy; silence and turbulence; creation and destruction; fearlessness and fearful~~ness~~. This it was in Christ.



It is quite plain from all this that whatever else He claimed to be or to do, He at least knew how to live. All this is the perfection of living, of living in the mere sense of passing through the world in the best way. Hence His anxiety to communicate His idea of life to others. He came, He said, to give men life, true life, a more abundant life than they were living; "the life," as the fine phrase in the Revised Version has it, "that is life indeed." This is what He himself possessed, and it was this which He offers to all mankind. And hence His direct appeal for all to come to Him who had not made much of life, who were weary and heavy laden.

These He would teach His secret.  
They, also, should know “the life that  
is life indeed.”

## WHAT YOKES ARE FOR.

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THERE is still one doubt to clear up. After the statement, "Learn of Me," Christ throws in the disconcerting qualification, "*Take My Yoke* upon you and learn of Me." Why, if all this be true, does He call it a *yoke*? Why, while professing to give Rest, does He with the next breath whisper "*burden*"? Is the Christian life, after all, what its enemies take it for—an additional weight to the already great woe of life, some extra punctiliousness about duty, some painful devotion to ob-

servances, some heavy restriction and trammelling of all that is joyous and free in the world? Is life not hard and sorrowful enough without being fettered with yet another yoke?

It is astounding how so glaring a misunderstanding of this plain sentence should ever have passed into currency. Did you ever stop to ask what a yoke is really for? Is it to be a burden to the animal which wears it? It is just the opposite. It is to make its burden light. Attached to the oxen in any other way than by a yoke, the plough would be intolerable. Worked by means of a yoke, it is light. A yoke is not an instrument of torture; it is an instrument of mercy. It is not a

malicious contrivance for making work hard; it is a gentle device to make hard labor light. It is not meant to give pain, but to save pain. And yet men speak of the yoke of Christ as if it were a slavery, and look upon those who wear it as objects of compassion. For generations we have had homilies on "The Yoke of Christ," some delighting in portraying its narrow exactions; some seeking in these exactions the marks of its divinity; others apologizing for it, and toning it down; still others assuring us that, although it be very bad, it is not to be compared with the positive blessings of Christianity. How many, especially among the young, has this one mistaken

phrase driven forever away from the kingdom of God? Instead of making Christ attractive, it makes Him out a taskmaster, narrowing life by petty restrictions, calling for self-denial where none is necessary, making misery a virtue under the plea that it is the yoke of Christ, and happiness criminal because it now and then evades it. According to this conception, Christians are at best the victims of a depressing fate; their life is a penance; and their hope for the next world purchased by a slow martyrdom in this.

The mistake has arisen from taking the word "yoke" here in the same sense, as in the expressions "under

the yoke," or "wear the yoke in his youth." But in Christ's illustration it is not the *jugum* of the Roman soldier, but the simple "harness" or "ox-collar" of the Eastern peasant. It is the literal wooden yoke which He, with His own hands in the carpenter shop, had probably often made. He knew the difference between a smooth yoke and a rough one, a bad fit and a good fit: the difference also it made to the patient animal which had to wear it. The rough yoke galled, and the burden was heavy; the smooth yoke caused no pain, and the burden was lightly drawn. The badly-fitted harness was a misery; the well-fitted collar was "easy."

And what was the "burden"? It was not some special burden laid upon the Christian, some unique infliction that they alone must bear. It was what all men bear. It was simply life, human life itself, the general burden of life which all must carry with them from the cradle to the grave. Christ saw that men took life painfully. To some it was a weariness, to others a failure, to many a tragedy, to all a struggle and a pain. How to carry this burden of life had been the whole world's problem. It is still the whole world's problem. And here is Christ's solution: "Carry it as I do. Take life as I take it. Look at it from My point of view. Interpret it upon My



principles. Take My yoke and learn of Me, and you will find it easy. For My yoke is easy, works easily, sits right upon the shoulders, and *therefore* My burden is light."

There is no suggestion here that religion will absolve any man from bearing burdens. That would be to absolve him from living, since it is life itself that is the burden. What Christianity does propose is to make it tolerable. Christ's yoke is simply His secret for the alleviation of human life, His prescription for the best and happiest method of living. Men harness themselves to the work and stress of the world in clumsy and unnatural ways. The harness they put on is

antiquated. A rough, ill-fitted collar at the best, they make its strain and friction past enduring, by placing it where the neck is most sensitive; and by mere continuous irritation this sensitiveness increases until the whole nature is quick and sore.

This is the origin, among other things, of a disease called "touchiness"—a disease which, in spite of its innocent name, is one of the gravest sources of restlessness in the world. Touchiness, when it becomes chronic, is a morbid condition of the inward disposition. It is self-love inflamed to the acute point; conceit, *with a hair-trigger*. The cure is to shift the yoke to some other place; to let men and

things touch us through some new and perhaps as yet unused part of our nature ; to become meek and lowly in heart while the old nature is becoming numb from want of use. It is the beautiful work of Christianity everywhere to adjust the burden of life to those who bear it, and them to it. It has a perfectly miraculous gift of healing. Without doing any violence to human nature it sets it right with life, harmonizing it with all surrounding things, and restoring those who are jaded with the fatigue and dust of the world to a new grace of living. In the mere matter of altering the perspective of life and changing the proportion of things, its functions in lightening the care of man is altogether

its own. The weight of a load depends upon the attraction of the earth. But suppose the attraction of the earth were removed? A ton on some other planet, where the attraction of gravity is less, does not weigh half a ton. Now Christianity removes the attraction of the earth, and this is one way in which it diminishes men's burden. It makes them citizens of another world. What was a ton yesterday is not half a ton to-day. So without changing one's circumstances, merely by offering a wider horizon and a different standard, it alters the whole aspect of the world.

Christianity as Christ taught is the truest philosophy of life ever spoken. But let us be quite sure when we speak

of Christianity that we mean Christ's Christianity. Other versions are either caricatures, or exaggerations, or misunderstandings, or shortsighted and surface readings. For the most part their attainment is hopeless and the results wretched. But I care not who the person is, or through what vale of tears he has passed, or is about to pass, there is a new life for him along this path.

HOW FRUITS GROW.  

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WERE Rest my subject, there are other things I should wish to say about it, and other kinds of Rest of which I should like to speak. But that is not my subject. My theme is that the Christian experiences are not the work of magic, but come under the law of Cause and Effect. And I have chosen Rest only as a single illustration of the working of that principle. If there were time I might next run over all the Christian experiences in turn, and show how the same

wide law applies to each. But I think it may serve the better purpose if I leave this further exercise to yourselves. I know no Bible study that you will find more full of fruit, or which will take you nearer to the ways of God, or make the Christian life itself more solid or more sure. I shall add only a single other illustration of what I mean, before I close.

Where does Joy come from? I knew a Sunday scholar whose conception of Joy was that it was a thing made in lumps and kept somewhere in Heaven, and that when people prayed for it, pieces were somehow let down and fitted into their souls. I am not sure that views as gross and material

are not often held by people who ought to be wiser. In reality, Joy is as much a matter of Cause and Effect as pain. No one can get Joy by merely asking for it. It is one of the ripest fruits of the Christian life, and, like all fruits, must be grown. There is a very clever trick in India called the mango-trick. A seed is put in the ground and covered up, and after divers incantations a full-blown mango bush appears within five minutes. I never met any one who knew how the thing was done, but I never met any one who believed it to be anything else than a conjuring-trick. The world is pretty unanimous now in its belief in the orderliness of Nature.



Men may not know how fruits grow, but they do know that they cannot grow in five minutes. Some lives have not even a stalk on which fruits could hang, even if they did grow in five minutes. Some have never planted one sound seed of Joy in all their lives: and others who may have planted a germ or two have lived so little in sunshine that they never could come to maturity.

Whence, then, is joy? Christ put His teaching upon this subject into one of the most exquisite of His parables. I should in any instance have appealed to His teaching here, as in the case of Rest for I do not wish you to think I am speaking words of my own. But

it so happens that He has dealt with it in words of unusual fulness.

I need not recall the whole illustration. It is the parable of the Vine. Did you ever think why Christ spoke that parable? He did not merely throw it into space as a fine illustration of general truths. It was not simply a statement of the mystical union, and the doctrine of an indwelling Christ. It was that; but it was more. After He had said it, He did what was not an unusual thing when He was teaching His greatest lessons. He turned to the disciples and said He would tell them why He had spoken it. It was to tell them how to get joy. "These things have I spoken unto you," He

said, "that My joy might remain in you and that your Joy might be full." It was a purposed and deliberate communication of His secret of Happiness.

Go back over these verses, then, and you will find the Causes of this Effect, the spring, and the only spring, out of which true Happiness comes. I am not going to analyze them in detail. I ask you to enter into the words for yourselves. Remember, in the first place, that the Vine was the Eastern symbol of Joy. It was its fruit that made glad the heart of man. Yet, however innocent that gladness—for the expressed juice of the grape was the common drink at every peasant's board—the gladness was only a gross and passing

thing. This was not true happiness, and the vine of the Palestine vineyards was not the true vine. *Christ* was "the true Vine." Here, then, is the ultimate source of Joy. Through whatever media it reaches us, all true joy and Gladness find their source in Christ. By this, of course, is not meant that the actual Joy experienced is transferred from Christ's nature, or is something passed on from Him to us. What is passed on is His method of getting it. There is, indeed, a sense in which we can share another's joy or another's sorrow. But that is another matter. Christ is the source of Joy to men in the sense in which He is the source of Rest. His people share

His life, and therefore share its consequences, and one of these is Joy. His method of living is one that in the nature of things produces Joy. When He spoke of His Joy remaining with us, He meant in part that the causes which produced it should continue to act. His followers, that is to say, by *repeating* His life would experience its accompaniments. His Joy, His kind of Joy, would remain with them.

The medium through which this Joy comes is next explained: "He that abideth in Me, the same bringeth forth much fruit." Fruit first, Joy next; the one the cause or medium of the other. Fruit-bearing is the necessary antece-

dent; Joy both the necessary consequent and the necessary accompaniment. It lay partly in the bearing fruit, partly in the fellowship which made that possible. Partly, that is to say, Joy lay in mere constant living in Christ's presence, with all that that implied of peace, of shelter and of love; partly in the influence of that Life upon mind and character and will; and partly in the inspiration to live and work for others, with all that that brings of self-riddance and Joy in others' gain. All these, in different ways and at different times, are sources of pure Happiness. Even the simplest of them — to do good to other people — is an instant and infalli-

ble specific. There is no mystery about Happiness whatever. Put in the right ingredients and it must come out. He that abideth in Him will bring forth much fruit; and bringing forth much fruit is Happiness. The infallible receipt for Happiness, then, is to do good; and the infallible receipt for doing good is to abide in Christ. The surest proof that all this is a plain matter of Cause and Effect is that men may try every other conceivable way of finding Happiness, and they will fail. Only the right cause in each case can produce the right effect.

Then the Christian experiences are our own making? In the same sense in which grapes are our own making,

and no more. All fruits *grow* — whether they grow in the soil or in the soul; whether they are the fruits of the wild grape or of the True Vine. No man can *make* things grow. He can *get them to grow* by arranging all the circumstances and fulfilling all the conditions. But the growing is done by God. Causes and effects are eternal arrangements, set in the constitution of the world; fixed beyond man's ordering. What man can do is to place himself in the midst of a chain of sequences. Thus he can get things to grow: thus he himself can grow. But the grower is the Spirit of God.

What more need I add but this — test the method by experiment. Do



not imagine that you have got these things because you know how to get them. As well try to feed upon a cookery book. But I think I can promise that if you try in this simple and natural way, you will not fail. Spend the time you have spent in sighing for fruits in fulfilling the conditions of their growth. The fruits will come, must come. We have hitherto paid immense attention to *effects*, to the mere experiences themselves; we have described them, extolled them, advised them, prayed for them — done everything but find out what *caused* them. Henceforth let us deal with causes. “To be,” says Lotze, “is to be in relations.” About every other

method of living the Christian life there is an uncertainty. About every other method of acquiring the Christian experiences there is a "perhaps." But in so far as this method is the way of nature, it cannot fail. Its guarantee is the laws of the universe, and these are "the Hands of the Living God."

THE TRUE VINE.  

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“ I AM the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much

fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my word abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye may bear much fruit; so ye shall be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

THE CHANGED LIFE.



## PREFACE.

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LAST autumn, in a book-shop in California, the author found a little book with his name upon the title-page — a book which he did not know existed; which he never wrote; nor baptized with the title which it bore. This stray publication — taken from shorthand notes of a spoken Address — he does not grudge. Already, it seems, it has done its small measure of good. But owing to the imperfections which it contains it has been thought right to issue a more complete edition.

The theme, like its predecessors in this series, represents but a single aspect of its great subject—the manward side. The light and shade is apportioned with this in view. And the reader's kind attention is asked to this limitation, lest he wonder at points being left in shadow which theology has always, and rightly, taught us to emphasize.

It was the hearing of a simple talk by a friend to some plain people in a Highland deer-forest which first called the author's attention to the practicalness of this solution of the cardinal problem of Christian experience. What follows owes a large debt to that Sunday morning.



We all  
With unveiled face  
Reflecting  
As a Mirror  
The Glory of the Lord  
Are transformed  
Into the same image  
From Glory to Glory  
Even as from the Lord  
The Spirit.



## THE CHANGED LIFE.

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“I PROTEST that if some great power would agree to make me always think what is true and do what is right, on condition of being turned into a sort of clock and wound up every morning, I should instantly close with the offer.”

THESE are the words of Mr. Huxley. The infinite desirability, the infinite difficulty of being good—the theme is as old as humanity. The man does not live from whose deeper being the same confession has not risen, or who would not give his all

to-morrow, if he could "close with the offer," of becoming a better man.

I propose to make that offer now. In all seriousness, without being "turned into a sort of clock," the end can be attained. Under the right conditions it is as natural for character to become beautiful as for a flower; and if on God's earth there is not some machinery for effecting it, the supreme gift to the world has been forgotten. This is simply what man was made for. With Browning: "I say that Man was made to grow, not stop." Or in the deeper words of an older Book: "Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate . . . to be conformed to the Image of His Son."

Let me begin by naming, and in part discarding, some processes in vogue already, for producing better lives. These processes are far from wrong; in their place they may even be essential. One ventures to disparage them only because they do not turn out the most perfect possible work.

The first imperfect method is to rely on Resolution. In will-power, in mere spasms of earnestness there is no salvation. Struggle, effort, even agony, have their place in Christianity, as we shall see; but this is not where they come in. In mid-Atlantic the other day, the *Etruria*, in which I was sailing, suddenly stopped. Something

had gone wrong with the engines. There were five hundred able-bodied men on board the ship. Do you think that if we had gathered together and pushed against the mast we could have pushed it on? When one attempts to sanctify himself by effort, he is trying to make his boat go by pushing against the mast. He is like a drowning man trying to lift himself out of the water by pulling at the hair of his own head. Christ held up this method almost to ridicule when he said, "Which of you by taking thought can add a cubit to his stature?" The one redeeming feature of the self-sufficient method is this — that those who try it find out almost at once that it will not gain the goal.

Another experimenter says: "But that is not my method. I have seen the folly of a mere wild struggle in the dark. I work on a principle. My plan is not to waste power on random effort, but to concentrate on a single sin. By taking one at a time, and crucifying it steadily, I hope in the end to extirpate all." To this, unfortunately, there are four objections: For one thing, life is too short; the name of sin is Legion. For another thing, to deal with individual sins is to leave the rest of the nature for the time untouched. In the third place a single combat with a special sin does not affect the root and spring of the disease. If only one of the channels of sin be ob-

structed, experience points to an almost certain overflow through some other part of the nature. Partial conversion is almost always accompanied by such moral leakage, for the pent-up energies accumulate to the bursting point, and the last state of that soul may be worse than the first. In the last place, religion does not consist in negatives, in stopping this sin and stopping that. The perfect character can never be produced with a pruning knife.

But a third protests: "So be it. I make no attempt to stop sins one by one. My method is just the opposite. I copy the virtues one by one." The difficulty about the copying method is that it is apt to be mechanical. One



can always tell an engraving from a picture, an artificial flower from a real flower. To copy virtues one by one has somewhat the same effect as eradicating the vices one by one; the temporary result is an overbalanced and incongruous character. Some one defines a *prig* as "a creature that is over-fed for its size." One sometimes finds Christians of this species—over-fed on one side of their nature, but dismally thin and starved-looking on the other. The result for instance, of copying Humility, and adding it on to an otherwise worldly life, is simply grotesque. A rabid temperance advocate, for the same reason, is often the poorest of creatures, flourishing on a single

virtue, and quite oblivious that his Temperance is making a worse man of him and not a better. These are examples of fine virtues spoiled by association with mean companions. Character is a unity, and all the virtues must advance together to make the perfect man. This method of sanctification, nevertheless, is in the true direction. It is only in the details of execution that it fails.

A fourth method I need scarcely mention, for it is a variation on those already named. It is the very young man's method; and the pure earnestness of it makes it almost desecration to touch it. It is to keep a private note-book with columns for the days

of the week, and a list of virtues with spaces against each for marks. This, with many stern rules for preface, is stored away in a secret place, and from time to time, at nightfall, the soul is arraigned before it as before a private judgment bar. This living by code was Franklin's method; and I suppose thousands more could tell how they had hung up in their bedrooms, or hid in lock-fast drawers, the rules which one solemn day they drew up to shape their lives. This method is not erroneous, only somehow its success is poor. You bear me witness that it fails. And it fails generally for very matter-of-fact reasons—most likely because one day we forget the rules.

All these methods that have been named — the self-sufficient method, the self-crucifixion method, the mimetic method, and the diary method — are perfectly human, perfectly natural, perfectly ignorant, and, as they stand, perfectly inadequate. It is not argued, I repeat, that they must be abandoned. Their harm is rather that they distract attention from the true working method, and secure a fair result at the expense of the perfect one. What that perfect method is we shall now go on to ask.

THE FORMULA OF SANCTIFICATION.

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A FORMULA, a receipt, for Sanctification — can one seriously speak of this mighty change as if the process were as definite as for the production of so many volts of electricity? It is impossible to doubt it. Shall a mechanical experiment succeed infallibly, and the one vital experiment of humanity remain a chance? Is corn to grow by method, and character by caprice? If we cannot calculate to a certainty that the forces of religion

will do their work, then is religion vain. And if we cannot express the law of these forces in simple words, then is Christianity not the world's religion, but the world's conundrum.

Where, then, shall one look for such a formula? Where one would look for any formula — among the text-books. And if we turn to the text-books of Christianity we shall find a formula for this problem as clear and precise as any in the mechanical sciences. If this simple rule, moreover, be but followed fearlessly, it will yield the result of a perfect character as surely as any result that is guaranteed by the laws of nature. The finest expression of this rule in Scripture, or indeed in any lit-

erature, is probably one drawn up and condensed into a single verse by Paul. You will find it in a letter — the second to the Corinthians — written by him to some Christian people who, in a city which was a byword for depravity and licentiousness, were seeking the higher life. To see the point of the words we must take them from the immensely improved rendering of the Revised translation, for the older Version in this case greatly obscures the sense. They are these: “We all, with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit.”

Now observe at the outset the entire contradiction of all our previous efforts, in the simple passive "we *are* transformed." We *are changed*, as the Old Version has it—we do not change ourselves. No man can change himself. Throughout the New Testament you will find that wherever these moral and spiritual transformations are described the verbs are in the passive. Presently it will be pointed out that there is a *rationale* in this; but meantime do not toss these words aside as if this passivity denied all human effort or ignored intelligible law. What is implied for the soul here is no more than is everywhere claimed for the body. In physiology the verbs de-



scribing the processes of growth are in the passive. Growth is not voluntary; it takes place, it happens, it is wrought upon matter. So here. "Ye must be born again" — we cannot born ourselves. "Be not conformed to this world, but *be ye transformed*" — we are subjects to transforming influence, we do not transform ourselves. Not more certain is it that it is something outside the thermometer that produces a change in the thermometer, than it is something outside the soul of man that produces a moral change upon him. That he must be susceptible to that change, that he must be a party to it, goes without saying; but that neither his aptitude nor his will can produce it, is equally certain.

Obvious as it ought to seem, this may be to some an almost startling revelation. The change we have been striving after is not to be produced by any more striving after. It is to be wrought upon us by the moulding of hands beyond our own. As the branch ascends, and the bud bursts, and the fruit reddens under the co-operation of influences from the outside air, so man rises to the higher stature under invisible pressures from without. The radical defect of all our former methods of sanctification was the attempt to generate from within that which can only be wrought upon us from without. According to the first Law of Motion: Every body continues in its state of

rest, or of uniform motion in a straight line, except in so far as it may be compelled *by impressed forces* to change that state. This is also a first law of Christianity. Every man's character remains as it is, or continues in the direction in which it is going, until it is compelled *by impressed forces* to change that state. Our failure has been the failure to put ourselves in the way of the impressed forces. There is a clay, and there is a Potter; we have tried to get the clay to mould the clay.

Whence, then, these pressures, and where this Potter? The answer of the formula is "By reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord we are changed." But this is not very clear. What is

the "glory" of the Lord, and how can mortal man reflect it, and how can that act as an "impressed force" in moulding him to a nobler form? The word "glory" — the word which has to bear the weight of holding those "impressed forces" — is a stranger in current speech, and our first duty is to seek out its equivalent in working English. It suggests at first a radiance of some kind, something dazzling or glittering, some halo such as the old masters loved to paint round the heads of their *Ecce Homos*. But that is paint, mere matter, the visible symbol of some unseen thing. What is that unseen thing? It is that of all unseen things the most radiant, the most beautiful,

the most Divine, and that is *Character*. On earth, in Heaven, there is nothing so great, so glorious as this. The word has many meanings; in ethics it can have but one. Glory is character, and nothing less, and it can be nothing more. The earth is "full of the glory of the Lord," because it is full of His character. The "Beauty of the Lord" is character. "The effulgence of His Glory" is character. "The Glory of the Only Begotten" is character, the character which is "fulness of grace and truth." And when God told His people *His name* He simply gave them His character, His character which was Himself: "And the Lord proclaimed the name of the Lord . . .

the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth." Glory then is not something intangible, or ghostly, or transcendental. If it were this how could Paul ask men to reflect it? Stripped of its physical enswathement it is Beauty, moral and spiritual Beauty, Beauty infinitely real, infinitely exalted, yet infinitely near and infinitely communicable.

With this explanation read over the sentence once more in paraphrase: We all reflecting as a mirror the character of Christ are transformed into the same Image from character to character—from a poor character to a better one, from a better one to one a little

better still, from that to one still more complete, until by slow degrees the Perfect Image is attained. Here the solution of the problem of sanctification is compressed into a sentence: Reflect the character of Christ, and you will become like Christ.

All men are mirrors—that is the first law on which this formula is based. One of the aptest descriptions of a human being is that he is a mirror. As we sat at table to-night the world in which each of us lived and moved throughout this day was focussed in the room. What we saw as we looked at one another was not one another, but one another's world. We were an arrangement of mirrors. The

scenes we saw were all reproduced; the people we met walked to and fro; they spoke, they bowed, they passed us by, did everything over again as if it had been real. When we talked, we were but looking at our own mirror and describing what flitted across it; our listening was not hearing, but seeing — we but looked on our neighbor's mirror. All human intercourse is a seeing of reflections. I meet a stranger in a railway carriage. The cadence of his first word tells me he is English, and comes from Yorkshire. Without knowing it he has reflected his birthplace, his parents, and the long history of their race. Even physiologically he is a mirror. His second



sentence records that he is a politician, and a faint inflection in the way he pronounces *The Times* reveals his party. In his next remarks I see reflected a whole world of experiences. The books he has read, the people he has met, the influences that have played upon him and made him the man he is — these are all registered there by a pen which lets nothing pass, and whose writing can never be blotted out. What I am reading in him meantime he also is reading in me; and before the journey is over we could half write each other's lives. Whether we like it or not, we live in glass houses. The mind, the memory, the soul, is simply a vast chamber

panelled with looking-glass. And upon this miraculous arrangement and endowment depends the capacity of mortal souls to "reflect the character of the Lord."

But this is not all. If all these varied reflections from our so-called secret life are patent to the world, how close the writing, how complete the record, within the soul itself! For the influences we meet are not simply held for a moment on the polished surface and thrown off again into space. Each is retained where first it fell, and stored up in the soul forever.

This law of Assimilation is the second, and by far the most impressive truth which underlies the formula of

sanctification — the truth that men are not only mirrors, but that these mirrors, so far from being mere reflectors of the fleeting things they see, transfer into their own inmost substance, and hold in permanent preservation, the things that they reflect. No one knows how the soul can hold these things. No one knows how the miracle is done. No phenomenon in nature, no process in chemistry, no chapter in necromancy can ever help us to begin to understand this amazing operation. For, think of it, the past is not only focussed there, in a man's soul, it is there. How could it be reflected from there if it were not there? All things that he has ever seen, known, felt,

believed of the surrounding world are now within him, have become part of him, in part are him--he has been changed into their image. He may deny it, he may resent it, but they are there. They do not adhere to him, they are transfused through him. He cannot alter or rub them out. They are not in his memory, they are in *him*. His soul is as they have filled it, made it, left it. These things, these books, these events, these influences are his makers. In their hands are life and death, beauty and deformity. When once the image or likeness of any of these is fairly presented to the soul, no power on earth can hinder two things happening--it must be

absorbed into the soul, and forever reflected back again from character.

Upon these astounding yet perfectly obvious psychological facts, Paul bases his doctrine of sanctification. He sees that character is a thing built up by slow degrees, that it is hourly changing for better or for worse according to the images which flit across it. One step further and the whole length and breadth of the application of these ideas to the central problem of religion will stand before us.

## THE ALCHEMY OF INFLU- ENCE.

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**I**F events change men, much more persons. No man can meet another on the street without making some mark upon him. We say we exchange words when we meet; what we exchange is souls. And when intercourse is very close and very frequent, so complete is this exchange that recognizable bits of the one soul begin to show in the other's nature, and the second is conscious of a similar and growing debt to the first.

This mysterious approximating of two souls who has not witnessed? Who has not watched some old couple come down life's pilgrimage hand in hand, with such gentle trust and joy in one another that their very faces wore the self-same look? These were not two souls; it was a composite soul. It did not matter to which of the two you spoke you would have said the same words to either. It was quite indifferent which replied, each would have said the same. Half a century's *reflecting* had told upon them; they were changed into the same image. It is the Law of Influence that *we become like those whom we habitually admire*: these had be-

come like because they habitually admired. Through all the range of literature, of history, and biography this law presides. Men are all mosaics of other men. There was a savor of David about Jonathan and a savor of Jonathan about David. Jean Valjean, in the masterpiece of Victor Hugo, is Bishop Bienvenu risen from the dead. Metempsychosis is a fact. George Eliot's message to the world was that men and women make men and women. The Family, the cradle of mankind, has no meaning apart from this. Society itself is nothing but a rallying point for these omnipotent forces to do their work. On the doctrine of Influence, in short, the whole vast pyramid of humanity is built.



But it was reserved for Paul to make the supreme application of the Law of Influence. It was a tremendous inference to make, but he never hesitated. He himself was a changed man; he knew exactly what had done it; it was Christ. On the Damascus road they met, and from that hour his life was absorbed in His. The effect could not but follow — on words, on deeds, on career, on creed. The “impressed forces” did their vital work. He became like Him Whom he habitually loved. “So we all,” he writes, “reflecting as a mirror the glory of Christ, are changed into the same image.”

Nothing could be more simple, more intelligible, more natural, more super-

natural. It is an analogy from an every-day fact. Since we are what we are by the impacts of those who surround us, those who surround themselves with the highest will be those who change into the highest. There are some men and some women in whose company we are always at our best. While with them we cannot think mean thoughts or speak ungenerous words. Their mere presence is elevation, purification, sanctity. All the best stops in our nature are drawn out by their intercourse, and we find a music in our souls that was never there before. Suppose even *that* influence prolonged through a month, a year, a lifetime, and what could not life become?

Here, even on the common plane of life, talking our language, walking our streets, working side by side, are sanctifiers of souls; here, breathing through common clay, is Heaven; here, energies charged even through a temporal medium with the virtue of regeneration. If to live with men, diluted to the millionth degree with the virtue of the Highest, can exalt and purify the nature, what bounds can be set to the influence of Christ? To live with Socrates — with unveiled face — must have made one wise; with Aristides, just. Francis of Assisi must have made one gentle; Savonarola, strong. But to have lived with Christ must have made one like Christ; that is to say, *A Christian*.

As a matter of fact, to live with Christ did produce this effect. It produced it in the case of Paul. And during Christ's lifetime the experiment was tried in an even more startling form. A few raw, unspiritual, uninspiring men, were admitted to the inner circle of His friendship. The change began at once. Day by day we can almost see the first disciple grow. First there steals over them the faintest possible adumbration of His character, and occasionally, very occasionally, they do a thing or say a thing that they could not have done or said had they not been living there. Slowly the spell of His Life deepens. Reach after reach of their nature is overtaken,

thawed, subjugated, sanctified. Their manner softens, their words become more gentle, their conduct more unselfish. As swallows who have found a summer, as frozen buds the spring, their starved humanity bursts into a fuller life. They do not know how it is, but they are different men. One day they find themselves like their Master, going about and doing good. To themselves it is unaccountable, but they cannot do otherwise. They were not told to do it, it came to them to do it. But the people who watch them know well how to account for it — “They have been,” they whisper, “with Jesus.” Already even, the mark and seal of His character is upon

them — “They have been with Jesus.” Unparalleled phenomenon, that these poor fishermen should remind other men of Christ! Stupendous victory and mystery of regeneration that mortal men should suggest to the world, *God!*

There is something almost melting in the way His contemporaries, and John especially, speak of the influence of Christ. John lived himself in daily wonder at Him; he was overpowered, over-awed, entranced, transfigured. To his mind it was impossible for any one to come under this influence and ever be the same again. “Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not,” he said. It was inconceivable

that he should sin, as inconceivable as that ice should live in a burning sun, or darkness coexist with noon. If any one did sin, it was to John the simple proof that he could never have met Christ. "Whosoever sinneth," he exclaims, "hath not seen *Him*, neither known *Him*." Sin was abashed in this Presence. Its roots withered. Its sway and victory were forever at an end.

But these were His contemporaries. It was easy for *them* to be influenced by Him, for they were every day and all the day together. But how can we mirror that which we have never seen? How can all this stupendous result be produced by a Memory, by

the scantiest of all Biographies, by One who lived and left this earth eighteen hundred years ago? How can modern men to-day make Christ, the absent Christ, their most constant companion still? The answer is that Friendship is a spiritual thing. It is independent of Matter, or Space, or Time. That which I love in my friend is not that which I see. What influences me in my friend is not his body but his spirit. It would have been an ineffable experience truly to have lived at that time —

“I think when I read the sweet story of old  
How when Jesus was here among men,  
He took little children like lambs to his fold,  
I should like to have been with Him then.



“I wish that His hand had been laid on my  
head,  
That His arms had been thrown around me,  
And that I had seen His kind look when he said,  
‘Let the little ones come unto me.’”

And yet, if Christ were to come into the world again few of us probably would ever have a chance of seeing Him. Millions of her subjects, in this little country, have never seen their own Queen. And there would be millions of the subjects of Christ who could never get within speaking distance of Him if He were here. Our companionship with Him, like all true companionship, is a spiritual communion. All friendship, all love, human and Divine, is purely spiritual.

It was after He was risen that He influenced even the disciples most. Hence in reflecting the character of Christ, it is no real obstacle that we may never have been in visible contact with Himself.

There lived once a young girl whose perfect grace of character was the wonder of those who knew her. She wore on her neck a gold locket which no one was ever allowed to open. One day, in a moment of unusual confidence, one of her companions was allowed to touch its spring and learn its secret. She saw written these words — “*Whom having not seen, I love.*” That was the secret of her beautiful life. She had been changed into the Same Image.

Now this is not imitation, but a much deeper thing. Mark this distinction. For the difference in the process, as well as in the result, may be as great as that between a photograph secured by the infallible pencil of the sun, and the rude outline from a school-boy's chalk. Imitation is mechanical, reflection organic. The one is occasional, the other habitual. In the one case, man comes to God and imitates Him; in the other, God comes to man and imprints Himself upon him. It is quite true that there is an imitation of Christ which amounts to reflection. But Paul's term includes all that the other holds, and is open to no mistake.

“Make Christ your most constant companion” — this is what it practically means for us. Be more under His influence than under any other influence. Ten minutes spent in His society every day, ay, two minutes if it be face to face, and heart to heart, will make the whole day different. Every character has an inward spring, let Christ be it. Every action has a key-note, let Christ set it. Yesterday you got a certain letter. You sat down and wrote a reply which almost scorched the paper. You picked the cruellest adjectives you knew and sent it forth, without a pang, to do its ruthless work. You did that because your life was set in the wrong key. You began the day

with the mirror placed at the wrong angle. To-morrow, at day-break, turn it towards Him, and even to your enemy the fashion of your countenance will be changed. Whatever you then do, one thing you will find you could not do — you could not write that letter. Your first impulse may be the same, your judgment may be unchanged, but if you try it the ink will dry on your pen, and you will rise from your desk an unavenged, but a greater and more Christian, man. Throughout the whole day your actions, down to the last detail, will do homage to that early vision. Yesterday you thought mostly about yourself. To-day the poor will meet you,

and you will feed them. The helpless, the tempted, the sad, will throng about you, and each you will befriend. Where were all these people yesterday? Where they are to-day, but you did not see them. It is in reflected light that the poor are seen. But your soul to-day is not at the ordinary angle. "Things which are not seen" are visible. For a few short hours you live the Eternal Life. The eternal life, the life of faith, is simply the life of the higher vision. Faith is an attitude — a mirror set at the right angle.

When to-morrow is over, and in the evening you review it, you will wonder how you did it. You will not be conscious that you strove for anything,

or imitated anything, or crucified anything. You will be conscious of Christ; that he was with you, that without compulsion you were yet compelled, that without force, or noise, or proclamation, the revolution was accomplished. You do not congratulate yourself as one who has done a mighty deed, or achieved a personal success, or stored up a fund of "Christian experience" to ensure the same result again. What you are conscious of is "the glory of the Lord." And what the world is conscious of, if the result be a true one, is also "the glory of the Lord." In looking at a mirror one does not see the mirror, or think of it, but only of what it reflects. For a

mirror never calls attention to itself — except when there are flaws in it.

That this is a real experience and not a vision, that this life is possible to men, is being lived by men to-day, is simple biographical fact. From a thousand witnesses I cannot forbear to summon one. The following are the words of one of the highest intellects this age has known, a man who shared the burdens of his country as few have done, and who, not in the shadows of old age, but in the high noon of his success, gave this confession — I quote it with only a few abridgments — to the world:

“I want to speak to-night only a little, but that little I desire to speak of



the sacred name of Christ, who is my life, my inspiration, my hope, and my surety. I cannot help stopping and looking back upon the past. And I wish, as if I had never done it before, to bear witness, not only that it is by the grace of God, but that it is by the grace of God, as manifested in Christ Jesus, that I am what I am. I recognize the sublimity and grandeur of the revelation of God in His eternal fatherhood as one that made the heavens, that founded the earth, and that regards all the tribes of the earth, comprehending them in one universal mercy; but it is the God that is manifested in Jesus Christ, revealed by His life, made known by the inflections of His

feelings, by His discourse, and by His deeds—it is that God that I desire to confess to-night, and of whom I desire to say, ‘By the love of God in Christ Jesus I am what I am.’

“If you ask me precisely what I mean by that, I say, frankly, that more than any recognized influence of my father or my mother upon me; more than the social influence of all the members of my father’s household, more, so far as I can trace it, or so far as I am made aware of it, than all the social influences of every kind, Christ has had the formation of my mind and my disposition. My hidden ideals of what is beautiful I have drawn from Christ. My thoughts of what is

manly, and noble, and pure, have almost all of them arisen from the Lord Jesus Christ. Many men have educated themselves by reading Plutarch's Lives of the Ancient Worthies, and setting before themselves one and another of these that in different ages have achieved celebrity; and they have recognized the great power of these men on themselves. Now I do not perceive that poet, or philosopher, or reformer, or general, or any other great man, ever has dwelt in my imagination and in my thought as the simple Jesus has. For more than twenty-five years I instinctively have gone to Christ to draw a measure and a rule for everything. Whenever there has been a

necessity for it, I have sought — and at last almost spontaneously — to throw myself into the companionship of Christ; and early, by my imagination, I could see Him standing and looking quietly and lovingly upon me. There seemed almost to drop from His face an influence upon me that suggested what was the right thing in the controlling of passion, in the subduing of pride, in the overcoming of selfishness; and it is from Christ, manifested to my inward eye, that I have consciously derived more ideals, more models, more influences, than any other human character whatever.

“That is not all. I feel conscious that I have derived from the Lord

JESUS Christ every thought that makes heaven a reality to me, and every thought that paves the road that lies between me and heaven. All my conceptions of the progress of grace in the soul; all the steps by which divine life is evolved; all the ideals that overhang the blessed sphere which awaits us beyond this world—these are derived from the Saviour. The life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God.

“That is not all. Much as my future includes all these elements which go to make the blessed fabric of earthly life, yet, after all, what the summer is compared with all its earthly products—flowers, and leaves,

and grass — that is Christ compared with all the products of Christ in my mind and in my soul. All the flowers and leaves of sympathy; all the twining joys that come from my heart as a Christian — these I take and hold in the future, but they are to me what the flowers and leaves of summer are compared with the sun that makes the summer. Christ is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of my better life.

“When I read the Bible, I gather a great deal from the Old Testament, and from the Pauline portions of the New Testament; but after all, I am conscious that the fruit of the Bible

is Christ. That is what I read it for, and that is what I find that is worth reading. I have had a hunger to be loved of Christ. You all know, in some relations, what it is to be hungry for love. Your heart seems unsatisfied till you can draw something more toward you from those that are dearest to you. There have been times when I have had an unspeakable heart-hunger for Christ's love. My sense of sin is never strong when I think of the law; my sense of sin is strong when I think of love — if there is any difference between law and love. It is when drawing near the Lord Jesus Christ, and longing to be loved, that I have the most vivid sense of unsym-

metry, of imperfection, of absolute unworthiness, and of my sinfulness. Character and conduct are never so vividly set before me as when in silence I bend in the presence of Christ, revealed not in wrath, but in love to me. I never so much long to be lovely, that I may be loved, as when I have this revelation of Christ before my mind.

“In looking back upon my experience, that part of my life which stands out, and which I remember most vividly, is just that part that has had some conscious association with Christ. All the rest is pale, and thin, and lies like clouds on the horizon. Doctrines, systems, measures, methods — what



may be called the necessary mechanical and external part of worship; the part which the senses would recognize — this seems to have withered and fallen off like leaves of last summer; but that part which has taken hold of Christ abides.”

Can any one hear this life-music, with its throbbing refrain of Christ, and remain unmoved by envy or desire? Yet, till we have lived like this we have never lived at all.

## THE FIRST EXPERIMENT.

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THEN you reduce religion to a common Friendship? A common Friendship — who talks of a *common* Friendship? There is no such thing in the world. On earth no word is more sublime. Friendship is the nearest thing we know to what religion is. God is love. And to make religion akin to Friendship is simply to give it the highest expression conceivable by man. But if by demurring to “a common friendship” is meant a protest against the greatest

and the holiest in religion being spoken of in intelligible terms, then I am afraid the objection is all too real. Men always look for a mystery when one talks of sanctification; some mystery apart from that which must ever be mysterious wherever Spirit works. It is thought some peculiar secret lies behind it, some occult experience which only the initiated know. Thousands of persons go to church every Sunday hoping to solve this mystery. At meetings, at conferences, many a time they have reached what they thought was the very brink of it, but somehow no further revelation came. Poring over religious books, how often were they not within a paragraph of

it; the next page, the next sentence, would discover all, and they would be borne on a flowing tide forever. But nothing happened. The next sentence and the next page were read, and still it eluded them; and though the promise of its coming kept faithfully up to the end, the last chapter found them still pursuing. Why did nothing happen? Because there was nothing to happen — nothing of the kind they were looking for. Why did it elude them? Because there was no “it.” When shall we learn that the pursuit of holiness is simply the pursuit of Christ? When shall we substitute for the “it” of a fictitious aspiration, the approach to a Living Friend? Sanc-

tity is in character and not in moods ; Divinity in our own plain calm humanity, and in no mystic rapture of the soul.

And yet there are others who, for exactly a contrary reason, will find scant satisfaction here. Their complaint is not that a religion expressed in terms of Friendship is too homely, but that it is still too mystical. To "abide" in Christ, to "make Christ our most constant companion," is to them the purest mysticism. They want something absolutely tangible and absolutely direct. These are not the poetical souls who seek a sign, a mysticism in excess ; but the prosaic natures whose want is mathematical

definition in details. Yet it is perhaps not possible to reduce this problem to much more rigid elements. The beauty of Friendship is its infinity. One can never evacuate life of mysticism. Home is full of it, love is full of it, religion is full of it. Why stumble at that in the relation of man to Christ which is natural in the relation of man to man?

If any one cannot conceive or realize a mystical relation with Christ, perhaps all that can be done is to help him to step on to it by still plainer analogies from common life. How do I know Shakespeare or Dante? By communing with their words and thoughts. Many men know Dante

better than their own fathers. He influences them more. As a spiritual presence he is more near to them, as a spiritual force more real. Is there any reason why a greater than Shakespeare or Dante, who also walked this earth, who left great words behind Him, who has greater works everywhere in the world now, should not also instruct, inspire, and mould the characters of men? I do not limit Christ's influence to this. It is this, and it is more. But Christ, so far from resenting or discouraging this relation of Friendship, Himself proposed it. "Abide in me" was almost His last word to the world. And He partly met the difficulty of those who

feel its intangibleness by adding the practical clause, "If ye abide in Me and My words abide in you."

Begin with His words. Words can scarcely ever be long impersonal. Christ Himself was a Word, a word made Flesh. Make His words flesh; do them, live them, and you must live Christ. "*He that keepeth My commandments, he it is that loveth Me.*" Obey Him and you must love Him. Abide in Him and you must obey Him. *Cultivate* His Friendship. Live after Christ, in His Spirit, as in His Presence, and it is difficult to think what more you can do. Take this at least as a first lesson, as introduction. If you cannot at once and always feel



the play of His life upon yours, watch for it also indirectly. "The whole earth is full of the character of the Lord." Christ is the Light of the world, and much of His Light is reflected from things in the world—even from clouds. Sunlight is stored in every leaf, from leaf through coal, and it comforts us thence when days are dark and we cannot see the sun. Christ shines through men, through books, through history, through nature, music, art. Look for Him there. "Every day one should either look at a beautiful picture, or hear beautiful music, or read a beautiful poem." The real danger of mysticism is not making it broad enough.

Do not think that nothing is happening because you do not see yourself grow, or hear the whir of the machinery. All great things grow noiselessly. You can see a mushroom grow, but never a child. Mr. Darwin tells us that Evolution proceeds by "numerous, successive, and slight modifications." Paul knew that, and put it, only in more beautiful words, into the heart of his formula. He said for the comforting of all slowly perfecting souls that they grew "from character to character." "The inward man," he says elsewhere, "is renewed from day to day." All thorough work is slow; all true development by minute, slight, and insen-

sible metamorphoses. The higher the structure, moreover, the slower the progress. As the biologist runs his eye over the long Ascent of Life he sees the lowest forms of animals develop in an hour; the next above these reach maturity in a day; those higher still take weeks or months to perfect; but the few at the top demand the long experiment of years. If a child and an ape are born on the same day, the last will be in full possession of its faculties and doing the active work of life before the child has left its cradle. Life is the cradle of eternity. As the man is to the animal in the slowness of his evolution, so is the spiritual man to the natural man. Foundations which

have to bear the weight of an eternal life must be surely laid. Character is to wear forever; who will wonder or grudge that it cannot be developed in a day?

To await the growing of a soul, nevertheless, is an almost Divine act of faith. How pardonable, surely, the impatience of deformity with itself, of a consciously despicable character standing before Christ, wondering, yearning, hungering to be like that! Yet must one trust the process fearlessly, and without misgiving. "The Lord the Spirit" will do His part. The tempting expedient is, in haste for abrupt or visible progress, to try some method less spiritual, or to defeat

the end by watching for effects instead of keeping the eye on the Cause. A photograph prints from the negative only while exposed to the sun. While the artist is looking to see how it is getting on he simply stops the getting on. Whatever of wise supervision the soul may need, it is certain it can never be over-exposed, or that, being exposed, anything else in the world can improve the result or quicken it. The creation of a new heart, the renewing of a right spirit, is an omnipotent work of God. Leave it to the Creator. "He which hath begun a good work in you will perfect it unto that day."

No man, nevertheless, who feels the

worth and solemnity of what is at stake will be careless as to his progress. To become like Christ is the only thing in the world worth caring for, the thing before which every ambition of man is folly, and all lower achievement vain. Those only who make this quest the supreme desire and passion of their lives can ever begin to hope to reach it. If, therefore, it has seemed up to this point as if all depended on passivity, let me now assert, with conviction more intense, that all depends on activity. A religion of effortless adoration may be a religion for an angel, but never for a man. Not in the contemplative, but in the active, lies true hope ; not in rapture,

but in reality, lies true life ; not in the realm of ideals, but among tangible things, is man's sanctification wrought. Resolution, effort, pain, self-crucifixion, agony — all the things already dismissed as futile in themselves must now be restored to office, and a tenfold responsibility laid upon them. For what is their office? Nothing less than to move the vast inertia of the soul, and place it, and keep it where the spiritual forces will act upon it. It is to rally the forces of the will, and keep the surface of the mirror bright and ever in position. It is to uncover the face which is to look at Christ, and draw down the veil when unhallowed sights are near. You have, perhaps,

gone with an astronomer to watch him photograph the spectrum of a star. As you entered the dark vault of the observatory you saw him begin by lighting a candle. To see the star with? No; but to see to adjust the instrument to see the star with. It was the star that was going to take the photograph; it was, also, the astronomer. For a long time he worked in the dimness, screwing tubes and polishing lenses and adjusting reflectors, and only after much labor the finely focussed instrument was brought to bear. Then he blew out the light, and left the star to do its work upon the plate alone. The day's task for the Christian is to bring his instrument

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to bear. Having done that he may blow out his candle. All the evidences of Christianity which have brought him there, all aids to Faith, all acts of worship, all the leverages of the Church, all Prayer and Meditation, all girding of the Will—these lesser processes, these candle-light activities for that supreme hour, may be set aside. But, remember, it is but for an hour. The wise man will be he who quickest lights his candle; the wisest he who never lets it out. To-morrow, the next moment, he, a poor, darkened, blurred soul, may need it again to focus the Image better, to take a mote off the lens, to clear the mirror from a breath with which the world has dulled it.

No readjustment is ever required on behalf of the Star. That is one great fixed point in this shifting universe. But *the world moves*. And each day, each hour, demands a further motion and readjustment for the soul. A telescope in an observatory follows a star by clockwork, but the clockwork of the soul is called *the Will*. Hence, while the soul in passivity reflects the Image of the Lord, the Will in intense activity holds the mirror in position lest the drifting motion of the world bear it beyond the line of vision. To "follow Christ" is largely to keep the soul in such position as will allow for the motion of the earth. And this calculated counteracting of the move

ments of the world, this holding of the mirror exactly opposite to the Mirrored, this steadying of the faculties unerringly through cloud and earthquake, fire and sword, is the stupendous cooperating labor of the Will. It is all man's work. It is all Christ's work. In practice it is both; in theory it is both. But the wise man will say in practice, "It depends upon myself."

In the Galerie des Beaux Arts in Paris there stands a famous statue. It was the last work of a great genius, who, like many a genius, was very poor and lived in a garret, which served as a studio and sleeping-room alike. When the statue was all but finished, one midnight a sudden frost

fell upon Paris. The sculptor lay awake in the fireless room and thought of the still moist clay, thought how the water would freeze in the pores and destroy in an hour the dream of his life. So the old man rose from his couch and heaped the bed-clothes reverently round his work. In the morning when the neighbors entered the room the sculptor was dead. But the statue lived.

The Image of Christ that is forming within us — that is life's one charge. Let every project stand aside for that. "Till Christ be formed," no man's work is finished, no religion crowned, no life has fulfilled its end. Is the infinite task begun? When, how, are

we to be different? Time cannot change men. Death cannot change men. Christ can. Wherefore *put on Christ.*



“FIRST!”

A TALK WITH BOYS.





## “FIRST!”

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I HAVE three heads to give you. The first is “Geography,” the second is “Arithmetic,” and the third is “Grammar.”

### GEOGRAPHY.

First. Geography tells us where to find places. Where is the kingdom of God? It is said that when a Prussian officer was killed in the Franco-Prussian war, a map of France was very often found in his pocket. When

we wish to occupy a country, we ought to know its geography. Now, *where* is the kingdom of God? A boy over there says, "It is in heaven." No, it is not in heaven. Another boy says, "It is in the Bible." No; it is not in the Bible. Another boy says, "It must be in the Church." No; it is not in the Church. Heaven is only the *capital* of the kingdom of God; the Bible is the *Guide-book* to it; the Church is the weekly *Parade* of those who belong to it. If you would turn to the seventeenth chapter of St. Luke you will find out where the kingdom of God really is. "The kingdom of God is within you" — within *you*. The kingdom of God is *inside people*.

I remember once taking a walk by the river near where the Falls of Niagara are, and I noticed a remarkable figure walking along the river bank. I had been some time in America. I had seen black men, and red men, and yellow men, and white men; black men, the Negroes; red men, the Indians; yellow men, the Chinese; white men, the Americans. But this man looked different in his dress from anything I had ever seen. When he came a little closer, I saw he was wearing a kilt; when he came a little nearer still, I saw that he was dressed exactly like a Highland soldier. When he came quite near, I said to him, "What are you doing

here?” “Why should I not be here?” he said. “Don’t you know this is British soil? When you cross the river you come into Canada.” This soldier was thousands of miles from England, and yet he was in the kingdom of England. Wherever there is an English heart beating loyal to the Queen of Britain, there is England. Wherever there is a boy whose heart is loyal to the King of the kingdom of God, the kingdom of God is within him.

What is the kingdom of God? Every kingdom has its exports, its products. Go down to the river here, and you will find ships coming in with cotton; you know they come from

America. You will find ships with tea; you know they are from China. Ships with wool; you know they come from Australia. Ships with sugar; you know they come from Java. What comes from the kingdom of God? Again we must refer to our Guide-book. Turn to Romans, and we shall find what the kingdom of God is. I will read it: "The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, joy" — three things. "The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, joy." Righteousness, of course, is just doing what is right. Any boy who does what is right has the kingdom of God within him. Any boy who, instead of being quarrelsome, lives at peace with other

boys, has the kingdom of God within him. Any boy whose heart is filled with joy because he does what is right, has the kingdom of God within him. The kingdom of God is not going to religious meetings, and hearing strange religious experiences: the kingdom of God is doing what is right—living at peace with all men, being filled with joy in the Holy Ghost.

Boys, if you are going to be Christians, be Christians as boys, and not as your grandmothers. A grandmother has to be a Christian as a grandmother, and that is the right and the beautiful thing for her; but if you cannot read your Bible by the hour as your grandmother can, or delight

in meetings as she can, don't think you are necessarily a bad boy. When you are your grandmother's age you will have your grandmother's kind of religion. Meantime, be a Christian as a boy. Live a boy's life. Do the straight thing; seek the kingdom of righteousness and honor and truth. Keep the peace with the boys about you, and be filled with the joy of being a loyal, and simple, and natural, and boy-like servant of Christ.

You can very easily tell a house, or workshop, or an office where the kingdom of God is *not*. The first thing you see in that place is that the "straight thing" is not always done. Customers do not get fair play. You

are in danger of learning to cheat and to lie. Better, a thousand times, to starve than to stay in a place where you cannot do what is right.

Or, when you go into your workshop, you find everybody sulky, touchy, and ill-tempered; everybody at dagger's drawn with everybody else; some of the men not on speaking terms with some of the others, and the whole *feel* of the place miserable and unhappy. The kingdom of God is not there, for *it* is peace. It is the kingdom of the Devil that is anger and wrath and malice.

If you want to get the kingdom of God into your workshop, or into your home, let the quarrelling be stopped.



**Live** in peace and harmony and brotherliness with every one. For the kingdom of God is the kingdom of brothers. It is a great society, founded by Jesus Christ, of all the people who try to be like Him, and live to make the world better and sweeter and happier. Wherever a boy is trying to do that, in the house or in the street, in the workshop or on the baseball field, there is the kingdom of God. And every boy, however small or obscure or poor, who is seeking that, is a member of it. You see now, I hope, what the kingdom is.

#### ARITHMETIC.

I pass, therefore, to the second head: What was it? "Arithmetic."

Are there any arithmetic words in this text? “Added,” says one boy. Quite right, *added*. What other arithmetic word? “First.” Yes, *first* — “first,” “added.” Now, don’t you think you could not have anything better to seek “first” than the things I have named — to do what is right, to live at peace, and be always making those about you happy? You see at once why Christ tells us to seek these things first — because they are the best worth seeking. Do you know anything better than these three things, anything happier, purer, nobler? If you do, seek them first. But if you do not, seek first the kingdom of God. I am not here this afternoon to tell

you to be religious. You know that. I am not here to tell you to seek the kingdom of God. I have come to tell you to seek the kingdom of God *first*. *First*. Not many people do that. They put a little religion into their life — once a week, perhaps. They might just as well let it alone. It is not worth seeking the kingdom of God unless we seek it *first*. Suppose you take the helm out of a ship and hang it over the bow, and send that ship to sea, will it ever reach the other side? Certainly not. It will drift about anyhow. Keep religion in its place, and it will take you straight through life, and straight to your Father in heaven when life is over.

But if you do not put it in its place, you may just as well have nothing to do with it. Religion out of its place in a human life is the most miserable thing in the world. There is nothing that requires so much to be kept in its place as religion, and its place is what? second? third? “First.” Boys, carry that home with you to-day—*first* the kingdom of God. Make it so that it will be natural to you to think about that the very first thing.

There was a boy in Glasgow apprenticed to a gentleman who made telegraphs. The gentleman told me this himself. One day this boy was up on the top of a four-story house with a number of men fixing up a

telegraph wire. The work was all but done. It was getting late, and the men said they were going away home, and the boy was to nip off the ends of the wire himself. Before going down they told him to be sure to go back to the workshop, when he was finished, with his master's tools. "Do not leave any of them lying about, whatever you do," said the foreman. The boy climbed up the pole and began to nip off the ends of the wire. It was a very cold winter night, and the dusk was gathering. He lost his hold and fell upon the slates, slid down, and then over and over to the ground below. A clothes-rope, stretched across the "green" on to which he was just about

to fall, caught him on the chest and broke his fall; but the shock was terrible, and he lay unconscious among some clothes upon the green. An old woman came out; seeing her rope broken and the clothes all soiled, thought the boy was drunk, shook him, scolded him, and went for the policeman. And the boy with the shaking came back to consciousness, rubbed his eyes, and got upon his feet. What do you think he did? He staggered, half blind, away up the stairs. He climbed the ladder. He got on to the roof of the house. He gathered up his tools, put them into his basket, took them down, and when he got to the ground again, fainted dead away.

Just then the policeman came, saw there was something seriously wrong, and carried him away to the hospital, where he lay for some time. I am glad to say he got better. What was his first thought at that terrible moment? His duty. He was not thinking of himself; he was thinking about his master. First, the kingdom of God.

But there is another arithmetic word. What is it? "Added." There is not one boy here who does not know the difference between *addition* and *subtraction*. Now, that is a very important difference in religion, because — and it is a very strange thing — very few people know the difference when they begin to talk about religion.

They often tell boys that if they seek the kingdom of God, everything else is going to be *subtracted* from them. They tell them that they are going to become gloomy, miserable, and will lose everything that makes a boy's life worth living—that they will have to stop baseball and story-books, and become little old men, and spend all their time in going to meetings and in singing hymns. Now, that is not true. Christ never said anything like that. Christ says we are to “seek first the kingdom of God,” and everything else worth having is to be *added* unto us. If there is anything I would like you to take away with you this afternoon, it is these two arithmetic words—



“first” and “added.” I do not mean by added that if you become religious you are all going to become rich. Here is a boy, who, in sweeping out the shop to-morrow morning, finds sixpence lying among the orange-boxes. Well, nobody has missed it. He puts it in his pocket, and it begins to burn a hole there. By breakfast-time he wishes that sixpence were in his master’s pocket. And by and by he goes to his master. He says (to *himself*, and not to his master,) “I was at the Boys’ Brigade yesterday, and I was to seek *first* that which was right.” Then he says to his master, “Please, sir, here is sixpence that I found upon the floor.” The master

puts it in the “till.” What has the boy got in his pocket? Nothing; *but he has got the kingdom of God in his heart.* He has laid up treasure in heaven, which is of infinitely more worth than sixpence. Now, that boy does not find a shilling on his way home. I have known that happen, but that is not what is meant by “adding.” It does not mean that God is going to pay him in his own coin, for He pays in better coin.

Yet I remember once hearing of a boy who was paid in both ways. He was very, very poor. He lived in a foreign country, and his mother said to him one day that he must go into the great city and start in business, and she

took his coat and cut it open and sewed between the lining and the coat forty golden dinars, which she had saved up for many years to start him in life. She told him to take care of robbers as he went across the desert; and as he was going out of the door she said: "My boy, I have only two words for you—'Fear God, and never tell a lie.'" The boy started off, and toward evening he saw glittering in the distance the minarets of the great city, but between the city and himself he saw a cloud of dust, it came nearer; presently he saw that it was a band of robbers. One of the robbers left the rest and rode toward him, and said: "Boy, what have you got?" And the

boy looked him in the face and said: "I have forty golden dinars sewed up in my coat." And the robber laughed and wheeled round his horse and rode away back. He would not believe the boy. Presently another robber came, and he said: "Boy, what have you got?" "Forty golden dinars sewed up in my coat." The robber said: "The boy is a fool," and wheeled his horse and rode away back. By and by the robber captain came, and he said: "Boy, what have you got?" "I have forty golden dinars sewed up in my coat." And the robber dismounted and put his hand over the boy's breast, felt something round, counted one, two, three, four, five, till he counted

out the forty golden coin. He looked the boy in the face, and said: "Why did you tell me that?" The boy said: "Because of God and my mother." And the robber leaned on his spear and thought, and said: "Wait a moment." He mounted his horse, rode back to the rest of the robbers, and came back in about five minutes with his dress changed. This time he looked not like a robber, but like a merchant. He took the boy up on his horse and said: "My boy, I have long wanted to do something for my God and for my mother, and I have this moment renounced my robber's life. I am also a merchant. I have a large business house in the city.

I want you to come and live with me, to teach me about your God; and you will be rich, and your mother some day will come and live with us." And it all happened. By seeking first the kingdom of God, all these things were added unto him.

Boys, banish for ever from your minds the idea that religion is *subtraction*. It does not tell us to give things up, but rather gives us something so much better that they give themselves up. When you see a boy on the street whipping a top, you know, perhaps, that you could not make that boy happier than by giving him a top, a whip, and half an hour to whip it. But next birthday, when he looks back,

He says, "What a goose I was last year to be delighted with a top; what I want now is a baseball bat." Then when he becomes an old man he does not care in the least for a baseball bat; he wants rest, and a snug fireside, and a newspaper every day. He wonders how he could ever have taken up his thoughts with baseball bats and whipping tops. Now, when a boy becomes a Christian, he grows out of the evil things one by one—that is to say, if they are really evil—which he used to set his heart upon (of course I do not mean baseball bats, for they are not evils); and so instead of telling people to give up things, we are safer to tell them to "seek first the kingdom of

God," and then they will get new things and better things, and the old things will drop off of themselves. This is what is meant by the "new heart." It means that God puts into us new thoughts and new wishes, and we become quite different boys.

#### GRAMMAR.

Lastly, and very shortly. What was the third head? "Grammar." Right: Grammar. Now, I require a clever boy to answer the next question. What is the verb? "Seek." Very good: "Seek." What mood is it in? "Imperative mood." What does that mean? "Command." You boys of the Boys' Brigade know what com-



mands are. What is the soldier's first lesson? "Obedience." Have you obeyed this command? Remember the imperative mood of these words, "*Seek* first the kingdom of God." This is the command of your King. It *must* be done. I have been trying to show you what a splendid thing it is; what a reasonable thing it is; what a happy thing it is; but beyond all these reasons it is a thing that *must* be done, because we are *commanded* to do it by our Captain. It is one of the finest things about the Boys' Brigade that it always appeals to Christ as its highest officer, and takes its commands from Him. Now, there is His command to seek *first* the king-

dom of God. Have you done it? “Well,” I know some boys will say, “we are going to have a good time, enjoy life, and then we are going to seek — *last* — the kingdom of God.” Now that is mean; it is nothing else than mean for a boy to take all the good gifts that God has given him, and then give Him nothing back in return but his wasted life.

God wants boys’ *lives*, not only their souls. It is for active service soldiers are drilled and trained and fed and armed. That is why you and I are in the world at all — not to prepare to go out of it some day; but to serve God actively in it *now*. It is monstrous and shameful and cowardly to

talk of seeking the kingdom *last*. It is shirking duty, abandoning one's rightful post, playing into the enemy's hand by doing nothing to turn his flank. Every hour a *kingdom* is coming in your heart, in your home, in the world near you, be it a kingdom of darkness or a kingdom of light. You are placed where you are, in a particular business, in a particular street, to help on there the kingdom of God. You cannot do that when you are old and ready to die. By that time your companions will have fought their fight, and lost or won. If they lose, will you not be sorry that you did not help them? Will you not regret that only at the last you helped the king-

dom of God? Perhaps you will not be able to do it then. And then your life has been lost indeed.

Very few people have the opportunity to seek the kingdom of God at the end. Christ, knowing all that, knowing that religion was a thing for our life, not merely for our death-bed, has laid this command upon us now: “Seek *first* the kingdom of God.” I am going to leave you with this text itself. Every Brigade boy in the world should obey it.

Boys, before you go to work tomorrow, before you go to sleep to-night, before you go to the Sunday-school this afternoon, before you go out of the door of the City Hall, resolve that,

God helping you, you are going to seek *first* the kingdom of God. Perhaps some boys here are deserters; they began once before to serve Christ, and they deserted. Come back again, come back again to-day. Others have never enlisted at all. Will you not do it now? You are old enough to decide. And the grandest moment of a boy's life is that moment when he decides to

**Seek first the kingdom of God.**



## HOW TO LEARN HOW.

- I. DEALING WITH DOUBT.
- II. PREPARATION FOR LEARNING.





## DEALING WITH DOUBT.

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THERE is a subject which I think we as workers amongst young men cannot afford to keep out of sight—I mean the subject of “Doubt.” We are forced to face that subject. We have no choice. I would rather let it alone; but every day of my life I meet men who doubt, and I am quite sure that most of you have innumerable interviews every year with men who raise skeptical difficulties about religion. Now, it becomes a matter of great practical importance

that we should know how to deal wisely with these men. Upon the whole, I think these are the best men in the country. I speak of my own country. I speak of the universities with which I am familiar, and I say that the men who are perplexed—the men who come to you with serious and honest difficulties—are the best men. They are men of intellectual honesty, and cannot allow themselves to be put to rest by words, or phrases, or traditions, or theologies, but who must get to the bottom of things for themselves. And if I am not mistaken, Christ was very fond of these men. The outsiders always interested Him, and touched Him. The ortho

dox people — the Pharisees — He was much less interested in. He went with publicans and sinners — with people who were in revolt against the respectability, intellectual and religious, of the day. And following Him, we are entitled to give sympathetic consideration to those whom He loved and took trouble with.

First, let me speak for a moment or two about the origin of doubt. In the first place, we are born questioners. Look at the wonderment of a little child in its eyes before it can speak. The child's great word when it begins to speak is, "Why?" Every child is full of every kind of questions, about every kind of thing that moves, and

shines, and changes, in the little world in which it lives. That is the incipient doubt in the nature of man. Respect doubt for its origin. It is an inevitable thing. It is not a thing to be crushed. It is a part of man as God made him. Heresy is truth in the making, and doubt is the prelude of knowledge.

Secondly: The world is a Sphinx. It is a vast riddle — an unfathomable mystery; and on every side there is temptation to questioning. In every leaf, in every cell of every leaf, there are a hundred problems. There are ten good years of a man's life in investigating what is in the leaf, and there are five good years more in

investigating the things that are in the things that are in the leaf. God has planned the world to incite men to intellectual activity.

Thirdly : The instrument with which we attempt to investigate truth is impaired. Some say it fell, and the glass is broken. Some say prejudice, heredity or sin, have spoiled its sight, and have blinded our eyes and deadened our ears. In any case the instruments with which we work upon truth, even in the strongest men, are feeble and inadequate to their tremendous task.

And in the fourth place, all religious truths are doubtable. There is no absolute proof for any one of them.

Even that fundamental truth — the existence of a God — no man can prove by reason. The ordinary proof for the existence of God involves either an assumption, argument in a circle, or a contradiction. The impression of God is kept up by experience; not by logic. And hence, when the experimental religion of a man, of a community, or of a nation, wanes, religion wanes — their idea of God grows indistinct, and that man, community or nation becomes infidel. Bear in mind, then, that all religious truths are doubtable — even those which we hold most strongly.

What does this brief account of the origin of doubt teach us? It teaches us

great intellectual humility. It teaches us sympathy and toleration with all men who venture upon the ocean of truth to find out a path through it for themselves. Do you sometimes feel yourself thinking unkind things about your fellow-students who have intellectual difficulty? I know how hard it is always to feel sympathy and toleration for them; but we must address ourselves to that most carefully and most religiously. If my brother is shortsighted, I must not abuse him or speak against him; I must pity him, and if possible try to improve his sight or to make things that he is to look at so bright that he cannot help seeing. **But never let us think evil of men who**

do not see as we do. From the bottom of our hearts let us pity them, and let us take them by the hand and spend time and thought over them, and try to lead them to the true light.

What has been the Church's treatment of doubt in the past? It has been very simple. "There is a heretic. Burn him!" That is all. "There is a man who has gone off the road. Bring him back and torture him!" We have got past that physically; have we got past it morally? What does the modern Church say to a man who is skeptical? Not "Burn him!" but "Brand him!" "Brand him!—call him a bad name." And in many countries at the present time a man



who is branded as a heretic is despised, tabooed, and put out of religious society, much more than if he had gone wrong in morals. I think I am speaking within the facts when I say that a man who is unsound is looked upon in many communities with more suspicion and with more pious horror than a man who now and then gets drunk. "Burn him!" "Brand him!" "Excommunicate him!" That has been the Church's treatment of doubt, and that is perhaps to some extent the treatment which we ourselves are inclined to give to the men who cannot see the truths of Christianity as we see them. Contrast Christ's treatment of doubt. I have spoken already of His strange

partiality for the outsiders—for the scattered heretics up and down the country; of the care with which He loved to deal with them, and of the respect in which He held their intellectual difficulties. Christ never failed to distinguish between doubt and unbelief. Doubt is *can't believe*; unbelief is *won't believe*. Doubt is honesty; unbelief is obstinacy. Doubt is looking for light; unbelief is content with darkness. Loving darkness rather than light—that is what Christ attacked, and attacked unsparingly. But for the intellectual questioning of Thomas, and Philip, and Nicodemus, and the many others who came to Him to have their great problems solved,

He was respectful and generous and tolerant.

And how did He meet their doubts? The Church, as I have said, says, "Brand him!" Christ said, "Teach him." He destroyed by fulfilling. When Thomas came to Him and denied His very resurrection, and stood before Him waiting for the scathing words and lashing for his unbelief, they never came. They never came. Christ gave him facts—facts. No man can go around facts. Christ said, "Behold My hands and My feet." The great god of science at the present time is a fact. It works with facts. Its cry is, "Give me facts." Found anything you like upon facts and we will believe

it. The spirit of Christ was the scientific spirit. He founded His religion upon facts; and He asked all men to found their religion upon facts. Now, gentlemen, get up the facts of Christianity, and take men to the facts. Theologies — and I am not speaking disrespectfully of theology; theology is as scientific a thing as any other science of facts — but theologies are human versions of Divine truths, and hence the varieties of the versions, and the inconsistencies of them. I would allow a man to select whichever version of this truth he liked *afterwards*; but I would ask him to begin with no version, but go back to the facts and base his Christian life upon

that. That is the great lesson of the New Testament way of looking at doubt — of Christ's treatment of doubt. It is not "Brand him!" — but lovingly, wisely, and tenderly to teach him. Faith is never opposed to reason in the New Testament; it is opposed to sight. You will find that a principle worth thinking over. *Faith is never opposed to reason in the New Testament, but to sight.*

Well, now; with these principles in mind as to the origin of doubt, and as to Christ's treatment of it, how are we ourselves to deal with our fellow-students who are in intellectual difficulty? In the first place, I think we must make all the concessions to

them that we conscientiously can. When a doubter first encounters you he pours out a deluge of abuse of churches, and ministers, and creeds, and Christians. Nine-tenths of what he says is probably true. Make concessions. Agree with him. It does him good to unburden himself of these things. He has been cherishing them for years — laying them up against Christians, against the Church, and against Christianity; and now he is startled to find the first Christian with whom he has talked over the thing almost entirely agrees with him. We are, of course, not responsible for everything that is said in the name of Christianity; but a man does not give

up medicine because there are quack doctors, and no man has a right to give up his Christianity because there are spurious or inconsistent Christians. Then, as I have already said, creeds are human versions of Divine truths; and we do not ask a man to accept all the creeds, any more than we ask him to accept all the Christians. We ask him to accept Christ, and the facts about Christ, and the words of Christ. But you will find the battle is half won when you have endorsed the man's objections, and possibly added a great many more to the charges which he has against ourselves. These men are in revolt against the kind of religion which we exhibit to the world —

against the cant that is taught in the name of Christianity. And if the men that have never seen the real thing — if you could show them that, they would receive it as eagerly as you do. They are merely in revolt against the imperfections and inconsistencies of those who represent Christ to the world.

Second: Beg them to set aside, by an act of will, all unsolved problems: such as the problem of the origin of evil, the problem of the Trinity, the problem of the relation of human will and predestination, and so on — problems which have been investigated for thousands of years without result — ask them to set those problems aside as



insoluble in the meantime, just as a man who is studying mathematics may be asked to set aside the problem of squaring the circle. Let him go on with what can be done, and what has been done, and leave out of sight the impossible. You will find that will relieve the skeptic's mind of a great deal of unnecessary cargo that has been in his way.

Thirdly: Talking about difficulties, as a rule, only aggravates them. Entire satisfaction to the intellect is unattainable about any of the greater problems, and if you try to get to the bottom of them by argument, there is no bottom there; and, therefore, you make the matter worse. But I would

say what is known, and what can be honestly and philosophically and scientifically said about one or two of the difficulties that the doubter raises, just to show him that you can do it—to show him that you are not a fool—that you are not merely groping in the dark yourself, but you have found whatever basis is possible. But I would not go around all the doctrines. I would simply do that with one or two; because the moment you cut off one, a hundred other heads will grow in its place. It would be a pity if all these problems could be solved. The joy of the intellectual life would be largely gone. I would not rob a man of his problems, nor would I have another

man rob me of my problems. They are the delight of life, and the whole intellectual world would be stale and unprofitable if we knew everything.

Fourthly — and this is the great point : Turn away from the reason, and go into the man's moral life. I don't mean, go into his moral life and see if the man is living in conscious sin, which is the great blinder of the eyes — I am speaking now of honest doubt ; but open a new door into the practical side of man's nature. Entreat him not to postpone life and his life's usefulness until he has settled the problems of the universe. Tell him those problems will never all be settled ; that his life will be done before he has

begun to settle them ; and ask him what he is doing with his life meantime. Charge him with wasting his life and his usefulness ; and invite him to deal with the moral and practical difficulties of the world, and leave the intellectual difficulties as he goes along. To spend time upon these is proving the less important before the more important ; and, as the French say, "The good is the enemy of the best." It is a good thing to think ; it is a better thing to work — it is a better thing to do good. And you have him there, you see. He can't get beyond that. You have to tell him, in fact, that there are two organs of knowledge : the one reason, the other obedience. And

Now tell him, as he has tried the first and found the little in it, just for a moment or two to join you in trying the second. And when he asks whom he is to obey, you tell him there is but One, and lead him to the great historical figure, who calls all men to Him: the one perfect life—the one Saviour of mankind—the one Light of the world. Ask him to begin to obey Christ; and, doing His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.

That, I think, is about the only thing you can do with a man: to get him into practical contact with the needs of the world, and to let him lose his intellectual difficulties meantime.

Don't ask him to give them up altogether. Tell him to solve them afterward one by one if he can, but meantime to give his life to Christ and his time to the kingdom of God. And, you see, you fetch him completely around when you do that. You have taken him away from the false side of his nature, and to the practical and moral side of his nature; and for the first time in his life, perhaps, he puts things in their true place. He puts his nature in the relations in which it ought to be, and he then only begins to live. And by obedience — by obedience — he will soon become a learner and pupil for himself, and Christ will teach him things, and he will find whatever

problems are solvable gradually solved as he goes along the path of practical duty.

Now, let me, in closing, give a couple of instances of how to deal with specific points. The commonest thing that we hear said nowadays by young men is, "What about evolution? How am I to reconcile my religion, or any religion, with the doctrine of evolution?" That upsets more men than perhaps anything else at the present hour. How would you deal with it? I would say to a man that Christianity is the further evolution. I don't know any better definition than that. It is the further evolution—the higher evolution. I don't start with him to attack evolu-

tion. I don't start with him to defend it. I destroy by fulfilling it. I take him at his own terms. He says evolution is that which pushes the man on from the simple to the complex, from the lower to the higher. Very well; that is what Christianity does. It pushes the man farther on. It takes him where nature has left him, and carries him on to heights which on the plain of nature he could never reach. That is evolution. "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I." That is evolution. It is the development of the whole man in the higher directions—the drawing out of his spiritual being. Show an evolutionist that, and you take the wind out of his sails. "I



came not to destroy." Don't destroy his doctrine—perhaps you can't—but fulfil it. Put a larger meaning into it.

The other instance—the next commonest perhaps—is the question of miracles. It is impossible, of course, to discuss that now—miracles; but that question is thrown at my head every second day: "What do you say to a man when he says to you, 'Why do you believe in miracles?'" I say, "Because I have seen them." He says, "When?" I say, "Yesterday." He says, "Where?" "Down such-and-such a street I saw a man who was a drunkard redeemed by the power of an unseen Christ and saved from sin. That is a miracle." The

best apologetic for Christianity is a Christian. That is a fact which the man cannot get over. There are fifty other arguments for miracles, but none so good as that you have seen them. Perhaps you are one yourself. But take you a man and show him a miracle with his own eyes. Then he will believe.

PREPARATION FOR LEARN-  
ING.

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**B**EFORE an artist can do anything the instrument must be tuned. Our astronomers at this moment are preparing for an event which happens only once or twice in a lifetime: the total eclipse of the sun in the month of August. They have begun already. They are making preparations. At chosen stations in different parts of the world they are spending all the skill that science can suggest upon the construction of their instruments; and up

to the last moment they will be busy adjusting them; and the last day will be the busiest of all, because then they must have the glasses and the mirrors polished to the last degree. They have to have the lenses in place and focussed upon this spot before the event itself takes place.

Every thing will depend upon the instruments which you bring to this experiment. Every thing will depend upon it; and, therefore, fifteen minutes will not be lost if we each put our instrument into the best working order we can. I have spoken of lenses, and that reminds me that the instrument which we bring to bear upon truth is a compound thing. It con-

sists of many parts. Truth is not a product of the intellect alone; it is a product of the whole nature. The body is engaged in it, and the mind, and the soul.

The body is engaged in it. Of course, a man who has his body run down, or who is dyspeptic, or melancholy, sees everything black, and disordered, and untrue. But I am not going to dwell upon that. Most of you seem in pretty fair working order so far as your bodies are concerned; only it is well to remember that we are to give our bodies a living sacrifice—not a half-dead sacrifice, as some people seem to imagine. There is no virtue in emaciation. I don't know if you have any

tendency in that direction in America, but certainly we are in danger of dropping into it now and then in England, and it is just as well to bear in mind our part of the lens — a very compound and delicate lens — with which we have to take in truth.

Then comes a very important part: the intellect — which is one of the most useful servants of truth; and I need not tell you as students, that the intellect will have a great deal to do with your reception of truth. I was told that it was said at these conferences last year, that a man must crucify his intellect. I venture to contradict the gentleman who made that statement. I am quite sure no such statement

could ever have been made in your hearing—that we were to crucify our intellects. We can make no progress without the full use of all the intellectual powers that God has endowed us with.

But more important than either of these is the moral nature—the moral and spiritual nature. Some of you remember a sermon of Robertson of Brighton, entitled “Obedience the Organ of Spiritual Knowledge.” A very startling title!—“Obedience the Organ of Spiritual Knowledge.” The Pharisees asked about Christ: “How knoweth this man letters, never having learned?” How knoweth this man, never having learned? The organ of

knowledge is not nearly so much mind, as the organ that Christ used, namely, obedience; and that was the organ which He Himself insisted upon when He said: "He that willeth to do His will shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." You have all noticed, of course, that the words in the original are: "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine." It doesn't read, "If any do His will," which no man can do perfectly; but if any man be simply willing to do His will — if he has an absolutely undivided mind about it — that man will know what truth is and know what falsehood is; a stranger will he not follow. And that is by far the best



source of spiritual knowledge on every account — obedience to God — absolute sincerity and loyalty in following Christ. “If any man do His will he shall know” — a very remarkable association of knowledge, a thing which is usually considered quite intellectual, with obedience, which is moral and spiritual.

But even although we use all these three different parts of the instrument, we have not at all got at the complete method of learning. There is a little preliminary that the astronomer has to do before he can make his observation. He has to take the cap off his telescope. Many a man thinks he is looking at truth when he is only looking at the

cap. Many a time I have looked down my microscope, and thought I was looking at the diatom for which I had long been searching, and found I had simply been looking at a speck of dust upon the lens itself. Many a man thinks he is looking at truth when he is only looking at the spectacles he has put on to see it with. He is looking at his own spectacles. Now, the common spectacles that a man puts on—I suppose the creed in which he has been brought up—if a man looks at that, let him remember that he is not looking at truth: he is looking at his own spectacles. There is no more important lesson that we have to carry with us than that truth is not to be

found in what I have been taught. That is not truth. Truth is not what I have been taught. If it were so, that would apply to the Mormon, it would apply to the Brahman, it would apply to the Buddhist. Truth would be to everybody just what he had been taught. Therefore let us dismiss from our minds the predisposition to regard that which we have been brought up in as being necessarily the truth. I must say it is very hard to shake one's self free altogether from that. I suppose it is impossible.

But you see the reasonableness of giving up that as your view of truth when you come to apply it all around. If that were the definition of truth,

truth would be just what one's parents were—it would be a thing of hereditary transmission, and not a thing absolute in itself. Now, let me venture to ask you to take that cap off. Take that cap off now, and make up your minds you are going to look at truth naked—in its reality as it is, not as it is reflected through other minds, or through any theology, however venerable.

Then there is one thing I think we must be careful about, and that is besides having the cap off, and having all the lenses clean and in position—to have the instrument rightly focussed. Everything may be right, and yet when you go and look at the object, you see

things altogether falsely. You see things not only blurred, but you see things out of proportion. And there is nothing more important we have to bear in mind in running our eye over successive theological truths, or religious truths, than that there is a proportion in those truths, and that we must see them in their proportion, or we see them falsely. A man may take a dollar or a half-dollar and hold it to his eye so closely that he will hide the sun from him. Or he may so focus his telescope that a fly or a boulder may be as large as a mountain. A man may hold a certain doctrine, very intensely — a doctrine which has been looming upon his horizon for

the last six months, let us say, and which has thrown everything else out of proportion, it has become so big itself. Now let us beware of distortion in the arrangement of the religious truths which we hold. It is almost impossible to get things in their true proportion and symmetry, but this is the thing we must be constantly aiming at. We are told in the Bible to "add to your faith virtue, and to virtue, knowledge, and to knowledge balance," as the word literally means — *balance*. It is a word taken from the orchestra, where all the parts — the sopranos, the basses, the altos, and the tenors, and all the rest of them — must be regulated. If you have too

much of the bass, or too much of the soprano, there is want of harmony. That is what I mean by the want of proper focus — by the want of proper balance — in the truths which we all hold. It will never do to exaggerate one truth at the expense of another, and a truth may be turned into a falsehood very, very easily, by simply being either too much enlarged or too much diminished. I once heard of some blind men who were taken to see a menagerie. They had gone around the animals, and four of them were allowed to touch an elephant as they went past. They were discussing afterwards what kind of a creature the elephant was. One man, who had

touched its tail, said the elephant was like a rope. Another of the blind men, who had touched his hind limb, said, "No such thing! the elephant is like the trunk of a tree." Another, who had felt its sides, said, "That is all rubbish. An elephant is a thing like a wall." And the fourth, who had felt its ear, said that an elephant was like none of those things; it was like a leather bag. Now, men look at truth at different bits of it, and they see different things, of course, and they are very apt to imagine that the thing which they have seen is the whole affair — the whole thing. In reality, we can only see a very little bit at a time; and we must, I think,



learn to believe that other men can see bits of truth as well as ourselves. Your views are just what you see with your own eyes; and my views are just what I see; and what I see depends on just where I stand, and what you see depends on just where you stand; and truth is very much bigger than an elephant, and we are very much blinder than any of those blind men as we come to look at it.

Christ has made us aware that it is quite possible for a man to have ears and hear nothing, and to have eyes and see not. One of the disciples saw a great deal of Christ, and he never knew Him. "Have I been so long time with you,

Philip, and yet hast thou not known Me?" "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father also." Philip had never seen Him. He had been looking at his own spectacles, perhaps, or at something else, and had never seen Him. If the instrument had been in order, he would have seen Christ. And I would just add this one thing more: the test of value of the different verities of truth depends upon one thing: whether they have or have not a sanctifying power. That is another remarkable association in the mind of Christ — of sanctification with truth — thinking and holiness — not to be found in any of the sciences or in any of the philosophies. It is peculiar to the

Bible. Christ said "Sanctify them through Thy truth. Thy word is truth." Now, the value of any question—the value of any theological question—depends upon whether it has a sanctifying influence. If it has not, don't bother about it. Don't let it disturb your minds until you have exhausted all truths that have sanctification within them. If a truth makes a man a better man, then let him focus his instrument upon it and get all the acquaintance with it he can. If it is the profane babbling of science, falsely so called, or anything that has injurious effect upon the moral and spiritual nature of man, it is better let alone. And above all, let us remem-

ber to hold the truth in love. That is the most sanctifying influence of all. And if we can carry away the mere lessons of toleration, and leave behind us our censoriousness, and criticalness, and harsh judgments upon one another, and excommunicating of everybody except those who think exactly as we do, the time we shall spend here will not be the least useful parts of our lives.

WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?



## WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?

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YOUNG men are learning to respect more, perhaps, than ever young men have done, the word "Christian." I have seen the time when it was synonymous with cant and unreality and strained feeling and sanctimoniousness. But although that day is not quite passed yet, it is passing. I heard this definition the other day of a Christian man by a cynic— "A Christian man is a man whose great aim in life is a selfish desire to save his own soul, who, in order to do that, goes regularly to

church, and whose supreme hope is to get to Heaven when he dies." This reminds one of Professor Huxley's examination paper in which the question was put — "What is a lobster?" One student replied that a lobster was a red fish, which moves backwards. The examiner noted that this was a very good answer, but for three things. In the first place a lobster was not a fish; second it was not red; and third it did not move backwards. If there is anything that a Christian is not, it is one who has a selfish desire to save his own soul. The one thing which Christianity tries to extirpate from a man's nature is selfishness, even though it be the losing of his own soul.



Christianity, as we understand it from Christ, appeals to the generous side of a young man's nature, and not to the selfish side. In the new version of the New Testament the word "soul" is always translated in this connection by the word "life." That marks a revolution in the popular theology, and it will make a revolution in every Young Man's Christian Association in the country where it comes to be seen that a man's Christianity does not consist in merely saving his own soul, but in sanctifying and purifying the lives of his fellow-men. We are told in the New Testament that Christianity is leaven, and "leaven" comes from the same root-word as lever, meaning that

which raises up, which elevates; and a Christian young man is a man who raises up or elevates the lives of those round about him. We are also told that Christianity is salt, and salt is that which saves from corruption. What is it that saves the life of the world from being utterly rotten, but the Christian elements that are in it? Matthew Arnold has said, "Show me ten square miles in any part of the world outside Christianity where the life of man and the purity of woman are safe, and I will give Christianity up." In no part of the world is there any such ten square miles outside Christianity. Christian men are the **salt** of the earth in the most literal

sense. They, and they alone, keep the world from utter destruction.

I want to say a word here about the Young Men's Christian Associations. Many have criticised them. They have been the target for a great deal of abuse. Many of the best young men have sneered at them, and turned up their noses at them, and denounced them. I am speaking with absolute sympathy and respect, and even enthusiasm, for Young Men's Christian Associations. But I will turn for one instant upon those men who turn against them, and tell them that it is not breadth that leads them to do that, but what one might call the narrowness of breadth — that breadth which

denounces intolerance, and which is itself too intolerant to tolerate intolerance. And, as some one says, it is easier to criticise the best thing superbly than to do the smallest thing indifferently.

It is very easy to criticise the methods and aims and men of the Young Men's Christian Associations. If, instead of looking on and criticising those who know a thing or two, those who think they are wiser, and that they have the whole truth, would throw themselves in among others and back them and try to work alongside of them, they would get perhaps their breadth tempered by earnestness and by zeal, because the narrow man has much to contribute to

the Christian cause, perhaps more than the broad man. But it needs all kinds of people to make a world; it needs all kinds of people to make a church, and every type of young men a Christian Association; and the greatest mistake of all is to have every man stamped in the same stamp, so that if you met him in a railway train one hundred miles off, you would know him as a Y. M. C. A. man. I would like to find many who would not wear the badge so pronouncedly, that every one should know them at a glance.

There is only one great character in the world that can really draw out all that is best in man. He is so far above all others in influencing men for good

that He stands alone. That man was the founder of Christianity. To be a Christian man is to have that character for our ideal in life, to live under its influence, to do what He would wish us to do, to live the kind of life He would have lived in our house, and had He our day's routine to go through. It would not, perhaps, alter the forms of our life, but it would alter the spirit and aims and motives of our life, and the Christian man is he who in that sense lives under the influence of Jesus Christ.

Now, there is nothing that a young man wants for his ideal that is not found in Christ. You would be surprised when you come to know who

Christ is, if you have not thought much about it, to find how He will fit in with all human needs, and call out all that is best in man. The highest and manliest character that ever lived was Christ. One incident I often think of and wonder. You remember, when He hung upon the cross, there was handed up to Him a vessel containing a stupefying drug, supplied by a kind society of ladies in Jerusalem, who always sent it to criminals when being executed. And that stupefying drug was handed up to Christ's lips. And we read, "When he tasted thereof He would not drink." I have always thought that one of the most heroic actions I have ever read of. But that

was only one very small side of Christ's nature. He can be everything that a man wants. Paul tells us that if we live in Christ we are changed into His image. All that a man has to do, then, to be like Christ, is simply to live in friendship with Christ, and the character follows.

But it is only one of the aims of Christianity to make the best men. The next thing Christ wants to do is to make the best world. And He tries to make the best world by setting the best men loose upon the world to influence it and reflect Him upon it. In 1874 a religious movement began in Edinburgh University among the students themselves, that has since



spread to some of the best academic institutions in America. The students have a hall, and there they meet on Sundays, or occasionally on week-days, to hear addresses from their professors, or from outside eminent men, on Christian topics. There is no committee; there are no rules; there are no reports. Every meeting is held strictly in private, and any attempt to pose before the world is sternly discouraged. No paragraphs are put into the journals; no addresses are reported. The meetings are private, quiet, earnest, and whatsoever student likes may attend them. That is all. It is not an organization in the ordinary sense, it is a "leaven." In all the schools

it is the best men who take most part in the movement, and among the schools it is the medical side which furnishes the greatest number of students to the meetings. Some of the most zealous have taken high honors in their examinations, and some have been in the first class of university athletes. It is not a movement that has laid hold of weak or worthless students whom nobody respects, but one that is maintained by the best men in every department. The first benefit is to the students themselves. Take Edinburgh, with about 4000 students drawn from all parts of the world, and living in rooms with no one caring for them. Taken away from the moral

support of their previous surroundings, they went to the bad in hundreds. It is now found that through this movement they work better, and that a greater percentage pass honorably through the university portals into life. The religious meetings, it is to be observed, are never allowed to interfere with the work of the students. The second result is to be seen in what are called university settlements. A few men will band themselves together and rent a house in the lower parts of the city and live there. They do no preaching, no formal evangelization work; but they help the sick and they arrange smoking concerts, and contribute to the amusement of their neighbors. They

simply live with the people, and trust that their example will produce a good effect. Three years ago they printed and distributed among themselves the following "Programme of Christianity:" — "To bind up the broken-hearted, to give liberty to the captives, to comfort all that mourn, to give beauty for ashes, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." I suppose there are few of us with broken hearts, but there are other people in the world besides ourselves, and underneath all the gayety of the city there is not a street in which there are not men and women with broken hearts. Who is to help these people? No one can lift them up in any way except those who

are living the life of Christ, and it is their privilege and business to bind up the broken-hearted.

I want to urge the claims of the Christian ministry on the strength and talent of our youth. I find a singular want of men in the Christian ministry, and I think it would be at least worthwhile for some of you to look around, to look at the men who are not filling the churches, to look at the needs of the crowds who throng the streets, and see if you could do better with your life than throw yourself into that work. The advantage of the ministry is that a man's whole life can be thrown into the carrying out of that programme without any deduction. Another ad

vantage of the ministry is that it is so poorly paid that a man is not tempted to cut a dash and shine in the world, but can be meek and lowly in heart, like his Master. It is enough for a servant to be like his master, and there is a great attraction in seeking obscurity, even isolation, if one can be following the highest ideal.

With regard to the question, how you shall begin the Christian life, let me remind you that theology is the most abstruse thing in the world, but that practical religion is the simplest thing. If any of you want to know how to begin to be a Christian, all I can say is that you should begin to do the next thing you find to be done as

Christ would have done it. If you follow Christ the "old man" will die of atrophy, and the "new man" will grow day by day under His abiding friendship.





THE STUDY OF THE BIBLE.



## THE STUDY OF THE BIBLE.

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I WILL give a note or two, pretty much by way of refreshing the memory about the Bible and how to look at it.

First: *The Bible came out of religion, not religion out of the Bible.* The Bible is a product of religion, not a cause of it. The war literature of America, which culminated, I suppose, in the publication of President Grant's life, came out of the war; the war did not

come out of the literature. And so in the distant past, there flowed among the nations of heathendom a small warm stream, like the Gulf Stream in the cold Atlantic—a small stream of religion; and now and then at intervals, men, carried along by this stream, uttered themselves in words. The historical books came out of facts; the devotional books came out of experiences; the letters came out of circumstances; and the Gospels came out of all three. That is where the Bible came from. It came out of religion; religion did not come out of the Bible. You see the difference. The religion is not, then, in the writing alone; but in those facts, experiences, circum-

stances, in the history and development of a people led and taught by God. And it is not the words that are inspired so much as the men.

Secondly: *These men were authors; they were not pens.* Their individuality comes out on every page they wrote. They were different in mental and literary style; in insight; and even the same writer differs at different times. II. Thessalonians, for example, is considerably beneath the level of Romans, and III. John is beneath the level of I. John. A man is not always at his best. These writers did not know they were writing a Bible.

Third: *The Bible is not a book; it is a library.* It consists of sixty-six

books. It is a great convenience, but in some respects a great misfortune, that these books have always been bound up together and given out as one book to the world, when they are not; because that has led to endless mistakes in theology and in practical life.

Fourth: These books, which make up this library, written at intervals of hundreds of years, were collected after the last of the writers was dead — long after — by human hands. Where were the books? Take the New Testament. There were four lives of Christ. One was in Rome; one was in Southern Italy; one was in Palestine; one in Asia Minor. There were twenty-one

letters. Five were in Greece and Macedonia ; five in Asia ; one in Rome. The rest were in the pockets of private individuals. Theophilus had acts. They were collected undesignedly. For example, the letter to the Galatians was written to the Church in Galatia. Somebody would make a copy or two, and put it into the hands of the members of the different churches, and they would find their way not only to the churches in Galatia, but after an interval to nearly all the churches. In those days the Christians scattered up and down through the world, exchanged copies of those letters, very much as geologists up and down the world exchange

specimens of minerals at the present time, or entomologists exchange specimens of butterflies. And after a long time a number of the books began to be pretty well known. In the third century the New Testament consisted of the following books: the four Gospels, Acts, thirteen letters of Paul, I. John, I. Peter; and in addition, the Epistles of Barnabas and Hermas. This was not called the New Testament, but the Christian Library. Then these last books were discarded. They ceased to be regarded as upon the same level as the others. In the fourth century the canon was closed — that is to say, a list was made up of the books which were to be regarded



as canonical. And then long after that they were stitched together and made up into one book — hundreds of years after that. Who made up the complete list? It was never formally made up. The bishops of the different churches would draw up a list each of the books that they thought ought to be put into this Testament. The churches also would give their opinion. Sometimes councils would meet and talk it over — discuss it. Scholars like Jerome would investigate the authenticity of the different documents, and there came to be a general consensus of the churches on the matter. But no formal closing of the canon was ever attempted.

And lastly : All religions have their sacred books, just as the Christians have theirs. Why is it necessary to remind ourselves of that ? If you ask a man why he believes such and such a thing, he will tell you, Because it is in the Bible. If you ask him, "How do you know the Bible is true?" he will probably reply, "Because it says so." Now, let that man remember that the sacred books of all the other religions make the same claim ; and while it is quite enough among ourselves to talk about a thing being true because it is in the Bible, we come in contact with outsiders, and we have to meet the skepticism of the day. We must go far deeper than that. The

religious books of the other religions claim to be far more divine in their origin than do ours. For example, the Mohammedans claim for the Koran — a large section of them, at least — that it was uncreated, and that it lay before the throne of God from the beginning of time. They claim it was put in the hands of the angel Gabriel, who brought it down to Mahomet, and dictated it to him, and allowed him at long intervals to have a look at the original book itself — bound with silk and studded with precious stones. That is a claim of much higher Divinity than we claim for our book ; and if we simply have to rely upon the Bible's testimony to its own verity, it is for the

same reason the Mohammedan would have you believe his book, and the Hindu would have you put your trust in the Vedas. That is why thorough Bible study is of such importance. We can get to the bottom of truth in itself, and be able to give a reason for the faith that is in us.

Now may I give you, before I stop, just a couple of examples of how the Bible came out of religion, and not religion out of the Bible? Take one of the letters. Just see how it came out of the circumstances of the time. The first of the letters that was written will do very well as an example. It is the 1st Epistle to the Thessalonians. In the year 52 Paul went to Europe.

He spent three Sundays in Thessalonica, created a great disturbance by his preaching, and a riot sprang up, and his life was in danger. He was smuggled out of the city at night — not, however, before having founded a small church. He was unable to go back to Thessalonica, although he tried it two or three times; but he wrote a letter. That is the first letter to the Thessalonians. You see how it sprang out of the circumstances of the time. Take a second example. Let us take one of the lives of Christ. Suppose you take the life recorded by Mark. Now, from internal evidences you can make out quite clearly how it was written, by whom it was written,

and to whom it was written. You understand at once it was written to a Roman public. If I were writing a letter to a red Indian I would make it very different from a letter I would write to a European. Now, Mark puts in a number of points which he would not if he had been writing to Greeks. For example, Mark almost never quotes prophecy. The Romans did not know anything about prophecy. Then, he gives little explanation of Jewish customs. When I was writing home I had to give some little explanations of American customs—for example, Commencement Day. When Mark writes to Rome about things happening farther East, he gives elab-

orate explanations. Again, Mark is fond of Latin words — writing to the Latins, who could understand them. He talks about “centurion,” “prætorium,” and others. Then, he always turns Jewish money into Roman money, just as I should say a book, if I were writing to Europe about it, cost two shillings, instead of fifty cents. Mark, for example, says, “two mites, which make a codrantes.” He refers to the coins which the Romans knew. In these ways we find out that the Bible came out of the circumstances and the places and the times in which it was written. Then if we will we can learn where Mark got his information, to a large extent. It is an extremely

interesting study. I should like to refer to Gocet's "New Testament Studies," where you will get this worked out. Let me just indicate to you how these sources of information are arrived at — the principal sources of information. There are a number of graphic touches in the book which indicate an eye-witness. Mark himself could not have been the eye-witness; and yet there are a number of graphic touches which show that he got his account from an eye-witness. You will find them, for example, in Mark iv. 38; x. 50; vi. 31; vii. 34. You will find also graphic touches indicating an ear-witness — as if the voice lingered in the mind of the



writer. For example, the retention of Aramaic in v. 41; and in vii. 34 — “*Talitha cumi*; Damsel, I say unto thee, arise.” He retained the Aramaic words Christ said, as I would say in Scotland, “My wee lassie, rise up.” The very words lingered in his ear, and he put them in the original. Then there are occasional phrases indicating the moral impression produced — v. 15; x. 24; x. 32. Now, Mark himself was not either the eye-witness or ear-witness. There is internal evidence that he got his information from Peter. We know very well that Mark was an intimate friend of Peter's. When Peter came to Mark's house in Jerusalem, after he got out of prison, the

very servant knew his voice, so that he must have been well known in the house. Therefore he was a friend of Mark's. The coloring and notes seem to be derived from Peter. There is a sense of wonder and admiration which you find all through the book, very like Peter's way of looking at things — i. 27 ; i. 33 ; i. 45 ; ii. 12 ; v. 42 ; and a great many others. But, still more interesting, Mark quotes the words, "Get thee behind Me, Satan," which were said to Peter's shame, but he omits the preceding words said to his honor — "Thou art Peter. On this rock," and so on. Peter had learned to be humble when he was telling Mark about it. Compare Mark viii.

27-33, with Matthew's account — xvi 13-33. Mark also omits the fine achievement of Peter — walking on the lake. When Peter was talking to Mark, he never said anything about it. Compare vi. 50 with Matthew's account — xiv. 28. And Mark alone records the two warnings given to Peter by the two cock-crowings, making his fall the more inexcusable. See Mark xiv. 30; also the 68th verse and the 72d. Peter did not write the book; we know that, because Peter's style is entirely different. None of the four Gospels have the names of the writers attached to them. We have had to find all these things out; but Mark's Gospel is obviously made

up of notes from Peter's evangelistic addresses.

So we see from these simple examples how human a book the Bible is, and how the Divinity in it has worked through human means. The Bible, in fact, has come out of religion; **not religion out of the Bible.**







