AN EFFICIENT CHURCH

An Efficient Church

By
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With an Introduction by
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TO MY WIFE

"Even this poor gift I cannot give;
I bring but what belongs to thee."

"Many daughters have done virtuously,
But thou excellest them all."

INTRODUCTION

By Earl Cranston

Some books are born so dead that neither untimely nor unkind is the sepulture that lays them away from sight under the dust of the vaulted storeroom. Of others it may be said that the making of the book was the unmaking of the author—because of some glaring fault of style, some unwarranted assumption of learning or piety, or unpardonable offense against decency or truth. Better the dust of the vault for "literary remains" than the epitaph awarded the author who brazenly or ignorantly presumes upon either the stupidity or moral obliquity of his public. His sin is mortal and the penalty swift and sure.

But the serious public is not unreasonable in its demands if dealt with in sincerity. It will overlook faults in construction and even condone occasional lapses in thought and judgment, if satisfied "by signs infallible" that the author is fairly entitled to his convictions and moved by high purpose in expressing them. Honest, earnest souls quickly know each other, and hindrances must be greater than those offered by infelicitous words or defective sentences to bar them from sympathetic communion. Truth is royal, crowned or uncrowned, in purple or in tattered robes.

But there is no disputing the fact that she has a warmer welcome when at least well clad, and the

reader of the following chapters is assured beforehand that when he is done with the book he will have no stock of second-hand commonplaces or misfit phrases to dispose of. In these days when many books, written for reasons primarily commercial, political, or artistic simply, dare to deal wantonly with matters serious and sacred ; when self-constituted critics, and advisers absolutely untrained and uninformed, are assuming to instruct the Christian ministry and to solve off-hand the gravest problems of church life ; and when even many church writers are wasting their efforts in books dogmatical, prelatical, piratical or fanatical, it is positively reassuring to find a busy pastor so alert to the question of his own usefulness, and so moved by the tremendous interests involved in the success of the gospel ministry, that neither the burdens of a great church nor the many-sidedness of the complex theme itself could deter him from such a study as that presented in the following chapters by Dr. Doney. After years of patient and painstaking inquiry seeking information at first hand as well as from other students, he gives us the fruit of his labor in this altogether creditable volume. To the attentive reader it will quickly appear that the author works with a trained mind, a fearless spirit, and by an exacting method. What is even better, there is manifest throughout the work the exalted aim that inspired it. It has been a pleasure to the writer of this brief introduction to read the pages in manuscript and to find everywhere evident the author's "one purpose to increase the every-day efficiency of the minister."

The difficulties of a subject so involved make it im-

possible for any one mind to compass them to the satisfaction of all, but I believe that the most exacting critic will concede that in his study of the religious congregation the author lacks neither poise nor discernment, and that it would be impossible for so clear a thinker, actuated by a purpose so reverent, to produce a dull or profitless book. May it prove to many conscientious workers a manual of permanent value.

FOREWORD

THIS study is essentially the same as that which was submitted in 1902 to the Department of Philosophy of the Ohio State University in candidacy for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. There was little thought then of giving it the dignity of a book, but the suggestion of persons whose opinions I value has led me to offer it to a publisher. I have delayed to do so, however, hoping to enlarge and revise the work ; but the ever-increasing duties of the pastorate have made it impossible to accomplish all that is desired. The greater portion of the materials employed was collected during the eight years preceding the preparation of the thesis, but the results of inquiries and investigations continued since 1902 have also been incorporated.

It has been my practice since entering the ministry to make specific inquiries of persons who are indifferent to the church in order to learn, if possible, why they are so unconcerned about what to others is so vital. In 1900 a more systematic method was adopted and a printed list of questions was prepared. This plan was not suggested by the work of others, but took shape before the psychology of the Christian life had become a popular study. It is thought, also, that the questions submitted and the results obtained are still somewhat original. The list of queries, given in the Appendix, embraces sixteen major questions each having from four to twelve sub-

questions, making in all nearly one hundred. Some of these were necessarily inquisitorial and all were intended to be very personal. It was not general observation or opinion that was wanted, but facts from the individual's life. It is at least encouraging to note that in every case, except one, the plan appeared to meet with approval. It would be interesting and helpful if these answers could be given in detail, but it has seemed advisable to consider the conclusions which are reached as a deduction from the replies, and from the more numerous personal interviews. The result of these inquiries appears but to confirm principles which are generally accepted, in thought, at least, if not in practice. It does not justify the pronouncement of any new theories; and this tends to show that our thought in general attains a practical approximation to that degree of truth needful for ordinary conduct and life.

As far as possible technical terms have been avoided. Preferring to be understood rather than to seem learned, I have exposed myself to the criticism which often attaches to the ordinary and practical. The one purpose is to increase the every-day efficiency of the minister and if that is not attained, there is nothing attained.

It would appear that schools of theology and other institutions from which men enter the ministry should attach greater importance to the study of psychology in the practical training of students for their profession. The chemist, the engineer, the physician are not masters of principles until they have reduced them to practice. Therefore laboratories and clinics have a first place in the college work of these men.

The preacher has few "laboratory" privileges until he assumes a pastorate, but homiletics may well include a greater study of psychology and so emphasize its truths that they readily are applied when opportunity offers. That would be a better equipment than the fullest knowledge of early heresies and ante-Nicean disputations.

I record with pleasure my indebtedness to Professor William H. Scott, LL. D., Professor of Philosophy in the Ohio State University, whose character and teachings have been unfailing assistance and inspiration throughout my college days and professional years. To my other instructors, notably Professor T. G. Duvall, of the Ohio Wesleyan University, Professor William James, of Harvard University, and the late Dean Charles C. Everett, of the Harvard Divinity School, I make grateful acknowledgment. Without the generous assistance also of the large number who so kindly submitted to inquisitorial questioning, these results would not have been possible, and to them my thanks are given. Many authors have been consulted and credited for all quotations; and in so far as memory served me, I have acknowledged any essential thought suggested by another.

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BOOK ONE
RELIGION AND LIFE

I
THE CHURCH OF TO-DAY

"The great mass of men do not to-day belong in associated relations with the Christian Church. What does that mean? First, that the Christian Church has not made itself broad enough to make earnest and true men recognize the ideal of their humanity in it; that it has been too special, too fantastic. Secondly, that it has a great work before it so to declare its human application that it shall commend itself to every man who really is in earnest in his thought and earnest in his deed. The Church seems to me to have that great function before it, and never to have had the possibility for that duty so large and open before it, in all the ages of its existence as to-day."—*Phillips Brooks.*

I

THE CHURCH OF TO-DAY

It is the decree of these later years that religion and life are to be no longer separated. However profound religion may be in its theological and speculative aspects its demonstration must be found in every-day life. Speculation, permissible in the class room and study, is repudiated by the pews when it appears in the pulpit. The God who is to be accepted must deal with man as he is and not as he is dissected in the seminary. There are two persons well known to theology: one is perfectly good and the other is completely bad. The people we deal with are too often classified with one or the other, and sermons are forged to meet their cases while the real man is left in the air.

The people have usually been patient with the ministry. This is right, for a minister is only a man; and for the sake also of his high calling he should receive every proper favour which will strengthen his endeavours. But the sanctity with which the clergy has been invested has tended not only to withhold the critical hand of the layman but to confirm the minister in his belief that he is fulfilling his mission. The iconoclasm of democracy, however, has found some walls to be of pasteboard and the preacher is being compelled to learn, among other lessons, that his work is not to edify the ideal saint or to convert or to condemn the typical sinner:

he is to face real men who have real needs and who want real help. The metaphysical God does not respond to that necessity, and the multitudes prefer to know a God who touches human life rather than to be interested in Him as a logical First Cause, and refuse to attend public worship when the services consist chiefly of impracticable discussions. If, however, in his endeavour to respond to this recently asserted demand of the people, the preacher sometimes resorts to crude and untried methods, he shows at least that he is not insensible to conditions. It is the swing of the pendulum from the speculative to the practical and its purpose is wholesome. It marks the attempt to reach the real need; it indicates a recognition of inadequacy and, to some extent, of its sources. In the process of any adjustment the first step is to see the necessity for it; unless that be clearly apprehended or all efforts will be tentative and indecisive. Afterwards will come the How.

The need of greater efficiency in the church to make men vitally religious is apparent to the blindest. But in granting this, we find no reason to pronounce a wholesale censure upon the Christian organization. It fails of perfection as everything else that is touched by human hands lacks perfection. Were it perfect, the reason for its existence would cease; the millennium would then have arrived in the completion of humanity. Indiscriminate criticism is perhaps the cheapest and most useless thing in the market. Intelligent criticism is not common and is valuable: merely negative it can be helpful only indirectly, but when constructive its service is that of a pioneer and prophet.

It must be recognized, however, that it is only recently that the church has had some of its larger problems presented. Previous to the magnificent uprise of science during the last fifty years, the world moved at an easy peace, each man restful and contented in his own narrow sphere. Conditions isolated him and social life was limited. He had his local problems, even problems of the whole state, but there was no vital interest which swept around the earth. A man's world then was his farm or town or, in a few instances, his nation. The aphorism of the classic Terence that he was concerned with all which affected men everywhere was considered to be a fine-sounding generalization; and one's "neighbour" of the second commandment was the man next door.

Science has given to man the whole world. It suddenly threw a universe into his lap. Evolution, invention, wealth, democracy, each created tremendous questions; and because they concern man, they are problems for organized religion. As soon as they were recognized the church took them up for solution. Christian helpfulness has always sought to be as big as the known world; but to-day it faces a world a hundred times greater, with complexities a thousand times more intricate than the world of the eighteenth century. With unparalleled suddenness the church has become aware of its enlarged mission. Practical, ethical, religious and irreligious forces intermingle in confusion; and the large estate has not yet been reduced to a working system. But the church is clearing its vision, stripping away the inessentials and emphasizing the vital elements. It has defined its ideal; the world is its parish and

every question involving the temporal, as well as the eternal, good or ill of any man is a question for the church. Aloofness is past. Religion is social, and the rational need of men everywhere is a call for help to which the church seeks to respond.

If some think that the church falls short of perfectly realizing this ideal and deserves to be named as outworn and decadent, it must furthermore be remembered that tremendous adjustments require time. The church is growing an oak, not a gourd; and if we are accustomed to the gourd-days, we must now adequately recognize the oak-generation.

Besides this, in the time order the natural comes first and afterwards that which is spiritual; and in the attainment of any ideal, though man does not find himself the puppet of nature, he yet is motived by influences which are more or less earth-born. While motives are not more than the conditions of choice, they are still the indices of voluntary activity. And in the early history of an individual or a race it is the material motives which chiefly dominate, the motives which are concerned in conserving sensual wants. It is only in the later and higher developments that the ideal becomes a moment of measureable value. Even then the highest motives are for long periods self-centred. Though they be affectional, æsthetic, rational or ethical, in the process of their development into the social and religious, they tarry long in the stage of self-interest. After becoming to a considerable degree altruistic, to fix them as permanent seats of unselfish activity demands added generations.

It is moreover easy to question their worth and

permanence, for they are simply the old motives transformed. The springs of highest character are the springs of the lowest transfused by nobler ends, transformed by the acceptance of exalted conceptions. In the presence of seductive solicitations it is not strange that they should sometimes revert to the less worthy type. Science has brought man face to face with such amazing opportunities for material gain that all souls seem unable to resist importunities which are startling in the extent of their promises. Wealth, ease, honour, comfort and pleasure have a tenfold power of appeal to human egoism. While the enlarging world throws greater demands upon religion, that world at the same time makes it harder for religion to respond because of its insistent invitations to the lower motives. The heart of the church is not far astray, but that heart is within a body of flesh which is not insensible.

Ignorance of the proper and most efficient methods of work is also a portion of the heritage of religious organizations. Omniscience could indeed perfectly plan for the new requirements, but finiteness moves with tentative and halting steps. Judgments must be tested, revised, discarded ; resources are to be perfected and directed. The Christian army meets a foe whose maneuverings, strategies and weapons are new ; it too must devise methods and equip itself for the modern form of warfare.

More than is casually apparent, I believe, the people generally have very little doubt concerning the essential truths of religion. The number of atheists is surprisingly small. A few years since a careful religious census of Philadelphia, a city having a pop-

ulation of more than one and one-fourth million, discovered only twenty-two avowed atheists. But herein lies a mystery.

Though men with striking accord believe in the uniqueness of the Christian religion, though they pay the church high respect and would positively refuse to remain in a churchless community, they are nevertheless, to a degree unwarranted, insensible to the practical implications of their belief. When one considers what is expected to follow from such a belief, he may well confess to some disappointment in not seeing that general conviction working itself out in a finer and more consistent type of living.

The very essential of Christianity's masterful position is worship, worship in its fullness of meaning; and this does not run parallel with men's implicit convictions. To one full of enthusiasm for the truths and blessings of religion, it is a matter of incomprehensible surprise to find a large class of persons who apparently give no heed whatever to church or formal religion. That surprise could be explained were the non-church-going class confined to the openly wicked and sinful; but instead of this it includes many respectable, well-loved men and women of high standing and integrity. The church is as devoid of practical interest to them as Bishop Turner's scheme of African colonization or the social laws of prehistoric man. They give to local charities, they stand for decency and order, they are sympathetic, genial, and, in some respects, are among the leading people. But the church is not in their lives as a confessed influence. Of course, the average character and service of the church members are much better than those of

the non-church members, but a considerable proportion of the latter will compare favourably with the former. Confronted by this general condition, the Christian worker very naturally asks what he can do about it. Preliminary to a specific answer, it is well to consider what it is that the church is seeking to do.

There are four questions which thinking men everywhere are asking: What is man? What is God? What is the true relationship between them? How can that relationship be consummated? The last question is the one which the minister must ask; for his work, briefly expressed, is to bring man and God together in a conscious, experimental relationship. Let it not be thought, however, that he is to do no more than strictly evangelical service. The union of the soul of man with the infinite Soul is indeed the crown of his endeavour, the goal towards which everything else should tend; but there is a proper function in the promotion and maintenance of those wholesome conditions, individual and social, which are needful requisites to the attainment and conservation of the best soul life. Although the gardener seeks the flowers and fruits, he must perform not only the positive work of seed sowing and cultivation, but also the negative work of keeping the soil healthful and free from weeds and parasites. While the purposes of the church are incomplete unless they lead souls to close union with God, it has the necessary duty of encouraging and conserving the soul's interest in every reform and charity which makes it easier to do right and harder to do wrong.

It will be noted that many of the non-church-going

people are honest; honest in the sense that they do what they think they ought to do. (Their data and means of defining "ought" is another question.) Some are as true to their convictions as the average Christian, but in the matter of a religious life they appear to have no conceptions of duty for or against it; they are neutral. But man's volitional activities are nevertheless always preceded by a sufficient and determining motive, and those who go to church, or who do not, have a reason for it. It may be that in neither instance could the reason be called sufficient. In the case of the indifferent, it is often no more than an excuse; the real reason is veiled or not understood. Yet whatever degree of merit it may have, there is some motive which is the source of the activity or inactivity; and it is safe to believe that for the man who worships and the man who does not, there is for each a sufficient motive. Here is the point at which the transformation of any person must commence; and while the church realizes, as never before, the value of objective conditions, it knows that the fundamental influence must finally be subjective.

There is certainly too much of nobility and honesty of purpose among Christians to permit the judgment that the church is not trying to respond to all legitimate requirements. And too much real good has been, and is being, accomplished to warrant any belief that religion will prove to be inadequate for the present and the future. Other systems and religions have been tried, and upon their own chosen fields. Systems running from atheism to apologetic agnosticism, from intuitionalism to experientialism, from deism to ethics have come upon the stage before a

friendly audience, and they have retired before the hostile criticism of their own creators. We judge by fruits; religious and social systems must meet the test.

Confucianism embraces six thousand years of China's wisdom, but the lifeless civilization of that empire declares the imperfection of its religion. Brahmanism, with its castes and self-immolation, forces degraded India to declare that the words of Brahm are not sufficient. Buddhism, soured by asceticism and despair, causes the child of the Orient to cast the gold of his heart into the furnace of sorrow and receive it back unpurified. Mohammedanism, with its fanatical courage, leaves the mind and soul of man untouched. There are elements of power in each, but men have neither invented nor evolved a religion that is fundamental enough to save the world, whether it be an esoteric faith or a Positive Philosophy. The Christian religion as seen in Jesus has a direct message about the powers which make for a satisfying and saved life: God, duty, salvation and immortality. It is the only religion which is adequate for a sin-cursed soul, which can wash away the stains from the hands of a guilty Macbeth. Philosophies may name these powers as possibilities for the reason, Christ makes them realities for the soul. The one is theoretical, the other is empirical; one is partial, the other is perfect. Equivocate as he will, man stands fronting the fact that he has never been able to discover or invent a satisfactory substitute for the original message of the Christian religion. He has sought to improve it, and the proposed improvement has been discarded; he has turned from it sarcastic-

ally, and returned in reverence. He has run the full scale of possibilities. To-day is the day of Simon Peter saying, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

II

THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

"The kind of philosophy which one chooses depends on the kind of a man one is. For a philosophical system is not a dead bit of furniture which one can take to one's self or dispose of, as one pleases; but it is endowed with a soul by the soul of the man who has it."—*Fichte.*

"I hold that we have a very imperfect knowledge of the works of nature till we view them as works of God—not only as works of mechanism, but works of intelligence; not only as under laws, but under a Lawgiver, wise and good."—*James McCosh.*

II

THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

It may appear to some that a discussion of the philosophy of religion has no place in a study of this kind. Its relevancy, however, consists in the fact that philosophy and psychology occupy not simply contiguous or similar fields, but psychology involves philosophy, since it is the province of philosophy to interpret and explain our psychological experience and to assign to it its proper place in our theory of the world as a whole. But it has also a directly practical significance. It is philosophy which measurably is the corrective of religious error, not only in requiring accurate processes of thought and in the attainment of greater religious truth, but in the establishment of that truth as such. "A religion that ignores philosophy is in constant danger of superstition and fanaticism," says Stuckenberg. Many of the phenomena of religion are so varied, fluctuating and incidental that there is need for that which dissects away all that is adventitious and lays bare the ultimates and essentials.

The chief value of this discussion, nowever, is to the preacher personally and to the preacher as the exponent and advocate of religious verities. The thought is frequently suggested, plainly and by implication, that religion is an addition to man's nature, not a development; an accretion, not an unfolding; a

culture, not an essential. In so far as this belief, however hazy it may be, possesses the preacher it takes from him that sense of security in religious truth which is the first requisite of his efficiency. That many find themselves in this state is a conviction forced upon me by the confessions of ministers themselves and of those who compose their congregations. Further evidence is found in the apologetic tone of sermons, the character of discussions in magazines and books, and in the indifferent lives of many who have long been instructed religiously. It is a living tragedy for a preacher to feel that his belief and faith may have only the support of tradition and custom which fuller light will dissolve into insubstantiality. Half-hearted preaching, instead of confirming the faith and convictions of childhood, instead of illuminating and more securely fixing them by growing knowledge, will loose them from their moorings and set them adrift with a doubtful chart and compass. It is a condition of danger and heart-hunger, of life without a purpose "unswerving, high and true." Many people who have submitted to my inquiries and who hold tenaciously to religious belief ask eagerly for more rational grounds for their faith. To deny them is to confess ignorance or that there are no such grounds, and in either case there is grief and loss.

In this chapter we desire to declare that religion is grounded in the rational nature of man and that the preacher is not the advocate of principles which, while wholesome and helpful, are no more than accidental or dogmatical. For it is to be seen that religion is neither an invention nor a discovery, but is

a growth springing up from the roots of man's nature. It is the unfolding of native faculties according to certain necessary laws. It is as fundamental as thinking and is as normal and inherent as any function of intelligent life. The preacher is an exponent of basal truth, supported in his advocacy by the deepest instincts of man. He has no apologies to make nor is his confidence to be weakened by misgivings. He stands with those who expound the principles of physical growth, with those who unfold the processes of mental culture, with this difference that his truths directly concern the soul and indirectly the body and mind also.

It is certainly apparent that the limits of this chapter will permit no exhaustive treatment of the theme. Much will have to be omitted which would be required in a complete discussion. But an articulated skeleton can be presented without assuming any essential points which are not generally accepted by the philosophers as demonstrated.

The aim of philosophy is the ultimate and universal. It seeks the final interpretation and explanation of truth, and its subjects for study are God, man and nature. According to Stuckenberg, "Philosophy is the rational system of fundamental principles." ("Intro. to Study of Philosophy," p. 46.) The philosophy of religion is, therefore, the rational system of the fundamental principles of the religious consciousness. The religious consciousness is the composite of religious experiences; such as prayer, sacrifice, aspiration, hope, worship, etc. These experiences are to be understood and interpreted by determining whether they are valid and what their significance is.

It is true that there are reasons proposed which, if sound, would render a philosophy of religion impossible. Mr. Spencer says that there can be no scientific study of religion because "the power the universe manifests to us is utterly inscrutable." Some hold that religious knowledge is intuitive and only to be cognized by a faculty apart from self-conscious intelligence or reason. Others believe that supernatural revelation is the one source of religious knowledge. Another objection, simply a denial of the whole matter, is that offered by materialism. All of these propositions, it would seem, have been refuted by the cold processes of logic and certainly by the living denial of the experiencing race. A philosophy of religion must presuppose that the data of religion are such as can be investigated by the reason, and we submit, in answer to the above objections also, that anything which is real is rational. This presupposition must, of course, be made in the case of every subject which offers itself for investigation and is in no sense a gratuity to religion.

As stated before, religion is necessary, using the term in its philosophical meaning. This does not signify that all men must be, or are, good, or that the religious ideas of all peoples, races and times shall agree. It means that religion is involved in the very nature of man and that until he is changed in constitution it will remain as a latent or explicit element of his being.

The historical evidence pointing to this is twofold. 1. Religion is universal in time and place. In the most ancient bit of written language recovered from the past we read this cry of the Egyptian, "O

Lord Osiris, let thy favour be poured out upon thy servant." ("Prisse's Papyrus," 3580 B. C.) It is echoed in the oldest literature of India, reëchoed in hoary China, caught up by the ancient Greeks "who were our betters," says Socrates, "and handed down the tradition to us." (That God once dwelt among them as the Shepherd of men.) Said a Kaffir, "We had this word, the name of God, long before the missionaries came, we had God long ago, for a man when dying would utter his last words, saying, 'I am going home, I am going up on high.'" (W. R. Nicoll in a sermon.) And Max Müller, than whom none is so well prepared to speak, says, "We may safely say that, in spite of all researches, no human beings have been found anywhere who do not possess something which to them is religion." ("Origin and Growth of Religion," p. 76.) 2. Many religious ideas among different peoples are strikingly similar. Traditions concerning creation, the flood, and a perfect Man are to be found in the four quarters of the earth. Likewise every race is discovered to have its notions of heaven, hell and a future life. A similarity in ideals and aspirations is reflected in legends and authentic histories of nations diverse in time and place. The practical life has generally been selfish, but everywhere there are traces of the principle of vicarious sacrifice and the souls who have witnessed to it have been revered.

We find, therefore, that the human race is religious and manifests that nature by aspiration, prayer, hope, worship, etc. The "exact thought-content" of these religious experiences varies with different races and persons and hence the essence of religion

must lie deeper than these expressions of it. Likewise a study of thought, feeling and will, alone or together, in this connection, while it would afford a knowledge of the psychological forms of these manifestations of the religious nature, could not go back far enough to reveal the fundamental concepts of religion. Therefore, we begin our inquiry with man himself as a self-conscious, spiritual being, back of which there can be no other beginning.

Necessarily included in the thought of man as a self-conscious, spiritual being is the notion of self-transcendence. Such a being must be able to cognize phenomena which lie outside his own individuality. Only this can make him a rational being, for mind cannot think itself or rest in itself, but needs to establish relations with other things. All rationality is based upon the relativity of knowledge.

Furthermore, the categories of thought by which all thinking proceeds compel the mind to cognize objects under certain formal relations. The category has a double aspect. As we look at it proceeding from within the mind outward to the world, the category is the inherent method by which man does, and must, relate himself to objects and by which he reduces them to mental possessions. As we look at it proceeding from the outer world to men's minds within, the category is the form in which the world must present itself in order to enter the mind and become a mental possession.

At first the categories of thought are simple, such as apply in the cognition of an object in space and time, or as a substance, or as coexistent with another object. Later the category of causality estab-

lishes simple relations of unity among objects and proceeds, in connection with other categories, to consummate a more and more inclusive unity until at last there is attained an all-embracing unity of thought and being upon which all thought and all being depend.

Possessing potentially this double endowment of self-transcendence and an inherent progression of thought towards an all-inclusive unity, man enters life. It is with this equipment that all men begin; let us see more in detail what a man does with it.

When he is born, he comes into a world of objects, of change, of events which take place and give way to others. Consciously or otherwise, he is impelled to inquire what it all means, and he must offer some interpretation of that which presses upon him so insistently. If he receive unreflectively the impress of his world of experience, the effect will appear as uncognized but practical judgment, or if he be deliberately rational his judgment will be didactic. He may look upon the world as from a remote standpoint, or he may regard the seething scenes as centred in himself, or he may have a divided point of view. If he looks upon the world with untrained mind, he will see unrelated, individual things, behind each of which he places some corresponding power, his own personality suggesting that all things are controlled by some living force. It is the world of barbarism, of fetichism. Or if he views the concourse of phenomena with a merely scientific mind, he sees things related to other things, he discovers laws and classifications, the individual forces merge more and more, and a unifying first cause is posited. If he sees with

the whole self, with the spirit as well as with the intellect, a still closer unity emerges, not mechanical but vital, the source of which is a person.

A like process takes place when he contemplates the world within. Whence come we? for what purpose? whither do we go? are questions which spontaneously propound themselves. Every man answers them, not always explicitly or even sensibly to himself, but the character and quality of his life is the practical response to what he conceives to be the meaning of life.

A still higher and broader view discovers that the outer and the inner world are not two, but one and that the study of them should go on together. The degree to which one becomes conscious of his relation to the universe and the degree of definiteness and accuracy in his answer to its fundamental problems measure the unfolding of his nature.

Notice what takes place in a mind which completes the innately prompted inquiry. Can it stop at fetichism? or materialism? or must it go on to theism? The world as it first presents itself to a man is in the form of a series of individual phenomena. There are things within and without, subjective and objective. He sees trees, clouds, mountains, animals; he experiences hunger, pain, hate, love; he witnesses storm, calm, cold, death; all are unrelated, dissociated. Soon, however, he joins the tree and fruit, the cloud and rain, the cold and pain, the wound and death; and, in response to the innate category of causality, he has made one of the greatest discoveries of the race, that of causal connection.

Provided with this mental endowment, the notion

of causality, now risen to definite recognition in consciousness, he is prepared for all conquest. By the deeper insight which it gives him, he sees that life is not chaotic, that the universe is not chaotic, but that running through all experience, actual and possible, there is a binding thread. The world of events which to his casual view appeared unrelated and confused, he finds to be a universe, a complete response to man's instinctive appreciation of, and demand for, harmony and unity. He sees that realities do not have independent worth and existence, that their being and value rest in their relations to other realities. Beneath all phenomena he discovers a coördinating principle, a unifying world-ground. His reflection concerning the essential relativity of all phenomena compels him to believe in some integrating principle which runs through the entire universe.

A consideration of the rational principle involved, as distinguished from causality as a natural principle, leads to the belief that the events occurring manifest foresight and design. They are not haphazard, but exhibit the marks of rationality. They are adaptations and adjustments which have the characteristics of rationality and which produce rational results; rational means are employed for the attainment of rational ends. The universe is seen to be a system which is intelligible. It is such that an intelligent being can understand it. The fact that the world is intelligible justifies the conclusion that the World-Ground is an Intelligence.

Another step induces a further necessary conviction. If the World-Ground is an Intelligence, there are certain implications bound up within it. All that we

know of intelligence requires that it shall be self-determined. "There can be no rationality, and hence no knowledge, upon any system of necessity. . . . Rationality demands freedom in the finite knower; and this, in turn, is incompatible with necessity in the world-ground." (Bowne, "Philosophy of Theism," p. 116.) The very condition of intelligence being freedom, the World-Ground as Intelligence must be free. But the freedom of an Intelligence is what we understand by personality; and thus we are led to the conclusion that the World-Ground is a Person.

A continuation of the necessary thought-process shows that it is logically inevitable that more be affirmed of the World-Ground than intelligence and personality. The World-Ground as the principle of which the entire universe is the expression will include infinity and absoluteness, otherwise we have not reached the ultimate basis of reality. Metaphysically considered, therefore, the World-Ground comprehends the further attributes of immutability, omnipresence, omnipotence, omniscience and everlastingness.

Man himself is an expression of the World-Ground and as such exhibits a moral personality. Some conception and appreciation of morals is coincident with his religion. His union with his fellows into society involves moral relations. The life of the race and the course of events when summed up by history are permeated by morals. The consummation attained in the past and that "towards which the whole creation moves" are interpreted and reflected by the outworking of goodness, truth and beauty. The moral life of man, finite manifestation of the Infinite, justifies the conclusion that moral attributes belong to the

World-Ground. These are truth, goodness and beauty which are the sum of all virtues ; as mercy, patience, love, justice, etc.

Finally, man has learned from the universe that all finite existences are dependent. Everything exists in relation to everything else and all things have their being in, and are dependent upon, the World-Ground. The World-Ground, being a function present in everything, must be present in the human soul, which makes it metaphysically possible that there should be communion between the World-Ground and man, justifying the belief in prayer.

We here have a philosophical basis for those conditions which are the essentials of religion : one God who is sustaining, beneficent and in communion with man. Given these conditions, the reason can offer no objections to belief in guidance, redemption, immortality ; and worship is a necessity of the rational nature of man.

If this argument is an abstraction, it nevertheless is based upon sufficient concrete experience to give it potent reality in life. Do not think that these philosophical considerations are utterly foreign to all persons except those who are given to speculation. They are of practical significance for every one. Man is instinctively philosophical ; embryonic truth is within him and while he may never formulate a proposition, the conditions of his life unconsciously impel him to accept and follow the principles immanent in the universe. The material and unfree world is guided by those principles unresistingly ; man offers the obstruction of his limited self-initiation diverted from the truth by ignorance, willfulness and sin. But the

current controlling the unfree world exists also as an instinctive tendency within him, and he feels its pulse even though he may not know what it is or what it means.

The merely rational appreciation of the universe does not, of course, constitute man a religious being. It is no more than a *sine qua non*, a necessary condition without which religion could not exist. Religion requires an actual communion between God and man; and to consummate this man must use his complementary nature of feeling and will, of interest, aspiration, love and purpose which is essentially deeper in practical import than any logical conception of the universe. We have seen that he has this nature, and it leads him to an emotional and volitional appreciation of harmony and unity, a desire for oneness with the immanent World-Spirit and within the world of his experience. We have seen that his rational nature manifests itself in the effort to attain an orderly, comprehensive and satisfying world-view. But this is based upon objective and abstract data and is not personal to the man himself. Within himself, however, he finds another world, in which there is the actual chaos of a struggling duality. His members are at war with one another and, try as he may, there is in his naturally realized experience no peace and no satisfaction of his desire for harmony and unity. His nature is such that he is conscious of the disorder and conflict. But it is also such that he strives against it, ever seeking a realization of that implicit ideal, a satisfying, masterful harmony.

We readily see how every function of human experience has its bearing upon the formation and the

attainment of this ideal. Thought discriminates between possibilities, seeking the true; feeling motives and impels; while the will seeks actively to attain the ideal set before it. Furthermore we can see the progressive nature of this conception of religion. The ideal will continually serve as a critic to pass judgment upon the religious life step by step as it is attained. And with each increment of actualized religious experience there will arise to a certain and corresponding degree a readjustment of the elements of the unrealized ideal. That ideal for the Christian is the life which is to be attained in God, and it is towards this that he continually moves with his own weak but striving life.

In addition to man's innately prompted endeavour to comprehend the meaning of experience and to interpret the significance of life, he finds that the Christian religion proffers the help of a Divine Revelation. The Scriptures are a master-key, an oracle, to unlock and to explain practically the significance of life, and to confirm the interpretation which is made by philosophy. The Bible assists materially, if not perfectly, in the attainment of a correct point of view of life, and by appeal and promises of help, it provides that motive which enables man to "press towards the prize of his high calling."

This will be clear if we recall the principal functions of the Book. As a law, it is a revelation of the path along which we are required to go. It is not an arbitrary decree of God; it is the perfect way declared by His wisdom in conformity to man's nature and the principles upon which the universe itself is founded. Its punitive measures are hedges along the highway of

right intended to keep man within the path which leads to the highest realization of his nature. Furthermore, the Scriptures reveal the true heart-state, enabling him, as a self-determining organism, voluntarily to choose the road marked by Divine wisdom, and declare unto him the efficient motive needed for the practical realization in life of those ideals which are presented. The Bible is a revelation of those truths which are implicit in the universe. What philosophy discovers after much searching, the Scriptures declare; what the processes of reason may finally find, the Book proffers immediately. Truth is one throughout and that which reason attains by effort is the same as that which revelation gives at once.

The Christian religion, therefore, as the exponent and conservator of truth both metaphysical and revealed, not only offers a rational view of life, but places man in the way of working out that conception. It crowns him with knowledge and adds the power of Divine grace and motive.

III

THE VALUE OF PSYCHOLOGY

"You should make a deeper study of the subjectivity of the trout."—*Geo. Eliot.*

"Knowledge of my way is a good part of my journey."—*Warwick.*

"Seek not to reform every one's dial by your own watch."—*Proverb.*

"Thou art ignorant of what thou art, and much more ignorant of what is fit for thee."—*Thomas à Kempi*

"It is not sufficient to have read the Delphic inscription, 'Know thyself!' We must fix our attention upon it, and set earnestly to work to examine our own selves; for it will be difficult for us to know anything if we know not ourselves."—*Xenophon.*

III

THE VALUE OF PSYCHOLOGY

A STUDY of the religious life of a man is a study of the implicit philosophy of his life, and, through essential relationship, must include the science of mental phenomena. Every science is concerned with principles and principles are not perceived; they are products of conceptual activity. They are not things *ab extra*, they are subjective phenomena; they are not self-existent, they are mental creations. Not *what* these principles are, but *how* and *why* certain thoughts enter the mind to constitute and condition one's individual content of life are questions for the psychologist.

Until recent years the study of psychology was considered to have very little practical significance. Its scope was as broad as the mental world, but somehow its implications were unsuspected; research did not leave the schools, and resultant principles did not secure an application in human life. For two decades, however, there have been all kinds of "psychological studies," and it is not strange that some vagaries and ill-founded theories should be seriously submitted. They should not detract from the genuine truths of the subject, but should rather cause one to insist upon the greatest care and fidelity in making investigations and reaching judgments.

If man be not an automaton, he is self-directing ; and the centre of his self-direction is the mind. Any study of the mind which reveals the methods of its operations is a step towards mental control and, consequently, towards the guidance of human activity. The practical value of psychology is therefore self-evident.

In reality, however, the results are not so sun-clear as this syllogistic statement would indicate. Each mind is a unit having unfathomable depths and illimitable horizons ; and the mastery of the mental operations of an individual is not wholly possible. The field which is unexplorable is great : illusive phenomena, unexplained phenomena, sub-conscious and unconscious phenomena, presented by any one person, narrow the limits of the area which submits itself to reasonably accurate studies. These limits are still further restricted by the inclusion of other individuals, each of whom places a concentric boundary to the explorable area ; and it is the smallest circle which finally determines the extent of the indisputably knowable field.

Though one readily perceives the difficulties to which such a study is subjected, they are not so great as to make it impossible to obtain valuable results, for there is a scope of mental operations common to all men ; and in the outermost reaches of investigation it is found that men are more alike than they are unlike. Within the domain of undisputed likenesses, sufficient data would assure us of the laws which there obtain ; and even in the conflicting territory, the similarities are enough to afford a reasonable justification for accepting certain principles.

If psychology have a practical significance in human affairs, there is certainly no place where it is more important than in the ministry. Continual appeal is there made to motives, since the endeavour of the church is to induce men to change from one form of life to another. All of "the means of grace" seek to lead men to love and to attain the best things; and because the use of those "means of grace" is committed to men, it is of the highest value to know how to employ them properly and efficiently.

If, therefore, it is the work of the Christian, and certainly of the minister, to bring the finite and the Infinite together in an experimental relationship, it is plain that in effecting that union, he must know man and God. It is premised that the minister knows God, knows Him as the active, personal Source of human regeneration. But he fails unless he also has a working knowledge of men. And men differ. A series of influences which produce a certain result in one man cannot be depended on to produce the same effect in another. The race is composed of individuals, and individuality refers less to the numeral unit than it does to singularity of constitution. The physician diagnoses each patient separately, not those in a hospital or entire city. The farmer knows that there are horses and horses, and that what is suitable food for the delicately bred roadster would be decidedly debilitating for the Percheron-Norman draft horse. In dealing with men it is found that we cannot lump them, though this is not an old discovery.

The teacher in the schools was the first to differentiate practically between two objects upon whom he as a cause sought to produce effects. Froebel was

the John Baptist crying in the wilderness of speculative thought for a new preparation of heart and head. The Procrustean bed must be consigned to the garret, for the teacher no more stretches the short or cuts off the long to fit them to the type. He takes his student as he finds him and cuts his teaching to fit the learner. The teacher's preparation is not therefore one of traditional scholarship, but should include the ability to interpret a human being. Before he knows how to teach he must know who it is that is to be taught. As a guide in using everything else, he must have a working knowledge of psychology.

In what respect is the preacher not a teacher? Whether in the pulpit or in the homes of his people he is seeking to convey truth of a certain kind. He is a successor of the great Teacher. His task is appreciably different from that of the teacher in school, for his congregation is a heterogeneous body: all classes and conditions appear before him and they are to receive help at every service. His leading function is to induce men to be other than they are and to give them a sufficient motive for it. He is to call them from some Egypt into a Canaan, leading them first to that Source of strength which makes them willing and able to undertake the journey. The civil law can compel an outward obedience, but religion will have nothing short of a voluntary self-surrender. The preacher seeks the righteous self-determination of the individual. How to succeed in this is largely revealed by psychology. Knowing the man or the association of men and knowing the message committed to him, he will be better able to discover the method.

It is quite true that there have been efficient workers among men who never heard of psychology; common sense enables some to adapt themselves consciously or unconsciously to the man as he is. But this common sense is psychological sense, and its native effectiveness would be greatly increased by the added equipment of a well ordered knowledge of the laws of thought.

Our Lord was a psychologist. "He knew what was in man." He discerned the heart of the Pharisee and of the publican; He perceived the subtlety within the lawyer's question; He recognized the strength of the Syrophœnician woman's faith; He saw the truth in the soul of the woman by the well. Knowing men, knowing the psychological condition of those He met, He adapted His method of teaching and helping to their several conditions. One blind man He heals by a word, another with the clay; one leper is cleansed forthwith, others are sent to the priests; one paralytic is forgiven and then granted health, the other receives strength and afterwards is forgiven. He had no set methods; He clothed His truth and works in garments well adapted to those who were to wear them.

Not only should the minister know men in order directly to touch the springs of human action, but in order also to be able to interpret for them their own religious consciousness. Certainly there should be no encouragement given to an introspection which leads to morbidness, but few are to be found in any congregation who would not come upon undreamed of revelations after an hour of honest self-examination. The average man does not realize the tre-

mendous, practical import of what takes place within the secret chambers of his soul. The Word has it that "out of the heart are the issues of life," and the dictum is usually passed by as a Scriptural saying poetically true. But it is also a psychological verity which breeds destiny. The implications of human thought are human deeds, and in the cure of souls there is no stronger help than the rightful guidance of men's thoughts. The current saying that "it does not matter what a man believes so long as he is honest in his belief" is a devastating heresy, and there is no more effective weapon with which to overcome it and its kin than that furnished by psychology.

The strongly reiterated command, "Have faith! have faith!" is not yet unheard in some pulpits, but unless the mystified hearer has had a course under Professor James in "The Will to Believe," he may have the temerity to ask, "How can I have faith? I want it; tell me how to get it." The sweet assurance is still within my memory, "The way to have faith is—just to have faith." A preacher ought to know something of the thought processes which lead to faith; he ought to be able to speak intelligibly of interest, attention, meditation and fuller knowledge in their relation to the increase and conservation of faith.

Likewise everything else that pertains to the expression of the religious life has its psychological counterpart, and to reveal the worshipper to himself, to teach him what hidden chords are being unconsciously moved upon, is to open to him a world of wealth that is to be touched and used by reverent hands.

The rational basis for worship should be made plain. If it be simply in response to a sense of duty, it is all hard and irksome and it is nothing less than heroic to obey. To enjoin worship as a right which God claims is to state one side of the case. God asks it not for Himself alone, but for the good of His creatures. And that good comes to man through subjective influences which worship encourages and conserves. If we but realized this, the joy in worship would be akin to that experienced by the husbandman in gathering his fruits or the scientist in his discoveries. For example: The psychological aspect of prayer clearly presented adds wholesomeness and strength to the single view that the only result is God's response to human asking. Likewise, doctrine can be shown to be more than dogma; it meets the thought necessities of men. The hymn also is pregnant with power to move the soul to accord with the melody, thought, mood, and the total atmosphere of praise. Works of beneficence are often of greater moment for the doer than for the recipient. Psychology can show one how he is subjectively enriched by the various forms of worship, thus giving him more of meaning and less of mystery in religious living.

For these reasons suggested, and others, psychology is of especial help to the minister. The proposition, "Why men do not go to church," can be met by the other, "Men do go to church"; but the problem for each minister is how to bring even more into the class of worshippers. As he surveys his own parish casually, he will find no formal answer. But in a careful study of the people of a community some convictions

will be reached which will suggest more effective forms of service. And in that study of the parish there will appear, from another point of view, the value of psychology to the Christian worker. He is seeking to know the inner state of men in order to deal with them effectively. They are so motived as to produce effects which the Christian wishes to be different. He, therefore, would know what causes will produce desirable results; and, furthermore, he seeks to discover how to introduce those causes as controlling motives within men's minds. And any explanation of why a man acts as he does or why he does not act in some particular way leads to a consideration of the character and content of mental being.

Not unmindful of this conviction and pursuant to what has been suggested, we have sought from psychology some light upon certain phases of life as manifested in a religious congregation. The congregation of worshippers has generally been studied from the pulpit end of the church, to the neglect of valuable secrets in the pews. It was easier to study it from the pulpit, for in the earlier days almost the only man capable of doing it stood there; and the man in the pew did not count for so much as he now does. To-day the pew thinks and acts, and is enormously worth while. The layman is free to be a Christian or not; and if the preacher is to lead him to a religious life, he must know a great deal about what takes place in that man's mind.

The needful data for a correct view of the church from the people's standpoint can be had only from individuals who frankly reveal their own convictions

and experiences. Martineau says, "It is not possible to treat Ethics at all" (*a fortiori* religion also) "without continual reference, direct or indirect, to psychological experience; there is no other material from which a doctrine of character can be constructed." ("Types of Ethical Theory," Preface.) Nor is it possible, we observe, adequately to learn wherein the church fails to win men unless we view the church from the standpoint of those men. Their ability to make a subjective revelation of their true selves is in many instances doubtful and, literally, it is not possible; although, psychologically, it can be approximated.

As compared with investigations in the natural sciences, psychology is at a great disadvantage. In the case of science, the experiment can be repeated as often as desired and under varying circumstances. It may be observed, tested, measured from every point of view. "But," says Hume, "should I endeavour to clear up after the same manner any doubt in moral philosophy, by placing myself in the same case as that which I consider, 'tis evident this reflection and premeditation would so disturb the operation of my natural principles, as must render it impossible to form any just conclusions from Phenomena." ("Treatise," Introduction.) We cannot put ourselves in the place of another man; it is his by virtue of the thousand conditions which give him a distinct personality, and he cannot resign his place to another. We say this cannot be done literally, but we can with some measure of accuracy discover our own subjective selves and communicate them one to another. If, therefore, we can learn the real views of many Chris-

tians and non-Christians and the data which explain how they came to be as they are, we would have sufficient concrete knowledge from which to reach general principles.

BOOK TWO

THE CONGREGATION

IV

THE PURPOSE OF THE CONGREGATION

"The secret of a man's nature lies in his religion, in what he really believes about the world and his own place in it."—*Froude.*

"The Church is a union of men arising from the fellowship of religious life; a union essentially independent of, and different from, all other forms of human associations."—*Neander.*

"Worship is man's highest end, for it is the employment of his highest faculties and affections on the sublimest object."—*Channing.*

IV

THE PURPOSE OF THE CONGREGATION

In the discussion of this topic it is proposed to discover the purposes of the religious congregation and to suggest some of the reasons why those purposes are not more fully realized. The aid of the replies to the list of questions will be invited and considered in the light of general principles of psychology.

The congregation we understand to be the body of men, women and children who assemble in the church for worship. It is not limited to those who are enrolled as members of a particular church, nor will it include only those who are converted. It is intended to refer to all who enter the church at the time set apart for worship and who interest themselves in work usually denominated Christian.

"I go to church to worship God" is the reply most frequently made to the question, "Why do you attend church?" No fault can be found with this statement of purpose provided there is in "worship" a sufficiently inclusive meaning. And this is seldom found. To some, worship is merely church attendance. "If I go and repeat the ritual, sing, remain attentive during prayer and listen to the sermon, who can say that I have not worshipped?" No one indeed can successfully refute the challenge, but every one knows that he can do those things and not be a worshipper or even within hailing distance of Christianity. Another considerable class believes that one may wor-

ship though the sermon be utterly unattended to and neglected. Or if the sermon be deemed a part of the service it is regarded as a man-made adjunct for the purpose of distinguishing the preacher from the deaconess or city missionary. A still greater number looks upon the sermon as well nigh the only feature of worship; hymn and prayer and Scripture lesson are useful as an introductory. And there are those even who so emphasize the hymn, or the prayer, or the Scripture lesson as to invite the conclusion that aside from some one of these there is little else of value in the service.

Worship is more than this; it is to include all that relates to man as expressing his consciousness of the Divine Fatherhood and of his own sonship. It is adoration and reverence and communion—and more. God is worshipped when man is vitalizing and perfecting their relationship—and more. God is worshipped when His child receives His instruction, when he prepares for worthy service, when he admits to his soul the motives, impulses and inspirations which transform his life and that of others. And God is worshipped when man works out in tangibleness the life of love and helpfulness which has been granted unto him.

Certainly one can worship without including all of these features at once. The traveller, lifting his voice in the twilight hymn with no one nigh but God to hear, is worshipping. The mother who, bending over her child, pours out her soul in supplication is a worshipper. The hurrying business man who stops to help an unfortunate may perform an act of worship. The employer who practically cares for the souls of

his men, worships by so doing. These are as truly worshippers if the spirit be right as when they meet in the sanctuary. In the church itself individual phases of the service may be acts of worship, but they neither originate nor sustain themselves alone. They are expressions of a nature which has been brought to a certain strength and quality of spirit through the additional forms of worship. The single leaf upon the tree is as much alive as the whole tree, but the life of the leaf bespeaks the sustaining power of light and sunshine, soil and moisture. Neither can the hymn nor prayer nor deed be truly worshipful unless it proceeds from a spirit whose life, touched by the life of God, has been built up by edification and instruction, communion and activity.

The church is a school of worship, no part of whose services may be omitted except at the price of abnormality or deficiency. It is not difficult to recall certain persons whose worship was almost exclusively confined to singing. Each expressed a desire to "sing his soul away to everlasting bliss," and if they had succeeded in doing so there would have been relief from their in-and-out-of-season singing. The man also who limits his worship to prayer is the unaccountable quantity in any meeting where he can force an opportunity—there may be forty-five minutes remaining or there may be twenty; and if you select him as the very man to go with you to the family who has just lost the bread-winner, you may choose differently after a few trials. He is ready to pray that they have faith; but the man who worships only in prayer does not endow hospitals. The sermon connoisseur and gormand, who has no interest

in other forms of worship, who often times his entrance to the church that he may come as the sermon is commencing is strengthened in some particulars; but he is a Japanese dentist with mighty thumb and fore-finger, he is an expert who lives in the subjunctive mood. He has no spiritual "Now I see" for the perplexed and tempted.

The normal physical man has no atrophied members nor single muscles which stand out like those of a dachshund. Neither can a person claim his heritage of full spiritual power who exercises but a portion of his nature. The spirit life is not so simple as the amœba which attains complete self-realization in a single drop of water. Complexity demands care, and the human soul requires a multifarious help. To know God through the interpreted Word, through communion, through personal experience, through obedience, through brotherhood, through adoration and praise is at once the preparation for, and the act of, worship. Anything less is partial and, consequently, imperfect; anything less is not the purpose for which the congregation should gather in the house of God. Departure from this, however, is seen in every congregation, and the church is consequently weakened in its proper influence; for the crudities and idiosyncrasies of well-intending men offer vulnerable points to the attack of such as sit in the seats of the scornful.

Worship has a place for the exercise of every faculty of the mind and is intended to promote the entirety of the individual's life. Thought, feeling and will are each to find a proper satisfaction in the services of the church, and human experience is to be

brought to the highest stage of truth which is possible to those who suffer finiteness. Clearly there are two principal explanations of the weakness of the church. One is the nature and constitution of the man who seeks the perfect life, the other is the imperfect manner in which the content of the perfect life is presented. One rests with the learner, the other with the teacher; one is the congregation, the other is the preacher.

It will be passing over a much-travelled road to review the laws by which man is conditioned, but their relation to the general subject makes it necessary. In experience, man is a microcosm, and his universe will be chaotic unless he knows himself as a unit. In any experience, every element of his nature is more or less a function; and he can have no just conception of that experience unless he takes into account all that he himself is, and what others are. That will include past, present and future; the world within and the world without.

Under four general conditions we purpose to discuss the individual, having in mind especially their bearing upon him as a member of the religious congregation. These four conditions are the Physical, Mental, Ethical and Religious. In every person they represent phenomena which influence his life as it manifests itself in single activities or in its totality.

V

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

"Our life contains a thousand springs,
And dies if one be gone;
Strange that a harp of a thousand strings
Should keep in tune so long."—*Watts.*

"Man's highest merit always is as much as possible to rule external circumstances, and as little as possible let himself be ruled by them."—*Goethe.*

"Rapture, love, ambition, indignation and pride, considered as feelings, are fruits of the same soil with the grossest bodily sensations of pleasure and of pain."—*James.*

V

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

PSYCHOLOGY has rendered no service of more value than that of demonstrating the interaction between body and mind. That this relation has always been felt to exist is shown by the age-long conflict between the physical and spiritual for ascendancy, and by the fact that neither body nor spirit has ever been foully treated without disaster to the other. Psychology confirms the judgment of native common sense, saying that the strength of body and mind depends upon their wise coöperation in discovering and fulfilling the conditions of rightful mutual dependence.

The influence of each upon the other is so powerful and limitless that one is frightened as he contemplates the results of an attack of indigestion or of the entrance of an evil thought. "Old friendships," says Sidney Smith, "are destroyed by toasted cheese, and hard salted meat has led to suicide. Unpleasant feelings in the body produce corresponding sensations in the mind, and a great scene of wretchedness is sketched out by a morsel of indigestible and misguided food."

Dr. Starr, a leading specialist, declares that there are many cases of insanity attributable to a "functional change in the brain due to disordered nutrition or circulation." Great fatigue, laziness, insomnia and

the like clearly influence mind and morals and they have physical roots. The awful words of Tennyson are true: "The spirit of murder works in the very means of life." The tired man is poisoned by products of chemical decomposition, the lazy man is deficient in oxygenated blood and the sleepless man needs a better circulation. These physical weaknesses are hindrances to the discharge of duties to self and others, are the source of untrue judgments and of unworthy deed. "To Socrates well, his wine was sweet; to Socrates sick, his wine was sour." President Stanley Hall speaks of "muscle-habits" and of the impossibility of "healthful energy of will without strong muscles which are its organ." Body and mind cannot be separated and it is plainest wisdom to recognize their potent interaction.

It is not, therefore, a matter of indifference where a man is born or under what circumstances he is reared. The outer world works its way into the inner life and there becomes the source of consequent and conformable expressions. "Socrates, the child of a family of artisans and himself an artisan during his younger days, took pleasure in mingling with the crowd whose follies he despised, and endeavoured to elevate, ennoble and instruct them. Plato, the descendant of Codrus and Solon, was by birth predestined to become the author of the aristocratic Republic, the idealistic philosopher, for whom form is everything and matter a contamination, an obstacle and a check; the poet-prophet who will have nothing to do with vulgar reality, and whose home is in the realm of the eternal, the absolute, and the ideal; the favourite teacher of the Fathers of the Church, the

theosophists and the mystics. Socrates exercised a somewhat prosy cautiousness in his thought. He is not willing to take any risks, he avoids hypothesis and the unknown. The philosophy of Plato is conspicuous for its bold impudence, its love of adventure and mystery." (Weber's "History of Philosophy," p. 76.) Ptolemy lived on the sandy plains where horizon and heaven were unobscured. The one held no charm, the other was his world to make him an astronomer. David had no companion save his flock, and he made another of the harp. It is well said that character is the joint product of nature and nurture, and one's first and abiding teacher is his environment. It meets him when his eyes first open on the world, it accompanies him through all his journeys and receives him to its bosom when his day is done. It speaks in a language which he is compelled to learn. Impressions, habits and ideas unconsciously so became a part of him that it is only with effort he can displace them. Born on the farm, the lad will, with stronger probability, grow into a farmer than if he were reared in the city. City bred, he has greater chances of an occupation that will keep him there than though he were country born. Poverty and plenty have their respective influences which express themselves in character; while climate, vocation and society mould and shape him. Every kind of environment lays a corresponding impress upon the soul.

These trite propositions are confirmed by the religious state of those who have replied to the list of questions. Of the persons born in the country, ninety-two per cent. are church members; of the village-

born, seventy-five per cent. are members of the church; while of those reared in the city, but sixty per cent. are affiliated with the church. Why the country is thus religiously advantaged probably arises from the simpler life which there obtains and the greater freedom from competing attractions and temptations. The markings of poverty and plenty are not so striking. Among those who, in early life were poor, seventy-five per cent. belong to the church, and those who were then moderately circumstanced number eighty-two per cent. Of those who had a partial or complete college course, eighty-six per cent. are church members; and only fifty per cent. of those who have had no more than a common school education. The sectarian colleges make a favourable showing in that ninety-two per cent. of the respondents whose higher education has been chiefly or exclusively in such schools are Christians, while from the non-sectarian colleges but seventy per cent. are reported. It is to be noted, however, that youths already Christian or who come from religious homes will more generally prefer the sectarian institution. But it must also be remembered that the sectarian schools are declared to be more helpful religiously and to effect a larger number of conversions than the undenominational colleges.

Ancestry presents a problem of insolvable difficulties because there is no way of accurately distinguishing between its influence and that of the environment. Before the individual reaches a stage where he may be an object of study as to what ancestry has contributed, environment has long been at work upon him. In any character, however pronounced

in its uniqueness, it cannot be told how far heredity or circumstance is responsible, for heredity is inseparably accompanied by circumstance. There is no doubt that ancestry does measurably condition life, that it is much better to be born of good blood than otherwise.

Beecher says that men at birth are not like a sheet of blank, white paper, but are like paper written on with invisible ink which the heat of circumstances makes visible. Except both ancestry and environment are conditioning influences, we shall be in a dilemma to explain human progress. For if tendencies are not transmissible we have reason to expect the highest form of human development from the meanest savage child, provided he be reared under the most favourable circumstances. And if tendencies are fully transmissible and circumstances can do nothing to overcome them, we have no reason to believe that one born with the fires of crime and lust in his veins can ever be anything but criminal. The truth is that both principles operate, either having the possibility of predominance.

In the vicinity of Indianapolis is the "Tribe of Ishmael" founded by three weak-minded criminals, nearly every one of whose numerous progeny frequents the neighbouring jails and hospitals. The story of Margaret, "the mother of criminals," is familiar. On the other hand we have this statement from Professor Ely: "The Children's Aid Society, of New York, and other similar agencies have changed the circumstances of those whose heredity was unfortunate, and the outcome has been changed character in the majority of cases; probably it is

safe to say in nine out of ten cases. Thousands of children born of the worst parents have been taken from surroundings in the slums of cities which would have made them paupers, prostitutes, and criminals and they have become useful and honourable citizens." (*The Outlook*, Sept. 16, 1903.)

Turning now to the questions and answers, we find a confirmation of these judgments. The character of the home into which a child is born may indeed be properly classed as an environing influence, but it also speaks with considerable positiveness of the real nature of the parents and consequently of heredity. Ninety per cent. of the children born of parents who gave to their offspring wholesome and well-rounded Christian training became members of the church, while forty per cent. represent the proportion of those who had not such training. In homes where family worship was observed, eighty-eight per cent. of the children are professed Christians; where it was not observed, fifty-seven per cent. are connected with the church. More closely related to ancestry is the Christian or non-Christian character of the parents. Where both parents are Christians, ninety-four per cent. of the children are Christians; where one parent is a Christian, sixty-six per cent. of the children are connected with the church; and where neither parent is a Christian, only twenty-five per-cent. of the children are in the church.

These figures are quite in accord with the results of an extended investigation by the Young Men's Christian Association of America. Concerning church membership among young men from sixteen to thirty-five years of age, it was found that seventy-eight

per cent. are members when both parents belonged to the same church; fifty-five per cent. when parents belonged to different churches; and fifty per cent. when but one of the parents belonged to church. In the case of Catholics alone, the percentage is about one-seventh greater; with the Protestants exclusively, ten per cent. lower than the above figures, which include all denominations. In the information before us, our proportion of Christians is somewhat higher than that usually given. The reason is found in the fact that women, who are usually more religious than men, are included in the calculation, they having furnished twenty-eight per cent. of the replies. Another reason is suggested in that eighty-eight per cent. of our answers to the printed inquiries are from those who are in college or have had something of a college education; and these persons furnish more than an average proportion of Christians. Perhaps a third reason may be offered in the probability that the questions have appealed to the Christians more than to the non-Christians and they have been to more pains to send replies. The fact remains, however, that the practical significance of environment and ancestry as important moments of influence in character forming is clearly discernible, and that parents have in their keeping, very largely, the destinies of their offspring.

Likewise the power of personality will here be manifest, though one anomalous situation will present itself. By personality we are to understand that uniqueness of self which differentiates one person from all others. It takes cognizance of the peculiarity of constitution of both body and mind; of tem-

perament, of appetites and natural passions in their individuality of colouring and quality. The differentiation is, of course, not absolute; but all the laws which govern the race also determine one to be himself.

Religion is not indifferent to the nature of the person who accepts it. Religion, so to speak, chooses the man as large fish are chosen by the net while the smaller pass through; as the course in mechanics chooses the student of mechanical abilities and preferences. Religion passes by those who are wedded to irreligious preferences. Or to state it otherwise, we largely make our own world and make it out of our own selves. It will partake of our individuality; and if our individuality has been warped, consciously or otherwise, to sufficient degree from the normal, we fashion a world which religiously is fanatical if the bias be one way, or irreligious if the warp tend in the other direction. The external world, including the body, is potent in the process of retarding or in developing the normal and healthful.

In the replies to the list of questions, it is found that where physical health is good eighty-eight per cent. are Christians, and where it is only fair, with varying periods of health and illness, sixty per cent. are church members. The church service for those of only fair health "has little spiritual effect," "is very depressing," "has effects varying with service," "is soothing and calming simply," etc. The music of the church, however, generally has a pronounced influence upon them. And the sermons they prefer are those in which the emotional element is dominant. It is to be noted also that very nearly

all such consider themselves to be of the nervous temperament. In the matter of ancestry, home training and education they have fared as well as others; and it appears reasonable, therefore, to think that bodily infirmity does have its peculiar effect upon religious character.

An anomaly arises, however, when it is seen that nearly all of very poor health are Christians. This can be explained only upon the very doubtful hypothesis that for man as he is, suffering is a good angel, that prolonged illness removes him so far from secular influences that life is able to centre itself upon the spiritual; that sickness affords time for thought, and the thoughts most attended to are such as lead to religious convictions. When the illness, however, is intermittent the proportions of Christians is much less. Then one's plans are frustrated, he becomes the plaything of conditions which fight against him, giving victory and snatching it away until, as one expresses it, "If there is a God, He doesn't care."

Native constitution and state of health certainly have appreciable moment in determining the power of the natural passions. Many men pass at their face value in the Christian world who are saved from a thousand temptations by the inertia of their indolence. The saving grace of temperance is unnecessary to them, for they are neither tempted nor tried by the open forms of sin; though high ambition and strenuous labour, with their attendant dangers, would indeed be a gospel of blessing to them should they accept. That man who comes into the world with potentialities which environment unchains and sends like floods of fire through every vein regards the religious

life from the Pauline standpoint of deep-searching struggle and battle. And so it is observed among the phlegmatic that there is either a sweet, child-like and unquestioning acceptance of religion or the dull indifference of self-satisfaction. It is received at its full value as a matter of course or quite completely refused. But with the nervous-choleric type of men it is to be noted that another difference appears. The questions of the religious life have been settled by them upon fields of personal contest. Battling with doubts and their own fiery inclinations, they have either won a very precious victory or they have gone down to defeat with broken swords and scarred bodies.

Many a petulant Christian, or one morose, or cynical, or discouraged, or vacillating, or quarrelsome would be able to attain a finer condition of the soul if he had a better body and a better place to keep it. Wesley was right in approving sermons on good temper, cleanliness and wholesome housekeeping. The institutional church has the most practical and the soundest psychological reasons for its existence. Schools which teach women how to cook and sew and keep the house clean make soul-saving more easily possible and produce a worthier type of life after it is consecrated. Kindergartens which promote courtesy and good temper and regular habits are preparing the way for the preacher. Gymnasiums, athletic clubs and encouragements to outdoor living are strong allies of spiritual growth and morality.

Truly, the body is the temple of the Holy Ghost and the minister must not only declare it, but be able

to give intelligible reasons for his conviction. The king does not live in a hut, and God places no creature so imperial as the human soul in a habitation to be maltreated and despised.

VI

MENTAL CONDITIONS

"Faults in life breed errors in the brain,
And these, reciprocally, those again ;
The mind and conduct mutually imprint,
And stamp their image on each other's mint."

—*Cowper.*

"Demean thyself more warily in thy study than in the street. If thy public actions have a hundred witnesses, thy private have a thousand."—*Quarles.*

"Habits leave their impress upon the mind, even after they are given up."—*Spurgeon.*

VI

MENTAL CONDITIONS

HUMAN development, expressed in a word, is consummated when man realizes the most abundant and the noblest relationships. Relationship measures the quantity and quality of life. The man who vitally *touches* the largest number of principles and things, seen and unseen, manifestly possesses the greatest life considered quantitatively. And he who by wise choosing vitally *touches* the highest objects, seen and unseen, possesses the greatest life considered qualitatively.

In order to realize these relations which give both quantity and quality to life, a man needs to fulfill his normal functions of mentality. "However real or ideal the world may be, it becomes an object for us only as the mind builds up in consciousness a system of conceptions, and relates their contents under the various forms of intelligence. . . . And this order becomes our subject or our mental possession only through our own activity." (Bowne, "Theory of Thought and Knowledge," pp. 56, 57.) The activity needful is that of attending, assimilating, discriminating, abstracting and synthesizing; each of whose functions is evident, but whose total operation is essentially a process of judging. "Thought, as apprehended truth, exists only in the form of the judgment. The presence of ideas in consciousness, or

their passage through it, is neither truth nor error, but only a mental event. Truth or error emerges only when we reach the judgment." (Op. cit., p. 20.)

Judging is, in effect, a process of choosing; and herein rests its close connection with, and value to, religion. The significance and essence of the religious life consist in its determined choice, for preceding every voluntary activity there is a corresponding mental phenomenon. The state of mind and the resulting activity have a deeper relation than that of time-succession; the one is the essential precondition of the other. The mind delivers itself of a judgment concerning the good or evil, the truth or falsity, the wisdom or folly of a thing, and the will expresses itself in conformity to that judgment. Any voluntary activity is traceable to its inception in the mind, and the religion of "heart and hand" does not involve a native duality. There is a psychological reason why Paul and James should be brothers in the church, and why also there can be but a poor family anywhere unless the two are there. Nay, they are the necessary constituents of each normal individual.

The human mind is not fixed by fate. Man is not wholly the architect of his mental fortune, but he makes it as much as he does his material wealth. The husbandman takes advantage of rains and sunshine, of the character of the soil and, by thoughtful industry, gathers a harvest. The mind is not free from influences, without and within; but to it is given the function of guidance in planting, tending and, thereby, gathering, the harvest. "'Tis in ourselves that we are thus and thus. Our bodies [minds]

are gardens to which our wills are gardeners; so that if we will plant nettles or sow lettuce, set hyssop or weed up thyme, supply it with one gender of herbs or distract it with many, either to have it sterile with idleness or manured with industry, why the power and corrigible authority of this lies in our wills." (Shakespeare.)

This simply means that the mind is susceptible to impressions. It has already been observed how the home life brings the growing mind to that state which constrains it towards, or away from, an acceptance of religion. Every one who has questioned his own experience verifies the appositeness of the illustration employed by Professor Drummond in which he likens the brain of a young child to an untraversed plain. As the rains and snows falling upon the plain mark it, so the young brain exposed to mental influences by and by bears the consonant impress of impinging sensations and thoughts. It is true that during the most sensitive period of life the will has very little selecting and directing power. The child is dependent upon his teachers, having not yet reached the place of discrimination or volition based upon practical judgment; but his passive receptivity is subject to displacement when the mind realizes its own power of imitation and self-direction.

The passing over from pure receptivity to self-initiation is marked by the beginnings of conscious imitation. At first imitation may well be called instinctive, because of the absence of deliberation or any previous specific education. During the first year or more of a child's life his acquisitions are almost wholly products of instinct, later becoming

more generally the results of self-directed imitation. The gestures, manners and vocabulary he acquires in earlier years are fruits of imitation. Instinct gradually loses its dominance when the child becomes conscious of his faculty of imitation; and imitation remains as his chief educator until he attains to some degree of rational self-initiation. "His whole educability and in fact the whole history of civilization depend upon this trait, which his strong tendencies to rivalry, jealousy, and acquisitiveness reinforce." (James, "Principles of Psychology," II, p. 408.)

During the essentially formative period of life the home furnishes the greater portion of imitable phenomena. But back of the home is the total influence of the race; indeed, every individual is an epitome of humanity. "The totality of the ideas and sentiments that are, as it were, the birthright of the individuals of a given country form the soul of the race. Invisible in its essence, this soul is very visible in its effects, since it determines in reality the entire evolution of a people." (LeBon "The Psychology of Peoples," p. 10.)

Again, we say that it is not a matter of indifference where one is born. That storehouse of the individual, the human soul, is filled by the treasures garnered from all sources, and especially by those which more immediately offer themselves. There is no richer harvest-time in life than that period of instinctive imitation, for it is the hunger-period of the soul. Then it learns a vocabulary and practices those activities which later fix themselves as habits. Born into a Christian home, the child is soon possessed of a religious nomenclature which time more and more

invests with fullness of meaning. Thus a means of expression is unconsciously provided and his thought tends to follow the channel which it finds already prepared. Thought is the pre-condition of practical life and, psychologically, it is assured that the child of a Christian home shall normally be strongly disposed to the religious life.

From the questions and answers, we see how, as a matter of course, ninety-four per cent. of the children of Christian parents enter the church, while but twenty-five per cent. come from non-Christian parentage. There is no other explanation for the fact that there are Republican and Democratic homes except that their very atmosphere is surcharged with a particular kind of political preferences, and he who breaks away from the teachings to which he has long been accustomed is either a dolt or a genius. We may not say that imitation will wholly account for this, but imitation is not without its almost decisive moment of influence; for it furnishes the preparation for habitual and deliberate judgments.

A step farther on in life, we come to definite instruction in the home and school and from the public. It is too fully demonstrated, both negatively and positively, longer to question the superior value of definite Christian teaching in the family. Where such training was part of the family life, we have seen that ninety per cent. of the children have become church members, and where it did not prevail forty per cent. represent the proportion of Christians.

It is not without hesitation on the part of some that the claims of the sectarian colleges are accepted. But in the list of replies, it is found that ninety-two per

cent. of those who attended such institutions are Christians as compared to seventy per cent. who were educated in non-sectarian schools. In response to the question, "What influence did the college have upon you spiritually, and in what way?" seventy-five per cent. of the sectarian students reply that they were helped in a marked manner. Some of the testimonies are: "deepened my spiritual nature," "good, the Y. M. C. A. received me and later I joined the church," "pronounced uplift," "made me love God," "others were Christians and I became one," "just had to be a Christian," etc. The evidence of the minority is generally indecisive: "unable to tell," "little spiritual influence," "little influence either way," etc. Those of the non-sectarian schools who received religious help say, "my spirituality is growing here," "deepened my spiritual life greatly," "increased my faith in a future life," etc. The negative testimony from the undenominational school is: "I received only culture," "none at all," "no spiritual influence," etc.

The power of public opinion cannot be measured with any degree of accuracy. We realize, however, that unconscious phenomena do play a heavy part in the life of men, and that they are swayed not only by the opinions of individuals but by the "world spirit." We are enswathed in custom, code and public thought; much that is not formulated in laws does have a real coerciveness. Opinion is one of the most powerful tribunals ever set up and its influence is both conscious and unconscious. "What will the world say? exercises over us, from earliest infancy, great influence and power. Accustomed to hear and repeat it,

we are more anxious to appear virtuous, than to endeavour really to be so; and we lend a more willing and ready ear to the expression of public opinion, than to the voice of our own conscience." (Zschokke.)

Without effort we receive from public opinion many of our controlling ideals and the motives for endeavour. If a nation be blessed with an exalted public spirit, if the tone of the age be wholesome, there will constantly lift before the individual visions which are high and worthy. From this spirit proceed in large measure the conditions of man's judgment as to the ideal; and if that ideal be true, the life it evolves will tend to realize its truthfulness. If the spirit of the age be dominantly theological, we shall have nations and individuals repeating the period of the Reformation; if it be commercial, the result will be money-success and the master of finance; if it be military, the product will appear in army camps and soldier heroes. The theologian, the warrior, the scholar, the millionaire may each, according to the times, be the ideal which attracts the ambitions of the individual.

To-day, practical benevolence shares with commercialism the place of power in the soul of the race. The unit cannot fail to be impressed by it; and it is not strange to hear from those who have offered suggestions as to how the church may increase its efficiency a strong note of philanthropy and brotherliness. Say they, "let the church do most for the most," "be not indifferent to the poor and timid," "its spirit should be broadly missionary," "it should have great charity and humanity," etc. And then, as indicating the influence of the commercial spirit,

they point out as among its positive faults, "flattering the rich who oppress the labouring man," "conformity to a money-getting world," "failure to eliminate money," "money-controlled instead of Spirit-filled," etc.

Under the general subject of impressibility, there have been chiefly considered early influences, imitation and public opinion. These do not cease to function throughout life, but their products eventually crystallize into habits. In nature and in man we are impressed by the prevalence of systems of regularity. What man has done, man not only can do but does. And here we revert again to the illustration of Drummond for a picturable explanation of habit. The rains which first fall upon the plain must chisel out furrows in which the waters flow away. But succeeding rains do not cut out new furrows; they follow in the courses already provided. Physiologically a like process takes place in the brain. Nerve discharges plough a way for themselves and succeeding, identical or similar, discharges follow in the path marked by their predecessors. The channels deepen with every discharge and order the brain in such wise that by and by the thought-paths are so clearly marked that the ease with which a nerve-discharge may proceed along the old road precludes the probability of its marking for itself a new highway.

If this view be at all near the true one, and psychologists generally affirm it, the immense value of the early years becomes apparent. "It is a matter of universal experience that every kind of training for special aptitudes is both far more effective, and leaves a more permanent impress, when exerted upon

the growing organism than when brought to bear upon the adult. It is obvious that there is a tendency to the production of a determinate type of structure; which type is often not merely that of the species but some special modification of it which characterized one or both of the progenitors. But this type is peculiarly liable to modification during the early period of life; in which the functional activity of the nervous system (and particularly of the brain) is extraordinarily great and the reconstructive process proportionally active. In this manner all that portion of it [the organism] which ministers to the external life of sense and motion that is shared by man with the animal kingdom at large, becomes at adult age the expression of the habits which the individual has acquired during the period of growth and development. And when thus developed during the period of growth, so as to have become a part of the constitution of the adult, the acquired mechanism is thenceforth maintained in the ordinary course of the nutritive operation so as to be ready for use when called upon, even after long inaction.

"What is so clearly true of the nervous apparatus of animal life can scarcely be otherwise than true of that which ministers to the automatic activity of the mind. . . . It is in this way that what is early 'learned by heart' becomes branded in (as it were) upon the cerebrum; so that its traces are never lost, even though the conscious memory may have faded out." (W. B. Carpenter, "Mental Physiology," pp. 339–345.)

Again Professor James says, "The physiological study of mental conditions is thus the most powerful ally of hortatory ethics. The hell to be endured

hereafter, of which theology tells, is no worse than the hell we make for ourselves in this world by habitually fashioning our character in the wrong way. Could the young realize how soon they will become mere walking bundles of habits, they would give more heed to their conduct while in the plastic state. We are spinning our own fates, good or evil, and never to be undone. Every smallest stroke of virtue or vice leaves its never so little scar." ("Principles of Psychology," I, p. 127.)

There is a vastly greater number of effective sermons to be had in this single division of psychology than is contained in the usual Pulpit Notes or Index Rerum. A certain family of five, every member alert, lively and buoyant, was seen in regular attendance for years at all the services of the church. Said the father, "These children do not know anything else. From their earliest days they have expected to attend church services as much as they have looked for their meals." To allow church attendance to be a debatable question every Sunday morning is a capital offense against the psychological laws which make for fixed and unwavering activity.

Some questions ought to be settled, and there can be no peace of mind or stability of conduct so long as there is the questioning attitude of "Shall I?" or "Shall I not?" Habit is to character what the fixing bath is to the photographer's negative. In reading the replies to the question list it is very easy to distinguish those writers whose religious life is satisfactory and meaningful from those who have not entered into its spiritual significance; and almost without exception the former are marked by regular

prayer and Scripture study and the habitual attendance upon church services. They are those who are religiously habit-controlled, while the latter are the prey of irregularity and vacillation. To the question, "Are you able to progress religiously, or even maintain your present religious state, when you neglect church attendance?" the one class reply with striking uniformity, "I have not tried it"; the other class offer various answers.

These considerations very naturally lead us to speak again and in this connection of the conditioning power of the will. We do not question its freedom, nor do we hold that it is insensible to motives; it has choice, but it is not arbitrary. Will is preceded by the desire for a certain state of feeling or the possession of some thing or the performance of some activity, or there may be a mixed motive. It does not concern us to consider the mechanism of voluntary effort, but it is needful to recall that such efforts are subsequent to thought conditions and that everything involved in the soul's impressibility has some relation to the will.

Will is the arbiter, and the perfection of being is preconditioned by the perfection of the will. It makes choice and is the executor of its own testaments. It does not work upon original material; the mind in its conceptual functions must provide that. The mind, as feeling, announces what is painful or pleasant; reason distinguishes between the false and the true; conscience affirms the wrong or the right; but it is the will which brings all things in review before it and finally says, "I will have it thus, and not so."

There are various measures of the man, but there is no deeper test, no more searching revelator, than the simple capacity to will. For the one who plays a strong part upon the stage of life is he who directs vast energy. Be his ends malignant or sublime, the great man is one who brings things to pass. There never has been a language or dialect in which the simple declarative sentence has not been its backbone; and the declarative person is much superior to the one who lives in the subjunctive mood. The world awaits leaders. "What does, what knows, what is: three souls, one man," so reads the gospel of Browning and also of the Christian race.

Herein lies the difference not only between men, but between the religions of the East and West. The Christian religion seeks the development of the individual and names as the very essential thereto right desires, right thoughts and right deeds. The religions of the Orient demand the repression of the person and his absorption into the infinite Nothing. This is everywhere the fate of the weak willed. Distrust, cowardice, moral laziness and indecision, says President Wheeler, are the grounds of inaction; and its natural world-view is one of pessimism and despair.

The answers to the question-list afford no more than a general judgment concerning the relation of church membership to the strength of will. If, however, pessimism and despair be the logical products of weakness of will, then weakness of will belongs especially to those who are not connected with any church for they are most pronounced in their gloomy views and discouragements. And it is often remarked that there are no happy aged sinners. Evi-

dently more iron is needed in the blood of a young woman of twenty-five years who has had good health, always been in comfortable circumstances, never has had any troubles, is unmarried and living at home with nothing to do, who yet has only a common school education and naively confesses to having "no occupation or interests." We should expect either to see her floated into the church by parents or indifferently outside. In this case, lacking positive Christian parentage, she is not a member of any church though she "approves them all," and deplores her own lack of Christian activity. Another, a man of thirty-nine years, having average advantages but thoroughly disgruntled with life, feels that "the church fails in everything except sociability and conservation of its own doctrines, and is beginning to fall down as regards the latter." The ministers try hard enough, he thinks, and "do bravely in a hopeless cause." The influence of church attendance upon him is "to excite pity for the dupes." These two persons are fairly representative of the weak-willed class who are not Christians. They neither purpose great things nor accomplish what easily lies at their hands, though they condemn much and find little to make them hopeful.

It is not strange that the weak-willed are more largely represented outside the Christian life than those who are of powerful resolution, for to realize the ideal of the Christian or even to undertake to realize it, requires greater purpose and energy than the standard of the non-Christian. Especially is this true if, at the beginning of the Christian life, there are evil habits which must be given up and master-

ing sins to be overcome. The initial energy of the will in the case of those who have long been in sinful ways and seek to reform must be something tremendous.

It is assuredly not contemplated that there should be no relation, or only the relation of warfare, among the functions of the human organism; and fuller knowledge will but serve to show how truly noble the alliance is among them. None may be neglected, none may be unduly fostered without a protest from all and a consequent obstruction to their harmonious interaction. The mind, the evidence and source of man's greatness above other creatures, presupposes a vast potency in the spheres of inception, guidance and end. And these constitute the major part of life.

VII

ETHICAL CONDITIONS

"Morality must not be without religion ; for if it is so, it may change as I see convenient. Religion must govern it."—*Selden.*

"Religion without morality is a superstition and a curse ; and anything like an adequate and complete morality without religion is impossible."—*Mark Hopkins.*

"Few, without the hope of another life, would think it worth their while to live above the allurements of their senses."—*Atterbury.*

"For modes of faith, let graceless zealots fight ;
His can't be wrong, whose life is in the right."
—*Pope.*

VII

ETHICAL CONDITIONS

THERE are two things, says Immanuel Kant, which fill the mind with ever increasing awe and admiration the more frequently and steadily they are contemplated : the heavens above and the moral law within. The former meditations concern man's relation to a boundless extent of worlds and tend to minimize his value as a physical creature which is as a speck of dust upon a speck in the great universe. The second thought exalts a man's importance, naming him as a being which possesses a conscious life assigned to a destiny surpassing the worth of all the starry hosts.

Man has never divorced himself from some lofty conception of human life and destiny. It has entered into the heart of his endeavours and been an active factor in the production of consonant results. He points to no proud achievement without likewise indicating the subtle influence of some moral law. He has seen that evil is a dark word written everywhere. There is no place of security and every day there is a contest waged within the courts of his own bosom ; and in those depths of silence where public honour comes not and one stands all alone deeds have been done and victories won which pale the light of conquest made by force of arms.

This law which claims his fealty is the decree of the great and awful sovereignty within himself. Ages

have come and gone, each stamped with a character of its own. There have been ages of war and ages of peace, of reason and of imagination, of toleration and of dogmatism, of progress and of inaction ; periods of law, of philosophy, of belief, of doubt,—to each belongs its own glory, but running like a silver thread through all these changing conditions has remained a greater or less faith in the principle of permanency through virtue, decay through evil. That principle has been redefined many times, for knowledge of what is right develops coördinately with all other acquisitions of truth. Man's present ethical status has been wrought out slowly and painfully by accepting ideas and rejecting them when better have been presented. It is not the product of a few favoured generations, for the race since creation has been working consciously and unconsciously for the results now enjoyed.

The unseen force could not be stopped ; it might be legislated against, the divine right of monarchs might be promulgated, the inferiority of the majority might be demonstrated, the necessity of servitude might be clearly proved—the secret power still moved on as a silent autocrat overriding theories and fiats and conferring rights upon man because he is man. Those who think cannot get away from the golden rule. Coming to themselves, they find positive and instinctive tendencies to the ethical. A history of the world is the power of conscience put in language. There are great principles which are eternal for duty and life ; and these are the normal human forces which have stood as guardians of the rights of men, social, political and industrial.

Analytically to determine the influence of ethics, one must know what ethics is and what it is not. To gain an adequate and definite conception thereof is neither easy nor wholly satisfactory. Mr. J. S. Mill announces a suggestive opinion when he says, "No two ages, and scarcely two countries answer the question, What is morality? alike; and the answer of one country is a wonder to another." It is certain that we find a striking lack of uniformity in the views of the earlier philosophers. Thus to Socrates, perfect knowledge was perfect morality; Epicurus defined perfect happiness as the ideal of morals; with Plato, beauty constituted the highest moral state; while with Aristotle, the golden mean of symmetry formed the perfect life.

Modern theories and definitions are equally divergent and contradictory. Hobbes as the exponent of what is called nominalism affirmed that there is no essential difference between virtue and vice, and that the distinctions which we draw are arbitrary, depending upon feelings of preference or prejudice, or the accidental authority of law. Of course, a theory so baldly false as this is repudiated by the very instincts of the race and is worth little except as an example of extreme betrayal by narrow processes of thinking.

Samuel Clarke considers virtue to be founded in the nature, reason and fitness of things. "From the eternal and necessary differences of things, there naturally and necessarily arise certain obligations which are of themselves incumbent upon rational creatures, antecedent to positive institutions, and to all expectation of reward or punishment." Akin to this is the theory of Malebranche who affirms that to be virtuous

is simply to live the truth and to be vicious is to live a lie.

With Reid as its exponent, another view maintains that rightness is a cognition, an immediate perception. Butler holds that morality originates in the nature of the race and in the will of God. Shaftesbury and Edwards trace its origin to benevolent affections. Paley, Bentham and others support the doctrine of utilitarianism, that self-interest is the root of morals.

In each of these theories there are elements of reasonableness and each too shows the absence of essentials. A true view of what ethics is would include both personal and social considerations which look primarily to the welfare of the individual and secondarily to the good of society. Practically it would be utilitarianism ; and there is little use in trying to dodge the fact that man, without the corrective of the supernatural, would never become lovingly self-sacrificing. In the absence of an ultra-human origin of the standard and authority for conduct, man would evolve his own moral code and he would be compelled to make it out of what he himself is. It would be a composite of truth, ignorance, prejudice and preference.

Having in mind this general survey of ethics, we ask the question, What will be the conditioning influence upon character? To the average man, ethics represents the code of conduct which he himself has evolved from considerations of God, conscience and society, irrespective of Divine revelation or a personal Christian experience. His conception of God, in so far as he has any formulated idea of Him, is es-

sentially different from that of the Christian. In the replies to the question list, there is only one avowedly atheistic, but without exception the God of the moralist is a misty conception. "He is the one Reality in a world of dreams"; "no definite idea of God, now or ever"; "my idea of God is more like my idea of the Goddess of Liberty—entirely a conception, an ideal"; "abstract, no fixed idea"; "purely ideal existence"; etc. Such a God is little better than that of the Hindoo or of Comte; and the ethical code of such a being is necessarily man-made. Being of human origin, its standard is less exacting and more vacillating than that of the Christian.

There are very few atheists, but there is a vast number who practically withholds assent from a full acceptance of the implications of Christian theism. It is easy to believe in God and escape from a high standard of life by making a God to suit our preconceptions of what we would like Him to require of us. A consistent faith is thus preserved, apparently satisfying conscience, but at the cost of honesty and knowledge.

There is no reason for preferring the moral life to the religious life, which does not rest upon some misconception of religion; and those who express this preference likewise evidence such misconceptions. A confusion of sectarianism and religion, the weakness or wickedness of professed Christians, the assertion that religion destroys human freedom, are not tenable reasons for giving ethics the first place. These are excuses offered by the respondents to the list of questions. It is apparent that such conceptions indicate an imperfect understanding of life, take from it its

fullness of meaning and destroy the motive for consistent and worthy endeavour.

There must be a fixed basis for the unconditional authority of duty, and this requires that the moral sanctions shall have a superhuman ground. How can a man tell whether he is anybody morally if he have a standard which he and his imperfect kin have made? Go to parts of India and you will be doing a highly proper thing to sacrifice your child to the crocodiles. Move into China and you will be justified by custom in selling your daughter to a life of shame. Visit Borneo with your parents and if they are old or helpless you may kill and eat them. Uncivilized? Yes; then join the shifting negro servant population of Washington and learn the unwritten code which permits you to collect the unpaid wages of an enslaved grandfather by systematic borrowing from your employer's kitchen. Or make fifty million dollars, enter New York's Four Hundred and find it quite *au fait* to exchange your wife for an actress and turn your children over to nurse girls. Or take a desk in the Exchange and learn that "business is business" and "the way to make money is to make money."

The interpretation of the principles of ethics is unfixed, uncertain and dependent to such a degree that the merely moral code cannot lead men to the high plane of which they are capable. Variable standards can give no unity to the moral life of the individual or of a community, much less be a principle for the unification of mankind. The ethical code is subject to fluctuating moods and changing inclinations, while the Christian religion provides a fixed standard which

is yet adaptable to all peoples and places and times. It is presented to man as a Revelation harmoniously complementary to the other scripture of his own nature. In matters of vital moment there is general accord concerning Christian duties, a striking uniformity of belief as to what is good and what is bad.

Moreover, the motiving and consolatory power of religion is of such worth as to give it a transcendent superiority over the formalism of ethics. The metaphysician finds in experience only an abstract value, the moralist places a concrete estimate upon experience, while the Christian posits the reality of the ideal as an essential portion of his own and the world's experience. Character is a product arising from a contemplation of what is as contrasted with what ought to be; and it makes an infinite difference in conduct whether the ideal of action be man-made or God-revealed. The very rootings of heroic life are a recognition of its incompleteness and a positive endeavour to bring it to perfection. The merely moral man is in danger of self-satisfaction, and the satisfied man is the simply existent. Being complete, he has no motive or guide for being anything else or doing anything else. There is no struggle for maintenance or possession, no defeats, no victories; the man is all he wants to be, he has attained his ideal for he made it himself, but out of the clay.

A man chooses his abiding character. There are a million possibilities open to him, but he is confined to the necessity of possessing only one character. Professor James, in speaking of the rivalry and conflict of the different selves, says, "With most objects

of desire, physical nature restricts our choice to but one of many represented goods, and even so it is here. I am often confronted by the necessity of standing by one of my empirical selves and relinquishing the rest. Not that I would not, if I could, be both handsome and fat and well dressed, and a great athlete, and make a million a year, be a wit, a *bon vivant*, and a lady-killer, as well as a philosopher; a philanthropist, statesman, warrior, and African explorer, as well as a 'tone poet' and saint. But the thing is simply impossible. The millionaire's work would run counter to the saint's; the *bon vivant* and the philanthropist would trip each other up; the philosopher and the lady-killer could not well keep house in the same tenement of clay. Such different characters may conceivably at the outset of life be alike *possible* to a man. But to make any one of them actual, the rest must more or less be suppressed. So the seeker of his truest, strongest, deepest self must review the list carefully and pick out the one on which to stake his salvation. . . . Our thought, incessantly deciding, among many things of a kind, which ones for it shall be realities, here chooses one of many possible selves or characters, and forthwith reckons it no shame to fail in any of those not adopted expressly as its own." ("Psychology," Vol. I, pp. 309, 310.)

The age-long history of the race is a constant affirmation of man's inability to discover unaided the highest type of character. Selfishness and the consequent thwartings from true judgments make it simply impossible for one person or the race to obtain a vision of perfect character, much less to realize it in experience. Should one, unassisted by revelation,

adequately conceive what the best life is, it would be a conception evolved from his own or the world's consciousness and still lack the authority which is sufficient to make it stand uncontradicted when facing the struggles needed for its personal incarnation. It would not only fail to have the undivided and authoritative sanction which the supernatural gives, but would miss the necessary mastering motive of the inner love-life which is generated by experimental union with God. The ethical life is the insufficient, and cannot be otherwise so long as it remains no more than ethical, because it is deficient in vision, authority and motive.

The Christian view of life, however, not only gives to man a vision of incompleteness, but also a picture of perfectness and enables him to press constantly towards realizing the high goal. Before the merely moral man there lifts no vision of perfection. His is a life bearing forever the burden of the present woe. Religion, however, seeks the reality of the ideal. And man, seeking the perfection of his being in the harmony and unity of the Supreme, finds himself attaining that desire when his life accords, through self-surrender, with the great life of God; and when his life is transfigured by the present possession of the future. At one with God through faith, man, in this existence, enters into the realized life of the Good and Perfect.

VIII

RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS

"Religious life is more than feeling, since feeling may be physical, misdirected, selfish. It is more than knowledge, which, even if it be complete and accurate, may fail to govern the moral nature. It is more than obedience to a moral code, because such obedience, if sufficiently complete to be religious, already implies relations to the lawgiver. And yet religion is feeling; it is mental illumination; it is especially moral effort, because it is that which implies, and comprehends, and combines them all. It is the sacred bond, freely accepted, generously, enthusiastically, persistently welcomed, whereby the soul engages to make a continuous expenditure of its highest powers in attaching itself to the personal source and object of its being. It is the tie by which the soul binds itself to God, its true friend."—*Liddon.*

VIII

RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS

MAN and his religion are interacting influences. The character of his religion depends upon his character and his character is a resultant of his religion. In other words, he makes his religion and religion makes him. This does not mean that religion is unfixed, uncertain and literally the creation of man; it means that a man can be religious or not, faithful to its teachings or not, hungry and thirsty after good or not. The practical significance is that he can so relate himself to religion as to make it vitally potent in his life or he can fool with it, deceive himself and dethrone moral integrity. It is intended, however, to be the crowning principle of his endeavour, the guiding, saving and sanctifying inspiration of his activity, the regenerating life of his life.

By different persons, the same religion is received with vastly differing details. Individuality is not a negligible quantity. Men look at the identical thing and it is different to each. The man with a bad digestion or an unused intellect cannot attain the same degree of accurate judgment as can the sunny, healthful person having a trained mind. The newly rich and stolid think Mont Blanc is a mighty big thing; the poet and the artist are speechless with the soul's emotions.

We are creatures of endowment and education in whose complex constitutions millions of permutations are possible, and who do change ceaselessly. A high organism makes this not only possible but necessary. The living thing whose body is a single cell, whose life is wholly reactive may be duplicated by its kind in every essential. Complicate the organism, let function be added to function, let self-consciousness and volition enter and there is an organism so sensitive to impressions without and within, that the varying influences are constantly playing upon it to produce changes so multitudinous and unceasing that duplication is impossible.

This wonderfully complex nature was given to man, the crown of creation's endeavours, for a purpose. God could have made men as much alike as peas, but then they would have been peas. Complexity is an endowment for the purpose of such development and manifold use as will respond to the myriad needs of the world. An amœba cannot amount to much; it has very little to work upon. You can do more with a canary; it will sing to the sun and may be taught to hop upon your finger. The dog or the horse can be taught still more, and Professor Garner thinks that monkeys are able to converse. Man, however, stands at the summit of capacities. He is an instrument of so many strings that no wind can blow which does not start vibrations. And his soul of self-initiation is so powerful that from an inner source he himself can set the chords in motion. Let the winds be balmy and the soul be true and the strings speak forth a wondrous melody. Man sees no end to his possibilities: no wall shuts him in saying, "Here are

thy limits." The walls of the universe are broken down and divine voices are calling to him within and without.

He must be great in capacity in order to provide a fit place in which a creature so kingly can properly live. He must be able to make the world great, else its deformity would keep him in chains. Remove him, and nature has no conqueror. Her plains bear what they will, her forests sweep in the wind, her seas surge and roll. The lower animals take what she gives. If the gifts be prodigal, they multiply and prosper; if meagre, they hunger and perish. The call of the soil for seed and the plow, the voice of the woods for the axeman and sawyer, the sigh of the sea for the sailor and ship are heard by man alone. "Subdue the earth," God said to man in the beginning and He gave him an ear to hear, a hand to do and a soul to aspire. The solitary, God drew together in families and society, giving them tongues to speak, hearts to feel and spirits to adore.

All this is in order that man may be. And God gives Himself. No child is to be trusted alone upon a sea so stormy in a ship with such spread of canvas and engines so powerful in the hold. The Father wills to go with the child to teach him how to spread the sails, to use the inner power, and to point the vessel's prow towards the everlasting haven. And this is religion! It is seeing the stars, adjusting the compass, taking the reckoning, sailing true to the chart and obeying the unseen Hand at the helm.

In addition to the bases for religion discoverable by man in himself and the outer world, the Divine revelation furnishes a foundation and support for it

which is simply immeasurable. It is the sun, others are stars.

President Roosevelt, speaking of the Bible, says, "Every thinking man, when he thinks, realizes what a very large part of the people tend to forget, that the teachings of the Bible are so interwoven and intertwined with our whole civic and social life that it would be literally—I do not mean figuratively, I mean literally—impossible for us to figure to ourselves what that life would be if these teachings were removed. We would lose all the standards by which we now judge both public and private morals; all the standards towards which we, with more or less resolution, strive to raise ourselves. Almost every man who has added to the sum of human achievements, of which the race is proud, of which our people are proud,—almost every such man has based his life-work largely upon the teachings of the Bible. . . . The Bible does not teach us to shirk difficulties, but to overcome them." The Bible is indeed the Word, and when it is made flesh, when it becomes life, there can be no relation in which a man finds himself that may not receive the touch of its wisdom, consolation and power.

It is conceivable that the Christian life could be sufficiently founded upon something other than the Scriptures, but this is, in fact, its real basis. There can be no limits placed upon the subjective and immediate approach of God to man, but Christian experience will remain deficient in knowledge unless nurtured by the living Word. Its truths are the life-impregnated blood which must freely flow through every member of the individual organism to insure

development and strength. If worship is to be intelligent, man needs to know the God he worships; and for that knowledge he depends chiefly upon the Bible. If worship is to include the idea of duty, that duty is to be performed on earth among men. Man must be loveworthy before service is freely enlisted and for a revelation of his loveworthiness the Scriptures are opened. There every soul, bond, alien or ignorant is given a value beyond our power to estimate. Canon Mozley says, "Out of no philosophy has this high estimate of man as such come; it has come straight from revelation. There in the relation of man to God is the origin of this great change of rank."

Not only does the Bible unfold religious truth, but it is such that that truth gives added permanence and stability to religion. "Without revelation religion is a matter of race, family, temperament, climate, education, physiognomy, digestion. You are a stoic to-day, an epicure to-morrow, to-day you look upon the world as blind fate, to-morrow as a web of fancies changing with the kaleidoscope of your own conditions." (Gratacap, "The World as Intention," p. 69.)

This is not true, but these conditions do have a great influence. Revelation does not make duty an obligation, but the guide and lamp would be unsafe and dimmed without it. It does not create the journey, but it does provide chart and compass for it.

If civil law influences man and his civilization, if there is a difference between legal conditions in an Anglo-Saxon democracy and in a Latin monarchy, there is a vital difference between those who live

under explicit religious laws and under ethical principles.

As we have seen in the chapter on Religion and Philosophy, the phenomena of the inner and the outer world require from man some interpretation. In the solution of a problem so vitally complex every function of man is concerned; and in the answer which he gives, direct or implicit, there is likewise so much of multifariousness that he finds involved therein all that he himself was, is and hopes to be. His explanation of the world, in so far as it is theistic, includes his attitude towards God and represents his conception of what life is and ought to be. It is his ideal plus God. If he receives this as something more than an intellectual conception, if it be the conviction of his total conscious life, it will be his religion, vital, directing, motiving and sanctifying.

As a conditioning influence, man's relation to God is necessarily the most fundamental thing in life. It is basal in that motive and guidance root themselves there; it is perennial in that it is the fountain of aspiration and hope. We shall see this if we consider the deepest and most important functions of life.

Life expresses itself by an inner and an outer activity. The one is largely a series of judgings, the other is a concourse of deeds. Within is the constant presentation of alternatives, and to choose the one which is best is the hope and desire of the normal man. If he does not definitely choose, his thoughtless indifference will crystallize into a habit which will be essentially his choice. If his life be a purposeless drifting, that indecision will be his practical

decision later to grip him with the iron-hand of a well-nigh absolute necessity.

In the control of life, one needs the power to think, feel and will wisely. The acquisition of energies is noble, but of higher worth is the wish and capacity to use those energies for the worthiest and greatest effectiveness. Properly to estimate the values of alternatives, to secure the desired results and rightly to correlate them represent life at its best. These are difficult to attain, but it is here that religion so conditions man as to make the end a possibility.

They are difficult to attain because of known and unsuspected mental bias. The "idols of the cave, of the tribe, of the market place and of the theatre" are deceptions to which human nature is prone. Bacon says that every one has a cave of his own which refracts and discolors the white light of truth. It is "the personal equation" which unduly inclines a mind to certain tendencies. Errors of the "tribe" are founded in the errancy of human nature itself and do not belong especially to any individual. The deceptions of the "market-place" are delusions generated by public opinion and vivified by the force of words which we fondly, but mistakenly, believe to be our servants. While the "idols of the theatre" represent the stage-play of unreal, untrue speculations and philosophies which seem to us as genuine verities. These suggest the influences which destroy the steady vision necessary in forming the faithful judgment. Add to these the tremendous moment injected by sin and one may wonder that proximate sanity should be found anywhere.

Religion, however, is the creator of sanity through

the destruction of ignoble desires and the correction of distorted minds. As a religious being, man attains the power of disenchantment and is enabled to see things as they really are. In some sense he is permitted to put himself in God's place in estimating true and relative values. He sees that in business, principle is worth more than promotion, men more to be desired than money. In society he will judge that brotherhood should have a deeper root than wealth and a finer expression than caste or clique. He will realize that culture is a means, not an end, and that the unlearned are not to be anathema. Religion pares off the surface and lays bare the man. To the worldling, sin is a necessary evil; to the Christian it is an enemy to be overcome. To the one, immortality is a guess; to the other, it is the reality.

Religion removes the view-point of time and sense and, instead, has regard to eternity, spirit and God. The principal disturbing element in the rule of right is the dominance of self. Religion destroys the lower self and enthrones the higher self which is at one with God. It gives to man the thought and will and heart of Deity; and these, in the measure they are possessed, place him in accord with the laws by which the universe is governed.

Religion, furthermore, quickens and unifies all faculties. Judgments are wrong when effected by abnormal or divided functions of the mind. The complete man, fully active and harmonious, is needed to perceive the truth. Sin as the destroyer of this unified completeness, as the very source of all discord, is banished and man released from fetters. Can the impure man judge of purity? Will the dishonest

be capable of speaking of integrity? May the liar pronounce judgment upon veracity? And shall the drunkard give the final word concerning temperance? Specialization in sin unfits one for giving expert testimony. Abnormality or deficiency in any function clouds all others and distorts the powers of vision. Religion is the corrective. It demands the uncompromising purity and harmonious unfolding of all the forces within. It is the highest activity of the soul and the unified use of all the complex nature of man. It steadies, cleanses, governs, guides and quickens.

Finally, religion is the friend of teachableness, the enemy of pride. Pride cannot learn; it is the fool's crown of self-sufficiency. Dig to the root of bigotry and it is found. It is the nourishing blood of narrowness and the sinew of prejudice. Openness of mind is needful to him who would attain the truth. The whole ocean of truth may spread before him, but if he boasts he has it in his ten-quart pail his ships can be no more than peanut pods. "The meek will He guide in judgment" and "they that seek the Lord understand all things."

If, therefore, by religion man is fashioned into the image of the Divine and is enabled through grace to enter into fellowship with God, it is apparent that this new enduement has no limits to its operation. It will pervade every phase of human experience, dignifying and transforming. The religious life is not a surface adornment, not a gentility, culture or elegance simply. It is emphatically a new birth, the human incarnation of another Life. It is not merely possessed by man; it possesses him. It is the source

of highest principles, the first and final cause of superhumanness. If genuine, it will grip every thought and activity to transform and dignify them.

We cannot interpret religion to mean anything less than that all subjective and objective powers controlled by man should be used for the greatest and highest good. It cannot be understood to permit inaction in the face of real wrong to self or others. We do understand it to mean that every instrumentality and force, material, economical, social, civil and ethical should be subservient to the everlasting ought. Any cry which reaches heaven, religion says, must be heard and answered on earth. What is right must be as a consuming fire devouring plea and subterfuge, excuse and justification; must stand as the summary of heaven, the memorial of Sinai, the goal of Calvary, the sentinel on earth which forever guards and guides the souls of men.

IX

THE MAN AND THE CHURCH

"The preacher is before you as an ambassador, and therefore ought you to be in the attitude of listeners to an overture from the God whom you have offended, of expectants of a communication from Him in whose name the preacher addresses you."—*Melvill.*

"Pride is the destruction of the principle of progress; it whispers to us continually that we are already all that could be desired; or it points our attention to high position and ambitious efforts, beyond the scope of other men."—*Canon Liddon.*

"Every true church is a contract, not between two parties only, but three. It is not only an agreement of men with men, but of men with God."—*Joseph Cook.*

"It is not the actual differences of Christian men that do the mischief, but the mismanagement of those differences."—*Philip Henry.*

IX

THE MAN AND THE CHURCH

At some length we have considered certain laws which condition man, seeking especially to discover their relation to him as a religious being. These leading principles having been discussed in general and abstractly, it is now the purpose to observe them as they express themselves concretely in the life of individuals.

Every public speaker readily knows how he is succeeding with his audience. An unmistakable telepathy assures him of his hearers' interest or of their lack of it. A pastor readily classifies his congregation, seeming to have an intuitive knowledge of about where each person stands religiously. In the services of the church he sees before him the hungry soul eager for light and satisfaction and help, receiving with gracious approbation every portion of spiritual food. We say of such a person that he has "heart" in his worship; and in the outer life of helpfulness, the same serenity and godliness characterize his deeds of beneficence. Over against such are those whose worship is cold, formal and irksome. Listlessness of soul is the typical mark. They may be as regular in church attendance as the others, and as full of good deeds, but usually they are not; and because they have imperfectly nourished themselves they fall away when great demands are made upon their spiritual strength. They perhaps

do not neglect the good work of the helpful visit, but as one "shut in" expressed it, "they wanted to count the call more than they cared for me."

This class has the characteristics of insincerity, although in nearly every instance it may arise through unconscious self-deception. These people think that they have entered the Christian life and regard its irksomeness as an essential part of it. The drudgery of it is explained by the absence of the complete and satisfactory self-surrender; they are not converted. The struggle over the choice of a master is waged each day, the strategic points of defense for character are still disputed by sin and the channels for vital, personal communion with God are impeded. The semblance of the truly religious life is assumed either because they know of nothing better or for ulterior purposes. If the Christian life has been presented to them in the imperfectness of partialness, they are objects of sincerest pity; and in either case there is the tragedy of resting under a duty which is hard and uncongenial because it meets with no real response or approbation in the person's nature.

Sometimes the church is employed for the promotion of selfish purposes. Said a merchant, "I am opening a store and it will doubtless pay me to unite with your church." At another time a physician came asking for a transfer of membership to a neighbouring congregation, saying by way of explanation, "I find no fault with the church itself, but I have been a member here for more than six months and your people do not employ me." A bank which has considerable competition from another banking house

always makes it a rule to have its officers and help distribute themselves among the churches of the town. A professional man naively confessed to me that he found it good policy to have his wife in one church while he united with another. These instances are sufficient to show that there are those who deliberately introduce "method in their madness"; who seek not the purchase of the Holy Ghost with money, but use the sacred things of the church by which to make money. However we are gladly constrained to believe that the proportion of such is encouragingly small.

There are others found in every congregation whose presence is compulsory. These are mostly children or students in institutions which require regular church attendance. We naturally resent coercion; but in many things we have become accustomed to it and do not think of remonstrating against it. Nature's requirements are mandatory and if we disobey we do not expect thereby to make them nugatory. Civil law places a tolerably firm hand upon us and we are complacent withal, even though we are compelled to go to school and pay taxes. If voluntary church attendance cannot be secured for the young, the next best is that of compulsion. Were it necessary to continue the coercion always, I should think differently; but rules are useful means, and it is to be expected that by and by the need for them will cease. The wholesome reflex action induced by outward conformity to religious duties can be overcome only by deliberate and continuous antagonism. Doing the will of the Father, we come to know of the doctrine; and many magnificent persons potentially

have been spoiled by allowing them to be a law unto themselves before they were able to choose aright their governing principles.

Those of the respondents to the question-list whose adult religious life is satisfactory to them very generally mention the church and the Sunday-school services as a large part of their earliest training, and often as youths they were in those services because of compulsion. In but few instances do they mention a spirit of rebellion, but I find a time in the life of nearly every boy and girl when they decide that for them it is best that the religious service should be considerably slackened; and it is probable that the respondents passed through a like experience. In a child's day school life there arises a similar crisis, and the enforced rule at this time has a wholesomeness which many an adult has occasion to bless. Puritanism has its dangers, and so has softness. There are more seeds of anarchy sown by indulgent parents at the fireside than by the printing press. If a child may contravene parental authority it will require severe experiences to free him from the notion that he may do as he pleases with all other authority. Certainly the one who is compelled to attend the church is not therefore to be considered a genuine Christian. But the mind is not irresponsive and impressions are made which lead to excellence of character; and unless an unreasoning state of defiance arises, the feeling of coerciveness passes away and the individual acquires the freedom of voluntary obedience. "The current of life which runs in at our eyes or ears is meant to run out at our hands, feet, or lips." (James, "Reflex Action and Theism," p.

114.) And it will do so unless inhibited by deliberate purpose.

A not unimportant number regard the church as a place of entertainment and a few attend solely for such purposes. It should be enjoyable, and the service or the person is at fault unless it is so. If the preacher be eloquent or sensational or afflicted with any striking peculiarity, he will have a following attracted thereby. Music, when its quality and quantity overshadow every other portion of the service, will draw a class who seek entertainment and care little for worship. In the list of replies there is unanimous appreciation of good music, but among those who are indifferent towards the church itself there is a surprising number who prefer secular to sacred music, and one is emphatic in his preference for modern operatic music played in the church by a brass band. Another person says he goes to the Sunday-school solely to see the children, others to meet friends and some to pass away the time.

Confessed indifference is the cause assigned by many for their non-religious life. "Why are you not a Christian?" is most frequently met by the answer, "I don't know." A source of this indifference is to be found in the emotional intensity of the age. Everything is rated with the commonplace and unimportant unless it can arouse a super-tense condition of mind. We are in a period of superlatives, both of language and of life; there is so much to attend to that it is only the extraordinary which excites interest. Said Professor George Adam Smith in his Merrick lectures, "A man nowadays pays no attention to anything unless he gets excited, and he does

not attend to the matters of religion until he is powerfully wrought upon and moved." The scare headlines of the daily newspaper so accustom him to the cry of "Wolf!" that he refuses to act until he sees one chasing him. The modern novel exerts a baneful influence in intensely affecting the reader and creating in him a state which will make it difficult to stimulate his feelings even by the sight of real tragedy and sorrow. The church may indeed be "pokey," but it is only such in comparison with the unsafe speed of nervous living and the competition of irrational sensationalism.

In one of the wealthy churches of the east there is a pillar which has served other purposes than to support the edifice. Immediately behind it was the pew of a banker who used its erasable surface as a tablet on which to work out discounts and interest charges. The cares of life are not easily laid aside; it does not automatically take place with the rising of the Sabbath sun. If God has been forgotten during the entire week it is well-nigh impossible to hold undivided communion with Him on Sunday. If one has been exclusively occupied for six days with intense business, either he must have unusual mental control or the service be exceptionally interesting to prevent the pew occupant from becoming more or less engrossed with his daily interests. When a man stealthily takes an envelope or note-book from his pocket during service, the preacher knows of one whom he has not taken hold of.

It is quite generally supposed that doubts are responsible for very many remaining outside of the church. The creeds, as statements of doctrine, do

not, however, often meet with opposition; for men accept them according to their own interpretations. And furthermore the variety of denominations is so extensive that he is original indeed who cannot find one wherein he experiences mental agreement. About eight per cent. of the respondents to the questions speak of having found their doubts to be somewhat of a hindrance to their Christian life, but many more express a desire for fuller reasons for the faith they hold.

A far larger proportion reveal a certain prejudice which has served to stand between them and church membership. There is a failure on their part to distinguish between the church as the exponent of God's truth and the acts of some persons who may have the form of membership in that church. The reply which probably shows more bitterness towards the church than any other is from a man who once was a church member but is so no more because of a "great injustice" done to him by a fellow member. Another says, "The members were bound to follow that Old Sin, Fashion, so I kindly stepped down and out." One left the church "because of the hypocrisy of the members. I did not approve of what the members did." A man fifty-five years of age withdrew twenty-five years ago because he "did not like church methods of teaching." An engineer writes, "I am a Christian, a believer of the ideal embodied in Christ; would be Christian if I had positive historical evidence that there never (sic.) was a Christ." A young woman says, "I cannot endure hypocrisy, and there are many who use the church as a cloak to hide their sins." A life prisoner in the penitentiary

writes that during his imprisonment he has "formed the acquaintance (in the prison) of the lawyer who failed to keep the law; of the preacher who did not practice what he preached; of the banker who kept his money and other people's too; of the congressman who violated the same laws he helped to enact. . . . I have always picked my own company while in prison." In but one other instance is any unfriendly feeling manifested towards the preacher, and in that "the preacher was too ignorant" to merit the respect of a man "who thinks for himself."

The polity and particular rules of some denominations are not favoured by all. One man "cannot respect the chief officers" when he remembers that they "gained their place by wire-pulling and chicanery." The "amusement rule" of the Methodist Episcopal Church prevents one woman from becoming a member; she makes the dance a religious service, and "often prays while on the floor." A man of fifty-two years objects to the looseness of the church in not requiring all to vote the prohibition ticket; and another finds "clannishness with too much of politics" to be his chief grievance.

Whoever shall discover what treatment to administer to these recalcitrants will never lack for fellow men to speak his name in love. All are to be pitied, if not for their suffering then for their silliness. Many are sincere in their beliefs; and with such it is tenderness, frankness and patience that win. Others have been spoiled by words which disguised the truth and need to be kindly undeceived. All doubtless need more of the grace of God and a larger portion of common sense.

The limitations of language tend to reduce differences of thought to similarity of expression, and essential variations of meaning are often thereby lost. Concerning the ideas of God, we observe a greater disparity in the notions of childhood than in the conceptions of adult years. Among the early ideas of God are, "kind, just judge," "a watcher in the skies," "a powerful being in the sky," "a good somebody away off," "one greater than my queen," (from an Englishman), "a being to be feared," "a big, strict, powerful man," etc. In later life the thought of God is usually of a merciful, but just, and loving Father.

There is but one reply which shows no belief in heaven while there are six which indicate no belief in hell. The notions of heaven and hell are divided between their being definite places or simply conditions, in the proportion of four to one.

The proper function of the church is conceived with the greatest diversity of opinion. Nearly everything is suggested from "schools of science" to "Pentecost." One says that the best thing the church can do is to die, and another believes its one work is to create a foreign missionary spirit. It should be "a strong social unit," "a Christian corporation doing business with God every day," "a centre of old-fashioned religion," "a place of waiting, working and consecration," etc. No wonder so much Christian work is haphazard! A secular institution that did not have clearer conceptions of what it was organized for would speedily go into bankruptcy. There is reason herein for the positive statement of intention, for removing from the pulpit and from the

pew all haziness, idiosyncrasy and ignorance. A pastor can serve his church no better than by carefully indoctrinating his people with the truths which are the *raison d'etre* for the existence of the church.

No misconception is more pronounced than that concerning conversion or transition to the complete religious life. In nearly every congregation there are a few members who have entered the Christian life under the stress of intense conviction and violent emotion. They represent a class who live after a really high standard and it will not do to think that their conviction was not real or that their conversion is not genuine. But they usually are zealous and aggressive exponents of their own peculiar type of experience. So striking and so satisfactory has been their entrance into the new life that it is not strange if they regard it as the best, if not the only, way for a soul to find its freedom. In experience meetings where testimony is given, and in private conversation, these facts are emphasized. The prolonged agony of conviction, the awful sorrow in repentance, the sudden breaking of the light, the joy and peace which followed, are named as steps upon the way which the seeker must pursue. The young person who tries to proceed upon the outlined course very frequently finds that the plan so successful for another fails for him. But he does not question the method—his friend has succeeded, the results are apparent—and he falls back in a defiant or despairing self-condemnation. He fails to take into account the determining influence of a multitude of conditions present in the one case and absent in his own.

Differences of temperament, training, experience of previous years, the personal equation, all are effective to determine a person's attitude towards any truth which presents itself for acceptance. Those Christians who have had a striking conversion see the wisdom of the physician's individual diagnosis and of the teacher's progressive adaptation to the student's needs. The same principle has an application in leading a soul into a new life. It will not do to place limits to the power of God and the working of His Spirit ; it is not wise to say that He could manifest Himself in but one way or that His manifestations do not come in many ways. If, however, the Pauline conversion is the only true conversion, the great majority of the Christian world stands convicted of colossal self-deception ; their faith is vain because they do not know what faith really is and their Christian life is hybrid.

Of those replying to the list of questions, seventy-two per cent. are certain of their conversion, but only twenty per cent. experienced any overwhelming change at the moment of their new birth. There is no one who has any acquaintance with Christians who does not count among them choice and unimpeachable spirits who know not the hour, day, or year when they entered the Christian life. "Thou hearest the sound thereof but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth." They are satisfied to know that whereas they were once blind, now they see. Or if never conscious of any blindness, they are now unmistakably conscious of a satisfying light. The majority of our respondents testify that they have had periods of

self-examination and times of penitence, but that their entrance into the light was so gradual that they could not say at what moment they had ceased to be in twilight. Such peaceful transformations of life do not in a day furnish sufficient increment of change to be measurable. Careful observation, aided by delicate instruments, may note the earth's daily varying inclination to the plane of its orbit, but man's unaided faculties are unable to do so. The miracle of a season's transformation will tell him that, though unobserved, the earth has undergone a change. The mere fact, however, that a man can say, "On January tenth, at twenty minutes past nine o'clock in the evening, twenty-four years ago, in Bethel Chapel, eight feet from the north end of the altar and six feet from the desk, I was gloriously converted" causes many persons to expect equal definiteness in their own experience, and in default thereof they are in danger of concluding that God has not accepted them.

I do not question the value or the genuineness of such conversions—personally fortunate may be the person who has had this indisputable experience—but I have known several young men and women who were in utter despair thinking that they must have committed the unpardonable sin and were utterly cast away because of their inability to receive some overwhelming evidence that they had been accepted of God. What can a pastor do but tenderly insist that the Divine promises are true, that "him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out"? Beecher well says that the earth may be refreshed by the dews, by the gentle showers or by the torrents; and the waters coming in any way bring

flowers and fruits to equal fullness and beauty. We may not say that grace must flow in torrents before it can warm a soul to life; for we judge by fruits, and each man is his own best evidence.

No one doubts that after all the greatest hindrance to the religious life is a preference for sin. In a final analysis, it will be found that all of human imperfectness roots itself in sin; sin of the individual, of companions, of the social organism; sins of ignorance, of appetite and passion, of deliberate act. But the frailty of the lives of professed Christians cannot always be explained by a determined choice or desire to do certain evil acts. We are required to reckon with conditioning influences which are beyond the immediate control of the individual. In the answer list there are forty-three per cent. who confess that they are guilty of open or secret sins which are contrary to the standards of Christian living. Practically all of these, however, say that they are struggling to overcome their sins, and that they are succeeding.

While discussing the influence of physical laws, we might have mentioned the effect which the building and congregation have upon a person during the church service. This, however, is more specific and will be suggested at this point. Imperfect ventilation or heating will, of course, destroy what otherwise might produce wholesome results. Under normal conditions, some of the respondents say the effect is "quite depressing," "exhausting," "parlour car feeling of awe," "people cannot think sanely in this atmosphere and coloured glass light," "the comfortable effect of any regular habits," etc. The congre-

gation itself produces a feeling of "torpidity and melancholy," "worry and sympathy," "sadness; it makes me always think of mother," "distraction," "depression," etc. But these are exceptional; the great majority find rest and pleasure and help in the service itself, and the presence of the congregation is "inspiring," "helpful," "stimulating," "exhilarating," "refining and elevating," etc.

Truth can be approached upon but one side by knowing simply the life of an individual, and even that view of truth is imperfectly realized. A truer aspect comes from the study of many; specialization is thereby lost and the unity remains amidst the diversity. From generation to generation the Christian world has sought to enroll mankind under the leadership of the rightful Lord. "Our little systems have their day," and one by one they are cast aside to weave a more fitting vesture for the future. Foibles and idiosyncrasies, prejudice and indifference, insincerity and ignorance are false lights which deceive. They lure us from the truth, but man will push the quest until he finds. In the Christian life, these have no proper place. They impede the work which the church should accomplish; they prevent its purpose being fulfilled in the individual, they impair its efficiency as an organized force. The spirit of inquiry is searching out the efficient, and a woe is pronounced upon all which does not meet the test of fruitfulness. The church must claim its heritage; the untrue shall perish, but the truth shall last. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

BOOK THREE

THE MINISTER

X

THE FUNCTION OF THE MINISTER

"The life of the religion, then, lies in the Person of its founder; all that it has done for the race is but a form of His action within and through it. He has given actuality to its theistic beliefs, has been the motive, impulse, and law to all its beneficences. The sense or consciousness of His abiding presence constitutes His Church ; the emotions He awakens determine all its worship and all its desires. Even when this seems most concealed, it is yet present as the veritable seat and principle of life."
—*A. M. Fairbairn.*

X

THE FUNCTION OF THE MINISTER

SHOULD a visitor from some extra-mundane sphere come upon the earth, he would be perplexed and saddened; perplexed in seeing men do that which prudence and reason and right oppose, saddened in seeing them bear upon their backs the burdens of their disobedience. He would see a world of potential peace and plenty where, in fact, are strife and want; a world whose heart is sound, but whose hands and feet clutch and strive with one another. He would behold ignorance that could be avoided, poverty that could be alleviated, and sorrows that could be healed. He would find learning and illiteracy, lordly luxury and lean distress, the merry monarch and the pain-pinched peasant; he would discover children without parents and children forsaking their parents; homes built upon the ruins of other homes, and institutions that deal in sin and death. A sinuous line of pitiless separation would be seen to run its way through cities and fields, placing on the left all those who bore the marks of weakness and on the right such as gave the sign of strength. The visitor, seeing this and more, would be constrained to ask, "Why is it thus? One world, the same God and Father but on His footstool one brother rich, another poor; one sister happy, another sad?"

The visitor is imaginary, the picture is real. And the question he is supposed to ask is the question

men are asking now in earnest. The frightful disparateness of condition is not contemplated in the plan of God, nor in the plans of men when they have learned to know Him. The lower stratum who knows Him not rises in the anger of rebellion or in despair to strike and smite in all the pitifulness of instinctive, but ignorant or weak, destructiveness. The upper stratum who knows Him not rises in the pride of possession to declare that by power will be retained what power has given.

Through the midst of all this strange and wild discord there is heard a clear note of sincerity. The world of confusion is not God's mistake; man has sown and cultivated this seed of variance, and he must root it up—but not alone! In ignorance and sin it has been fostered, in knowledge and righteousness it shall be destroyed; and God gives to man the efficient weapon, "the sword bathed in heaven." It was the gospel of knowledge, of righteousness, for they are one, which Jesus lived. He stood in a world of darkness, the one undimmed light; and "he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." He knew whereof He spake; the great problems did not confuse Him, in His mind there was neither hurrying nor running to and fro, the secret of the solution He knew, and He gave it to the world in the life He lived.

"Minister" is Christ's own word; He gave it birth and fullness of meaning. In defining it, He cut the cord which held the race athwart the true significance of life. The world had its beatitudes—not meekness, or purity, or poverty, or hungering; not mercy, or mourning, or peacemaking; but pride and plenty and

ease, hardness and laughter and lordship. "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister" was an idea which smote the foundations. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." His ministry will not banish the differences among men, but it will destroy the discord; it will not remove all suffering, but it will eliminate much and give strength to endure; it will not make living less earnest, but it will give it a truer object. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

Such is the mission of any one who comes after Him. And if true of all who follow Him, much more of one who is clothed in the office, and set apart to the work, of the ministry. He is a life-bringer; not of his own life, but of the life that is in the Christ. Herein is the essential difference between Christianity and any other religion or institution. The Christian religion is the religion of a Person, a Person who transforms by the interfusion of His own life, a Person who saves men by the strength of His own salvation. And the minister is one who aids men to apprehend this Person in their own lives, to make Him consciously real as He is real; and to lead the new life out into the new servant-ship of righteous service where man's good is the supreme good and the supreme good is godliness. This is to be the answer of the minister to a race whose interests are conflicting because they do not understand that first of all comes the Kingdom. He is to cause men to see where their highest interests lie; he is to bring them into experimental knowledge of God, assured that in this

relationship every other relation will take its proper place in the inclusive and controlling harmony.

It has been said that the real heart of religion is worship—worth-ship—which includes the upward reach towards God and the inner and outer manifestation of the life which there is found. To the consummation of this the minister gives himself, and the lines of his agency are a thousand. He is in a work, not a profession; the call of Christ is to service, not to rest; to achievement, not to fruitlessness. Anything less is not enough, for in the seriousness of life a ministry of pageantry is as vain as wisps of straw in a whirlwind. Amidst the awfulness of sin and doubt and soul-hunger, in the face of suffering and ignorance and apathy, the demand is for men of the best and at their best.

XI

THE CALL OF THE MINISTER

"Rather leave the ark to shake as it shall please God, than put unworthy hands to hold it up."—*Bacon.*

"It is not a third of a man nor half a man, but a whole man that is needed for the ministry."—*Anon.*

"Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you the office of the ministry in the Church of Christ, to serve God for the promotion of His glory and the edifying of His people?"—*Discipline Methodist Episcopal Church.*

"Give me a humble, gentle lover of God and man; a man full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy, a man laying himself out in the work of faith, the patience of hope, and the labour of love."—*John Wesley.*

XI

THE CALL OF THE MINISTER

THE problem of a man's life work is one of the few terrifically great from which he cannot escape. It will be answered; if not by definite decision and preparation then by the eager grip of unreasoning circumstances which seize upon the irresolute to give them a place with the Micawbers. Few persons are more to be pitied than those who have drifted into a vocation and later awakened to a realization of their unfitness and distaste for it. To retrace one's steps, call back one's youth, is then impossible and the sorrow is that of bearing through life the daily self-consciousness of disastrous folly and wasted privilege. If ever a man should pray, if ever he should seek wisdom, human and divine, it is at a time when Destiny leads him to the jewelled boxes and says, "Choose thy work."

If this be true for all men, much more important is it for the minister to have made no mistake in selecting his vocation. For he stands in the white light of publicity and his failure or success is not for him alone but for a church, a community. It is almost impossible to withdraw him from the work without disaster for he has friends who will be grieved and who will rebel. In secular work, a man is discharged and his place filled, entailing no harm to the business. Moreover, the unsuccessful preacher can rarely, except early in his career, assume another vocation.

Age and training unfit him and he must stand for life pilloried before the patient or scoffing public as an incompetent.

The prerequisite of the success of a minister is largely included in his call to the work. There is no less belief now than formerly in a distinct call to the ministry, but there is more of a conviction that every person may have a call to some especial vocation. If God numbers the hairs of our head and no sparrow falls without His notice, He surely has given to every man a place in the world, and He will not let him flounder through life without trying to help him get into it. The ministerial call is different from others, however, in the increased feeling of moral guiltiness if the call be disobeyed. The man realizes that he is dealing with the destiny of others as well as his own, that any mistake here cannot be represented in terms of temporal well-being simply, that a commission to heal human souls is the most tremendous that a person can receive.

There is great danger that he will be deceived in the call, and the less he exercises the qualities of good sense the greater is the danger. If one deaf and dumb thought himself called to the ministry, I should advise him to wait until the second or third or fourth call. True, we are often mistaken in our judgment of others, but any person of less than average ability, naturally sluggish and dull, may well insist upon an added assurance of a call. Said a dear mother, "I do not know why my son in the ministry does not advance faster, why he never receives invitations to churches." He has not advanced at all in twenty years and his friends believe that if God

really had called him He would have given him a vastly different ability and not left him to be shifted yearly from parish to parish.

Some ministers are called by well-intending but injudicious friends. Grandmothers and aunts somehow think that a boy who is a little sickly, or who is faithful to the church, is predestined to the ministry. And if the poor lad, inclining to obedience, has small powers of self-assertion, he will probably find himself in holy orders. But wise friends and truthful can materially assist a young man to determine his place in life. That presiding elder may have seemed hard-hearted to the man of thirty-eight years, having a wife and four children, but neither means nor education, who was not allowed to take the first steps towards entering the ministry. There were before him six years of under-graduate college work, and the elder thought that had the Lord wanted the man in His work, He surely would have called him many years earlier. On the other hand, another, refusing to listen to sensible and careful friends who said God wanted him in the ministry, floundered in the practice of law for a few years and then became a preacher of eminent power and usefulness.

There are times, too, when the way to any other work seems closed before a man. Every move he makes is met by a check until he turns towards the ministry. But it is not often thus. The man usually is required to use his judgment; and by thoughtful, prayerful consideration make up his own mind. In so doing he will certainly give proper value to the words of friends, to his own inclinations and a truthful estimate of his own abilities.

A woe to the preacher who concludes that he has made a mistake in his calling. In the absence of an absolute assurance of a call, there will arise a multitude of difficulties to make him dissatisfied; and with dissatisfaction entering, there follows a loss of force, conviction, consecration and courage. The preacher who must apologize to himself every time he faces a congregation will by and by become a walking apology; and therein lies a weakness of some preachers otherwise good and efficient. Not only does the man fail to bring the needful efficiency to his work, but the work itself fails to stimulate him. It can make no high appeal to him for the sheer reason that he knows himself to be a self-chosen instrument. But given the man who knows that he is the called of God for this particular service, who has brought to his vocation the highest preparation for a faithful life, given such a man and he is the doer of the impossible, the miracle-worker in men, the "son of thunder" and the "heaven treader." Give us such men and Herod quails, Felix trembles, the English queen is afraid, souls are reborn, for they are not themselves; they are in the Spirit and it is God, not they, who speaks. "Give us these men!" says W. M. Punshon, "men of sound speech who will preach the truth as it is in Jesus, not with faltering tongue and averted eye, as if the mind blushed at its own credulity—not distilling into it an essence so subtle and so speedily decomposed that a chemical analysis alone can detect the faint odour which tells it has been there,—but who will preach it apostlewise, that is first of all, at once a principle shrined in the heart and a motive mighty in life,—the source of all morals

and the inspiration of all charity,—the sanctifier of every relationship and the sweetener of every toil. Give us these men ! men of zeal untiring—whose hearts of constancy quail not although dull men sneer, and proud men scorn, and timid men blush, and cautious men deprecate, and wicked men revile." And these men are not to be had, can never be had, unless there burns within them the unflickering light of a heavenly attestation of their work. But given that light, and the man is a wonder to himself.

Few things more invest a minister with power among men than the unshaken assurance that he is one sent of God. This power is effective with others because it is first of all potent within the preacher himself. It is his commission. Popes, bishops and elders cannot consecrate a man to the work of God. They may evidence it ecclesiastically but if God has not previously spoken, the church is stamping base metal.

The authority of an agent is limited to that which he has received from his principal, and if God be not the minister's Principal, the man has no claim upon the forces of heaven. We believe that the true preacher receives divine assistance, that the Holy Spirit aids him in every function of acquiring and dispensing religious truth. The Spirit is his ally, God within him ; and is to motive, inspire, illumine and guide him. But if God has not sent the man as an apostle to dispense the gifts of the Father, He sends not His Spirit with him.

Herein be it observed that those who have replied to inquiries discover the weakness of their own pastors to be the lack of a divine commission. They

preach sermons which conform to high models, are industrious and painstaking, but they fail to possess that unction which irresistibly persuades. Moody did not have it at first, but later obtained it. It is the secret of greatness, learned and untutored, of the world being overturned by fishermen, of the weak things confounding the mighty.

The people in the pew perceive unconsciously the inner state of the preacher. "He preaches well, but——"; "he is scholarly and a great worker, but it all seems so unreal"; "no one accuses God of having called our pastor"; "he should have been a blacksmith"; "he lacks the power of the Spirit"; "he is a self-chosen instrument"; "God does not appear to have much to do with my preacher"; etc. On the other hand they "love," "are drawn to," "cannot refuse," "are devoted to," "are strongly moved by" the minister who may not have the charms of eloquence and learning, but does have the God-given conviction of his apostleship and the consequent power of the Holy Spirit.

No degree of education or native talent can take the place of this, and a man must know that he is called of God in order to claim the gifts. And he cannot be too certain of the call. When Lyman Abbott was the University Preacher at Harvard, a student came to him for counsel. He was within one year of finishing a course in law, but he felt that he should preach. Dr. Abbott advised him to complete his legal studies, perhaps practice at the bar awhile, and then should the call to the ministry remain clear, let him preach. The reasons for this advice, he said, were two. First, the study of law would in itself be

valuable as a training. Second, should the legal profession be abandoned without further proof of it, there would arise, scores of times, a regret that it had not been continued. For there will be hours of despondency in the ministry when the work goes hard, when poverty presses, when criticism cuts, when results are disappointing and the thought will come that it was a mistake not to have been a lawyer. But the fact that law has been tested, that it is not a glamour of glory, will fortify and strengthen and assure one that he is in his proper place. The later years have strikingly shown the wisdom of this counsel, counsel spoken out of the experience of Dr. Abbott and literally confirmed by that of the student.

Whatever else is lost by the preacher, the clear conviction that he is where God wants him to be must remain as a fountain in the desert and a shadowing rock in the weary land. It is this alone which gives the strange note of authority, the superhuman capacity to suffer and the persuasiveness of one anointed. The "woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel" which grips the soul has led men through seas and wilderness and inspired songs in midnight prisons. Souls which possess God and are able to interpret Him to others are the world's Great-hearts and the heirs of everlastingness. Samuel waited for his call to be repeated again and yet again until it was unmistakable. With open, honest mind, the youth should wait, eager to obey the voice divine, but determined to be certain that it is no lesser sound.

Such are the truly great preachers. Their greatness is not in externalities for they have joined them-

selves to the invisible and eternal. The compelling and irresistible obligation to preach is to rest upon a subjective basis and must ground itself in life's very centre. Preachers so endowed never fail, they cannot fail, for they are at one with God, and until He perishes they shall not be swept away.

XII

THE EQUIPMENT OF THE MINISTER

"You may never be able to *preach* a great sermon, but you are always to *live* a great sermon. There are many men who have a marvellous power over their people, who are not great preachers. The power of a holy life is something that goes far to compensate for many deficiencies, and without this the greatest success is only a miserable failure at the best."—*Magee.*

"We preachers are to be something more than posts by the roadside, pointing the way, and informing the traveller that he is 'far from home.' It is a journey which should be 'personally conducted,' and we are sent to be guides, not mile-stones—we must teach by object-lessons, and the objects should be our own examples."—*Hole.*

"The minister is to be a live man, a real man, a true man, a simple man, great in his love, great in his life, great in his work, great in his simplicity, great in his gentleness."—*John Hall.*

XII

THE EQUIPMENT OF THE MINISTER

WHO then is the man who takes upon himself a task which Solon nor Socrates, Plato nor Aristotle, civil law nor science could even hope to complete? And what is his equipment who purposes a work which the force of war and the stress of famine and the fear of pestilence and the malignity of man shall not impede? Not by might nor by power can souls be built into the manhood acceptable to God, but by the indwelling of the Spirit.

The equipment of the minister will largely be included in the preparation of his personality. He is not merely to possess certain attributes and be master of peculiar powers; he is not simply to acquire graces and perform duties; he is himself first of all to be something. Life must flow from a soul surcharged with divine life and the light from above must find in him a transparent medium for its transmission. This state begins and continues in the sinlessness of the man. Only in a nature willing to be wholly pure can the full grace of God inhere; and a man's personality is flecked, marred and weakened by every trace of sin. Let him who would master men be master of himself and if he would control them for the divine life he must himself be controlled by it.

Concerning the man himself the ancient law decreed that no one with blemish or imperfection should serve

at the altar of the sanctuary; and the later law of the New Testament, speaking to every one, says, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

The various laws by which men are conditioned have greater import to the minister than to the layman. He is in a public place under a peculiar stress and strain of body, mind and soul. He is not complete unless he be physically sound and possess a genius for hard work. "He that with men is a success," says Herbert Spencer, "must begin with being a first-class animal." He must have the bodily basis for unsurpassed toil, be able to endure all things and suffer all things. Seldom now the saddle-bags and the unbridged rivers, the beasts and savages. The pioneer life was hard, but it was simple; the modern life is hard for it is complex. Fortunate is the minister whose first appointments are easy gradations from the college to the tension of a city pastorate. If the farmer in retiring from accustomed toil grows plethoric in the sedentary life of the country village, the pastor will grow lean in having added to his student-tasks the labours and perplexities which belong to the large church. The weak man had better work in a foundry or on the dock. True, he has the alternative of indolence, and there are those who go in thereat; but such an one made a mistake in entering the ministry and a first mistake in supposing that he was fully converted. "Every church," says John Watson, "should have a physical examination at the entrance to the theological college and only admit

those men who would have passed as first-class lives with an insurance company." ("The Cure of Souls," p. 281.)

Virility is essential to persuasion. Masterful influence over other men does not spring from the debilitated. One has said that Beecher's greatness was in his leonine neck and head. Most of it was in his head and heart, but that neck of strength was an index of vigour. Robustness is contagious; it can hurl itself forth from its seat to sweep the hearer to conviction. Had Martin Luther been a sickly lamb instead of "that German beast," the first priest passing by would have torn those theses from the door and muttered, "That poor fellow again!" Virility does not name its strength in avoirdupois; there are those of two hundred pounds nearer to the effeminate than John Wesley of little more than one-half so much. Virility is in fervid masculinity; not coarseness, not muscle, but in that copiousness of life which in the pulpit fires the eye, swells the nostrils, strikes with the voice like a thunderbolt; and in private is magnetic, mesmeric, the balm of May, the infection of potential power.

Certainly the mind of the minister ought to agree with the dynamism of the body. In the first sermon at a new pastorate, a preacher said, "I done it,"—and he had! It was in agreement with his general culture and the unfortunate word opened a door which he was never able to close. A slip of the tongue is not much if it be a slip, otherwise it is an index. "The gifts of the preacher," says Burkitt, "are as gold that adorns the temple; his grace like the temple that sanctifies the gold." God gave to

man a mind to be cultivated; and if it is worth while to study, it is worth while to keep on studying; if it is good to think, it is better to think accurately; and if to know a few things is helpful, the knowledge of many is still more so.

God never polishes a man's sword for him. Of two persons who face a difficulty, the trained man has superior chances of success. The charitable spirit of a congregation will overlook and apologize for a certain amount of ministerial ignorance for a certain time, but an end comes to this and with it the beginning of the end of a preacher's influence for good. Scarcely a more plaintive note is uttered in the entire list of answers to the questions than that which pleads against an ignorant ministry. "They are out of touch with the intellectual tendency of the age," says one; and others say, "he is worse than none at all," "I can name the number of good preachers I have heard, on one hand," "most sermons are like most political speeches," "tired of milk and honey," etc. These are exceptional instances in their severity, and proportionally are very few; they are also mostly from the non-Christians. But in these times of opportunity for mental training, the man who cannot attain to that degree of culture which will save him from reasonable contempt can expect small success in the pulpit.

The ordinary pastoral life of the minister has a tendency to make him other than a man among men. There is no necessary reason why there should be more women in the church than men, but there is a practical reason for it. If women be more sentimental and emotional than men, they are attracted to

the church in greater numbers than their husbands and sons because the church appeals to sentiment and emotion. Sound religion is not merely æsthetic; it is rugged and practical as well as tender and beautiful. But the minister, by virtue of his pastoral duties, is in contact with that which is prone to make him abnormally strong on the æsthetic and affectional side of his nature. Calling upon his members, he seldom meets any but the women and children. The conversation is about the aid society, the kindergarten and the best way to rear a family.

The pastor needs the balancing grace of visits to the shops, markets and offices; he needs contact with men in order to be able effectively to speak to men. What can a preacher know of the true inwardness of the man who sits before him on Sunday if on Sunday alone he sees the man? A good vacation school for the average preacher would be a trip with Professor Wyckoff among the "Workers." Then would sermons ring true to life, with the practical note carrying the real melody.

The church is no longer "a mere preaching place"; it is a great institution with questions of administration which demand the highest skill of thought and method. Business men have paid dearly for lessons which a wide-awake, observing minister may learn without making the church pay the bill. Every ability of the professor, of the lawyer, of the merchant, of the labourer can be called into use by the preacher. It is an impossible task for him to master the details of many vocations to which other men individually devote their whole time; but he can know some things of every work and what he knows he can

know that he knows; and better still he should be capable of enlisting the trained help of every man in his congregation.

The ministerial "dead line" is placed at fifty years. It is artificial. When a man crosses the equator, it will take instruments to tell him so. There is no jar of precipitous falling when a man steps off his fiftieth birthday. The jar may come sooner, it may never come; but it will come as soon as he ceases to toil patiently and wisely. There are parasitical preachers who have no suspicion of gray hair, there are others who cannot in their dreams see the dead-line and yet have little hair at all. A minister has a right to retire when his body is used up, but it is a shame to be retired for not using his mind.

If physical and mental power be essential to ministerial success, the great essential is spiritual strength. There have been efficient ministers who knew but superficially the spiritual truths which they declared; but these are exceptional. The rule remains that the inner life must dictate the outer and if the inner be a simulation, the manifestation will bear the mark. If the inner life be but brass, the outer will be as the tinkle of a cymbal. It has been said that the preacher can make an intuitive discrimination among his congregation on the basis of their sincerity. The same ability is not denied the congregation with reference to the preacher. Trial lawyers have little difficulty in penetrating the guise of witnesses who give manufactured testimony. The weakness of civil law may require its admission, but the trained man easily assures himself of its dishonesty.

What man can be expert in sciences about which

he has simply read? The chemist, physicist, biologist and physician experiment; they test and verify, they know from an experimental basis of their own. Much less may the minister omit from his preparation the continual and practical self-appropriation of the Spirit of God. He is concerned with the intangible, and if he fails to know in his own life the reality of the unseen his is the hollowness of pretense. If the apostle preferred to speak five words with understanding to ten thousand words in an unknown tongue, the preacher himself ought to understand what he declares. Conviction of self precedes the persuasion of others. Dr. Kennard says that "preaching is divine truth plus a man." The truth can get on as well without the man as the man can without the truth.

And what will the minister think of himself who knows that he is a pretender! The flash and fire of conviction, the seat of earnestness are in the inner assurance of absolute truthfulness. The man is indeed thrice armed who has his quarrel just, but it does not help him unless he knows also that he is able to come into court with clean hands. To convince others is a process which begins in the preacher's heart and the power of persuasion commences in the closet. For a time the minister may seem to his hearers to speak of what he knows, but he cannot appear so to himself. Every day is a day of judgment in that man's soul. "Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control, these three alone lead life to sovereign power." No mere pretender can reverence himself; and self-respect is the condition of others' respect for one.

Intense reality is needful if one is to make the truth acceptable to another. The man of spiritual illumination and of absolute honesty in his endeavour may then say with Paul "as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you, in Christ's stead." The man a minister should be is one whom God may use in Christ's stead. He is the man the people want for their spiritual leader. Not to know the secret of the Lord is infinitely worse than ignorance or physical and mental effeminacy in the preacher. In speaking of the minister whom they prefer, the respondents to the question list say, "Spirit-controlled," "unspotted from the world," "baptized with the Holy Ghost," "Spirit-filled," "who loves God in earnest," "one who can show others the Christ," "who lives and preaches Christ," etc. There is usually an added word as if there might be a thought that the intensely Godly man is visionary and impractical. They wish him to be "holy and helpful," "full of love for men," "a Spirit-filled worker," "one loving man and God," "the doer," "possessed of lots of horse-sense," "a man who sets people to work also," "not a soft, goody-goody fellow, but a strong man, gentle as a lamb, yet brave as a lion," etc.

In addition to a conviction of the truth of his message, the preacher must have something more. Plenty of non-efficient men in the pulpit believe with all their heart, they would enter martyrdom in a defense of their faith; but they cannot get other people to believe. They lack a virility which works itself out in the masterfulness of will. Sheer force of will enables a man to overcome difficulties which

education and opportunity would stagger under. It was will power which made it possible for Garrison to throw himself into the stolid or angered hearts of his countrymen and compel them to believe as he did. When Disraeli was hooted in the English Parliament, he cried out, "You shall hear me one day gladly!" Over alien birth and humble avocation, he rose until the aristocracy of England did obeisance to his greatness. One of the most eloquent of modern English preachers says, "Whenever I address men, I determine that they shall listen." It is the forceful will which enables one to project his mind into that of other men.

No time has been less tolerant of feebleness than is the present. Men are accustomed to push, to energy let loose; and a minister must have force of character if he would command the respect and win the assent of men. People differ in amount of will power, but in every one there is a latency which intensity of conviction and thoughtful determination will call out. Our respondents to the list of questions want preachers who will get men to do things, who really believe something, who are not afraid, who are leaders, who make others think as they think, who convince, who are sweet and strong, who irresistibly persuade. And the man who has any right in the pulpit can do these things if he will meditate the mighty import of his truths until they control him with a fiery fervour which burns to the tips of his fingers. By this masterfulness of will, we do not necessarily mean vehemence or demonstrative enthusiasm. All possible strength of will may accord with the quiet nature; there may be firmness without vociferation,

determination without doggedness. But the minister must lead—or be led.

Neither let it be thought that strength of will is opposed to tenderness of feeling and sympathy. At the sacrifice of these qualities, force of character would be too dearly purchased. But the strong hearts are the tenderest, as they are the bravest, and the very basis of a powerful will is a powerful conviction; and conviction rests upon feeling even more than upon reason. The feelingless minister has no place in a suffering, struggling world; and scarcely any other virtue will so win a heart-place for him as his ability to enter into the inner lives of his parishioners. And more: in the light of the great work he is trying to do, nothing will so admit him into the secret chambers of the soul where he may take the Word that is life.

"Man is ever an object of profound interest to himself, and was never more seriously studied by himself than in this day, when the minds of the people and the discussions of the press teem with earnest, eager questions that affect his nature, condition, social franchise, political status and all that concerns his development and destiny, but all, of course, limited to this material and present world.

"The drift of popular philosophy towards despair of the future and abandonment of the goal of personal immortality leaves man the subject of a life without an aim and a heart without inspiration. Beneath its bubbling frivolities the spirit of this generation is sad; the purple robes of material prosperities and the abundant viands which load its table mock an orphaned and an empty soul. . . .

"It is not metaphysics that men want, but bread;

not revel of imagination, but the river of life, and an ounce of crystallized sympathy will have more weight with them than a ton of theories and speculations." (Kennard, "Psychic Power in Preaching," pp. 115, 116.)

My inquiries lead to the belief that the fellow feeling engendered by the sympathetic pastor is one of the most delightful and fruitful bonds that can be established among men. "I want to know that my pastor cares for me," "he must know and care for men," "must have tact and sympathy," "a wide-awake, sympathetic pastor," "one in close sympathetic touch with his people so as to understand their natures and needs," "a special servant of Christ," "ready to greet one with a cheery word," "not ashamed to speak to one of his members wherever he meets him," etc.

The true minister will, therefore, see men as Christ saw the young man, who "beholding him loved him." He will feel the hardships and the sorrows of his fellows, and beneath the commonest clay will behold the soul of measureless worth. Sympathy is not mere pity, not condescension; it is the blending of lives in a helpful betrothal of loving fellowship and mutual trust. The minister ought to be as welcome in the sick room as the doctor, and he ought to do as much good even to the bodies as some doctors. He must carry his people in his heart, watching their unfolding and growth with the tender solicitude of a parent. The joy of one must add to his joy, and their disappointment by his burden also. Is any one struggling with doubts, it is his battle also; is one overcome by sin, he too suffers in defeat. Each soul

is committed to his care to be nurtured for eternity; and realizing that, his heart is as full of yearning as a mother's. The saddest and most tragic indictment that can be brought against the Christian world is for a man to say, "No one careth for my soul."

It has been suggested that the fault-finding critic has an office which is easy to secure and easy to fill, yet he who tells us wherein we err ofttimes does as fine a service as he who points to our virtues. By the help of the respondents and others, we are trying to see ourselves as they see us. We therefore ask the pertinent question propounded by Mr. James Buckham in the *Christian Register* of January 16, 1902, "Are Ministers Egotistical?" He replies to his own question by saying that he knows very few who have not impressed him as egotistical or, at least, "self-conscious beyond the normal and becoming." He is, however, charitably disposed in his judgment, and thinks they are subject to long-standing and peculiarly subtle temptations thereto. The "clergyman worshipper" has long been in evidence, he who has looked upon the man in the pulpit as being made of extraordinarily fine clay. "Men have encouraged its representatives in cherishing the conception of a vicarious excellence and nobility and worshipfulness derived from the priestly function." And furthermore, "the clergyman is peculiarly liable to the temptation of egotism because his function is necessarily more or less paternal, advisory, and instructive. He is, indeed, like the shepherd in the midst of his flock."

The contagion, doubtless, does prevail, he thinks; but a more wholesome state of the ministerial atmos-

phere is gradually appearing. "The future is going to subject them to a respectful but decided lack of class worship that will be wholesome and corrective in its effect." The church-goer is becoming an independent thinker and "will be less childishly dependent upon the minister than heretofore." The minister is to lose his "status of man-among-sheep" because of the rise of "stout independent bell-wethers among the flock."

Part of this is true and part is not. The clergyman has, indeed, peculiar temptations to egotism, but so has the lawyer, the physician, the teacher, every one whose work is that of specialized help. All professions are paternal. They control, within specified limits, every person who comes to them for assistance; and men's independency of thought will no more take from the preacher his place as leader in his proper work than it will destroy the specialized functions of any other class of men.

Moreover, if there is anything in the world which will keep a man humble it is found by the minister. The fact that he is ever face to face with the perfect standard of life as revealed by the Master will be a strong inducement to see himself as one far from having any right to self-glorification. Still further, in every congregation there are persons whose especial, self-constituted duty it is to keep him humble; if not by direct criticism and depreciation, then by anonymous letters and the "secret" opinion which travels faster than the March winds. And if this is not enough, the meagre salary of the majority will place the last sufficient straw upon the proverbial back.

The charge of egotism may not justly be made

against the ministry as a profession, but there are some conceited preachers and there is not a more execrable and anomalous being known to the public. And the greater condemnation attaches to him because of its obtrusive obviousness. When a clergyman persists in signing his name with all of his degrees (earned, honourary, and purchased) attached to it, one is minded to add the title suggested by Spurgeon, A. S. S. Our correspondents in a few instances mention this weakness as one of the faults of the ministry. "I want just an ordinary man," "so many are so anxious to become popular," "obnoxiously presumptuous," "one mortal enough to feel with his people," "should feel he is a humble servant of God," "too anxious to be pleasant and agreeable." It will be apparent, however, that some of these citations are scarcely applicable; and I think that these are the only suggestions concerning the egotistic preacher beyond those currently circulated among ministers themselves. If, however, there is one such it is too many by one; for simpleness and humility of spirit add to efficiency a beauty and strength both pervasive and subtle.

Akin to this is the flagrant crime of self-seeking. This is observed more frequently than egotism. A church member said of a visiting clergyman who came to present the claims of a benevolent cause and to take a collection, "How his heart yearned for the unfortunate—about five minutes! How his heart yearned for his percentage of the collection—about half an hour!" It kills a man's influence, and is in itself a shame. The minister has forgotten his original promise who separates himself from the

ideal of servantship and makes his work serve him.

Poverty and the fear of early retirement from the effective ranks do press hard upon him; but want is a possibility which attaches to any lot, and early retirement is avoided by not ceasing to study and to work hard while in the effective class. Said a presiding elder, "Brother A. has this year let down; he expects a change soon and has grown indifferent to his present congregation, but he has destroyed his chances of promotion." It is not necessary to tear the end out of a house in order to see into it, and any "let down" by a preacher for such reasons is a window into the man's nature showing that heart and soul are not in his work.

From the correspondents we quote: "there are many preachers who think more of position and of money than of the merits of their work," "there can be no ideal minister so long as he has to live by his calling," "an endowed ministry for those who have the courage of their convictions and do not want to starve," "the true minister will not seek his own," "they are afraid to preach the gospel, their salary would be short," "he ought to preach without regard to the money there is in it." These observations are practically all from persons living in the country who are members of small churches, where probably the "money in it" for the preacher is very little. The opinion is general, however, that if God wants a man in another parish, He must call him by an increased salary. But for ministers to be as free from self-seeking as they are, in the face of present conditions, is not a little thing. Having a family

whom he loves as truly as any man loves his, the minister would be anomalous if he did not desire to confer upon them the added privileges and opportunities which money will provide. The minister's duty to his family and the notions of a congregation do not always agree, and what parent will condemn the man who protects his own household! There is meal in both ends of a well-balanced sack, and one end cannot well be weighed alone.

There are those in the ministry, however, who have no true justification for their overweening desire for place and salary. When this becomes known of a man, his congregation largely ceases to be influenced by him. Said an excellent Christian, "Mr. B. is an acceptable preacher and a fine gentleman, but he thinks we are cheating him in the salary and we therefore think it well for him to go elsewhere."

"What has a preacher to do with self-advancement? He is not here to gain worldly ends. Other men are concerned with these. The need is for some one man in ten thousand that is not. He must be concerned with what he can give and not with what he can get. If he cannot so live, let him resign the office and join the ranks of the infidels." It is his function "to stimulate and encourage the perceptive faculties that men may come to think for themselves to the ends of regeneration; to sound the one major chord above all this minor wail; to be the perennial spring of optimistic thought amidst arid worldliness and barren selfishness." (S. K. Davis, *Arena*, Nov., 1901.)

We shall find that the fulfillment of the law and the prophets for the preacher is also in the two com-

mandments—love to God and man. This love will conserve and promote every power, it will take all possible help from God and spend it all in God's way —for His glory through the upbuilding of men. It will compel industry, produce sympathy, generate humility, give birth to boldness and be the source of every mastering virtue.

But this love is neither created by fiat nor maintained by mere desire. It is both created and nourished by communion with God. Nothing will suffice except a firm, personal hold of God ; and the preacher should begin and continue his preparations by learning to pray. It is the well-spring and the manna-field. No man has the motive, the power or the endurance to love and serve men unless there is within him an undying love of God. This love comes by prayer, for how can one love Him whom he does not know, and how can one know Him without communion?

The preacher sound in body, mind and soul is a prophet. Upon the authority of the Word and of his own experimental knowledge, he is to proclaim mankind's ideal ; and out of his heart he is to declare the motives of grace and Divine life which a union with God provides for the realization of that ideal. Practical, tactful, manly, he is to inspire and uplift; sympathetic, educated, forceful, he is to lead men to a personal knowledge of the Infinite. In precept and in life he must do this ; and the Scriptures of salvation must be interpreted by all that he is and does.

BOOK FOUR

THE MESSAGE

XIII

PURPOSE AND CONTENT OF THE MESSAGE

"Settle in your mind that no sermon is worth much in which the Lord is not the principal speaker. There may be poetry, refinement, historic truth, moral truth, pathos, and all the charms of rhetoric; but all will be lost for the purposes of preaching, if the word of the Lord is not the staple of the discourse."—*John Hall.*

"Never forget that the end of a sermon is the salvation of the people."—*M'Cheyne.*

"Preaching has to do with such a personal administration of the truth as shall make one man's soul a living fire by which another man's soul is kindled. . . . Our high mission, our noble calling, is to build up souls, to perfect the Christian's life, and to make manhood acceptable to God, and radiant in the sight of all men."—*Beecher.*

XIII

PURPOSE AND CONTENT OF THE MESSAGE

Ik Marvel sat in his room and read strange stories in the glowing firelight of his cheerful grate. Each leaping flame was a spirit, each white-red coal was a messenger, and each wholesome ray of heat warmed him into prophecy and kindled his vision to that of a seer. He leads us away into the dreamland where the charm and sweetness of his words paint pictures which enchant. What he sees is some aspect of life; sweet, morose, gay, sombre, love-worthy or ignoble. We awake from the spell and think it is but a clever way to invite attention to what he wishes to read from the hearth-fire of his soul.

But one day the calm reverie steals upon us and we look into our own glowing, burning human life. There comes a vision which rises like a phantom from the ashes of the past. The years are moving pictures which fly as sheeted clouds. A frame is hung around a century in the gallery of ages, man's heart-cry and the deeds he wrought because thereof are brought before us as breathing actualities.

Upon such a picture the most prosaic looks and finds his inmost soul profoundly stirred. It is an epitome of life, the apotheosis of prayer, the story of the cry heard in every land pressed by the foot of man. Labour and love and pain and sin and death place their seal upon the brow of mortality, but in the soul springs forever the question of its being.

Above the din of strife, the interests which absorb, the mistakes and confusions is a voice which speaks of God and Life and Duty. Yes, we answer the impassioned Shylock, Jew and Christian and all races are "fed with the same food, hurt by the same weapon, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer." Similar in body, kindred in mind, begotten of the same will, men are still more related in their cry for God.

It is a fact accepted that peoples everywhere have recognized a being not themselves who bound them to him by superstition, fear, or love. No soul so hard as never to have felt a Something, not wholly like itself or other souls, which lives and rules the world. No soul has been so falsely brave that it could feel itself untouched by this which from the beginning is the Soul of souls and Life of life.

> "Man cannot be God's outlaw if he would,
> Nor so abscond him in the caves of sense
> But Nature still shall search some crevice out
> With messages of splendour from that Source
> Which, dive he, soar he, baffles still and lures."
>
> — *Lowell, "The Cathedral."*

God has made no man an alien to his kind or to Himself. "One God, one law," the upward and the outward reach, make men in divers times and homes but mutual workers in a plan which, dimly seen and vaguely felt, gives power and purpose to the one and all. The unit searching how or what his life should be, may add but little strength or much to the world's great end and in his toil he may not know

that he has added aught of worth. The institutions which are greatest in their power to bless have been formed by workmen who knew neither the character nor the glory of their work. No one can say of language, "The foundation I have laid and on it reared the superstructure." Generations of men, each one in his place, have unconsciously wrought the harmony, giving to every sound a meaning and a place. Mythology was born in no one brain. It was reared from the corporate life of nations which saw the same sun and stars, heard the same wind and sea roar, listened to the same whispering in trees and caves and, from the collective consciousness, slowly evolved the fanciful interpretations of mystery and might.

There is but one poet, and his name is Humanity. He too is the one artist, musician, statesman, warrior. The soul of Milton was a harp touched by ten million unseen fingers, Raphael was an eye through which a race beheld the beauty it already felt, Beethoven caught the echo of the melodies of millions, and Gladstone spake the truths of ages. Humanity is the great creator, which here and there rears a soul to interpret the unclear consciousness of the entire race. Pinnacled men are prisms which gather scattered rays to shoot them forth in streams of heat and light. Heroes are incarnations of the nation's heroism, philanthropists are the heart-beats of the world of brethren, and reformers are heralds of the morning which awakens every one.

No man is wholly inexplicable. We know where Plato learned his politics, Demosthenes his eloquence, Napoleon his military genius, Wesley his

religious wisdom, Lincoln his yearning brotherliness and Tennyson his songs. One Man stands alone in His uniqueness. Not race or birth or home or school or all can tell the story of the Christ. From the heart of the eternities He sprang, the Son of Man, the incarnate Truth and Life. He came as the open secret of the ages, the consummation of time's preparation and the answer to the yearnings of the world. Through Him man was to be enabled vitally to relate himself to the Father and thereby reach a life which satisfies.

Mankind has always made a mistake when it supposed that God was far away, seeking to hide Himself from His creatures. He has ever been approachable, and has made such provision for communion as the race could best accept. At the heart of all we know of God is His longing to reveal Himself to men and make them like Him; but there is a process in His purposes. In leading man to Himself, He progressively adapts His revelation to the ability and needs of men.

> "God sends His teachers unto every age
> To every clime and race of men,
> With revelations fitted for their growth
> And shape of mind."
>
> —*Lowell.*

It is not a vain analogy which likens the development of the race to the unfolding of a child. God knows men in the age where He finds them and suits Himself to the stage of enlightenment which they have attained. Jehovah's first revelation and instruction were by immediate and unquestioned mes-

sages to chosen priests and prophets. Early patriarch and judge directly received from Him the word of guidance. Man's life was simple, confined to a family or a tribe, but soon called to serve as conservator and exponent of religious truth. As life unfolded and enlarged, becoming higher and more complex, the written word, the decalogue was given. Few, indeed, could read, but the precious tables in the holy ark spoke of majesty and might; and the teaching judges unfolded the meanings of the law and held the people to a conforming life. It was a life of rigour and rule; there was majesty attractive only in its greatness; there was power only to be feared. Religion came to be splendid, imposing and inflexible. But by and by, when man began to think and feel, there was a longing for a fuller, closer and more tender union with Jehovah. The necessary lessons of obedience were imperfectly learned, but prophets began to see visions and poets to sing songs of the approaching day when man might be "breast to breast with God."

Through the centuries, the promise and expectation of the coming One was the glad note in life's threnody. And when, in the fullness of time, Christ came He was the word incarnate, the tangible truth, God in human form, the Son of Man. God's revelation was complete, Himself before man in man's likeness, what more could He do! But God in the flesh was localized, He was directly for the few who could see and hear and feel Him. He is, however, the God of all and hence must offer Himself to every one in every place. And this He does in the Holy Spirit, "another Comforter, that He may abide with

you forever." Thus was the revelation made universal and abiding.

Complementary to this is His revelation in nature and history. Aside from the written Word, God manifests Himself in ways that can be sufficiently interpreted to give a rational, natural basis for religion. It is true Mr. Spencer finds "that the power which the universe manifests to us is utterly inscrutable," and in any explanation of the universe we can only come upon a First Cause about which no more can be said than that it is "unknowable." But it is clear that in reaching the concept of an ultimate first principle several things concerning it are known : its existence, its identity, its omnipotence, its causality. A rigid metaphysics will, in reaching these data, furnish a very insufficient ground for religion ; but metaphysics which includes the whole of human life, thought, feeling and will,—not abstract intellect alone—will afford a basis which has large practical significance.

The ontological, cosmological and teleological arguments may not in themselves offer a completely satisfactory basis, but their value cannot be a negligible quantity. It is not needful for us here to do more than call attention to the natural ground for a theistic religion and to note that in connection with the deductions of pure metaphysics, as we have seen, it gives us "One universal Cause, the infinite and eternal seat of all power, an omniscient Mind, ordering all things for ends selected with perfect wisdom." (Martineau, "Study of Religion," p. 391.)

Nor would man willingly part with the belief that God manifests Himself in human history. Through

the ages he sees not only the unceasing purpose of Nature's conservation and promotion, but man too finds his deeds directed in inexplicable ways and for ends he had not intended. Often he finds himself repeating Bancroft's observation at the close of the Civil War, "Lo, God was here and we knew it not." He feels himself to be a child whose plans are thwarted and whose objects are overturned only to find that by and by there emerges a better result, a more inclusive and a more perfect harmony. "The things and events of the world do not exist or occur blindly or irrelevantly, but all, from the beginning to the end of time, and throughout the farthest sweep of illimitable space, are connected together as the orderly manifestations of a divine Power, and . . . —this divine Power is something outside of ourselves, and upon it our own existence from moment to moment depends." (John Fiske, "Address at Dinner to Mr. Spencer.")

The minister's message is, therefore, God; not the God of the strict theologian, or of the philosopher, or of the scientist. His God is the All, the I Am, Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, and Guide of nature and man. A message less than this is partial, anything greater there cannot be. The purpose of the message is to unite man to God in the relation of son to Father, whereby on the one side there is loving and all-wise authority and on the other trustful, loving obedience.

Worship in its finest and fullest sense will be an evidence of man's vital relation to God, consummated directly or indirectly through preaching. To explain any lack of the true spirit of worship by

saying that "the church has become a mere preaching place" is an explanation which neglects to recognize the necessity of the human element in establishing this relationship, and fails to distinguish between the imperfect message and the true and complete message.

That message which does not promote, and contribute to, genuine worship may be called a sermon only through a charitable custom. A sermon is to instruct, edify and convert; and in so far as it accomplishes these ends it provides man with the needful conditions of real, inclusive worship. Otherwise we worship neither in spirit nor in truth.

The message should be such as speaks to the whole man. Professor Hale says that the secret of Phillips Brooks' preaching was that he never gave a sermon which left any one out. A greater success belongs to him who not only omits no man but neglects no part of man. Reason, heart and will must be right; and the message which appeals to but one fails in its function. If the sermon entertain merely, the preacher ought to be listed in a lecture bureau and not in synod, conference or classis; if it be only secularly instructive, the preacher's place is a chair of history, economics or literature. If the minister's work is to bring man and God into truer conscious interrelation there is every reason why he should not lay aside that office when he enters the pulpit.

A satisfactory knowledge of this relationship is not *a priori* or axiomatic; it is an acquired possession, and to its wealth, other riches may be added. Nor can the purpose of the sermon be completed by edifying and instructing only; there must be in the

message that note which calls men to action. Truth is no stronger than its incarnation, and it matters not what a man knows, how sublime his faith is; the question concerns his doing as well as his being: "Not hearers of the word only, but doers also." Socrates has told us that correct knowledge is the only necessity for the perfect life. If man were wholly intellectual, or complete in all except intellect, this would be a sound proposition. However, perversity characterizes feeling and volition as well as reason, and we need not only to understand by the intellect what is true but to declare by the feelings what is good and by the will to execute that judgment.

It must constantly be borne in mind what it is that the sermon is intended to accomplish. A good many sermons would never be preached if the authors first fully and clearly determined the result they intended to achieve by them. Professor Herrick Johnson in an address to the Presbyterian clergymen of Chicago said that for a number of years he had heard very few sermons with a purpose. They were discourses that rambled from Dan to Beersheba, having no preference for one place or the other. I am not able to conceive how there can be any definite results from an indefinite purpose. To speak, a man must know; to persuade, he must know from what to what end; and knowing it, he must lay his plans to suit the end. Haziness in not intentional, purposelessness is not purposed; back of all is haziness of thinking and inattention to the ends. If a man has no purpose, honesty and policy would bid him wait until he gets one; if he has a purpose and cannot move towards it, it is because he has not cut away the

obscurations and penumbra of mental twilight. Too many sermons are based upon sentiments instead of convictions and perspicuous thought; the preacher feels in general and so he talks in general.

The message, therefore, must ring true to its rightful content and purpose. And men are not far astray concerning the message they desire to hear from the pulpit. Turning to the answers to the questions, we have these opinions about effective sermons: "Fearlessly spiritual," "not intellect and emotions only, but the will too," "Christianity, morality and their underlying principles," "Christ and Him crucified," "Christ, the sun and centre of all preaching," "less sensationalism and more hell-fire," "not enough stress on the old gospel, the atonement and the baptism of the Holy Spirit," "impress the fact that Christianity is to be lived as well as preached and believed," "preach the gospel and let the official board run the temporal affairs of the church," "ministers do not talk practically," "a more masculine type and less vociferation," "not so much sensational preaching which is of no one but the Devil," etc.

The very term "Christian minister" suggests the purpose and content of the effective sermon. It is to be such an uplifting of the Christ as will produce a Christ-life, and that life includes the work of serving. It is a verifiable fact that the few really great preachers have constantly placed Jesus as their central theme; and at the heart of that heart has stood the cross. They have not been speculators, critics or apologists, but announcers of a fact. The mystery might remain but the power of the truth was to be personally experienced. Chrysostom, Bossuet,

Whitefield, Spurgeon, and Moody proclaimed the doctrine of the cross; and it was their strength. Inexplicable or not, unæsthetic or illogical or childish, the cross meets the yearning cry of the human soul, brings peace, transforms and glorifies it. There can be nothing greater than this, and anything less is not enough. This the people require the preacher to learn and to teach; and he has misread his commission and disobeyed the vision who determines to preach anything but Christ and Him crucified.

XIV

THE KIND OF SERMON

"A divine ought to calculate his sermon as an astrologer does his almanac—to the meridian of the place and people where he lives."—*Thomas Hughes.*

"That is not the best sermon that makes the hearers go away talking to one another and praising the speaker; but that which makes them go away thoughtful and serious, and hastening to be alone."—*Bishop Burnet.*

"Every year and every day convinces me that our preaching will be good for nothing if the main subject of it is not the atonement of God with man in Christ; if we may not proclaim His sacrifice as a finished work; if we may not ground all our sacrifices upon it."—*F. D. Maurice.*

XIV

THE KIND OF SERMON

THE first duty of a minister upon reaching a new field is to become acquainted with his people, not merely that he may know who are his own, but in order that he may understand how best to serve them. This personal, this psychological, knowledge is needed for the most helpful pulpit ministrations. A sensible storekeeper's sign bears these suggestive words: "Flies with which to catch fish in this locality." General sermons may be effective anywhere but an added power is given by the atmosphere of mutual understanding and close fellowship. The inner life of the people is to be known if the sermon is to respond to the subtlest conditions of need. The city pastor who, during his vacation in the backwoods of Michigan, preaches on "The Duty of Magistrates" only exaggerates the probable mistake of any one who delivers sermons which are prepared for people whom he does not know. Every sermon, therefore, may properly heed the local conditions.

In view, however, of the purpose of the sermon, that it is to relate man to God, it can be said of all that they should contain the truth of the gospel and the note of evangelism.

Many sermons are open to the criticism, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee," nor indeed has the Spirit of the Lord. But before passing an unfriendly judgment upon sermons which are not

"gospel" and "evangelistic," we should note what is intended by the terms. A current conception of the "gospel sermon" is akin to that of the fervid exhortation and the repeated emphasis of familiar phrases. John Wesley is often cited as the model preacher of the gospel sermon, yet he held that a sermon on good temper was preferable. "The term," says he, "has now become a mere cant word. I wish none of our society would use it. It has no determinative meaning. Let but a pert, self-sufficient animal, that has neither sense nor grace, bawl out something about Christ and His blood, or justification by faith, and his hearers will cry out, 'What a fine gospel sermon!'"

Over against this kind of a sermon there are those whose authors seem to be afraid lest they contain something about Christ. It may be there is a reason for such sermons. A few years since dogmatism and doctrine ran mad, and we are now in the midst of a recoil from that ill-advised state; and many ministers, casting dogma aside, have cut themselves loose from unity and stability of thinking. Their teachings are therefore haphazard, if not grotesque. Besides, the supernatural has been so pressed upon all sides that some preachers are ready to give up the fight and pitifully request to have permission to say a few words about the beatitudes.

Still further, it must be admitted that the ministry has its share of the incompetents. Some ministers have had no sufficient preparation, some have ceased to study after their last college examination, and some have never acquired the ability to think. Set such to making a sermon and it will either be of the

per-fervid hortatory type or culled from current newspaper opinion.

Others still are infected with doubts of various kinds and employ the pulpit as a place to discuss the problems of their own unsettled minds; and some even gird on mighty swords with which to wage a war on wooden windmills. Still less worthy of confidence is the clerical charlatan who is determined to have a reputation; and if he cannot find his name heralded in the press because of the excellencies of his discourses, he will yet have his name in bold face because of his eccentricities. All such preachers ought to wind up the thread of their years until they come to the place where they were called to preach, and there make anxious inquiry of echo and oracle to learn if they were not mistaken; and if mistaken, then to be honest.

It is not improbable that in this lies an explanation for many of the sensational sermons. Not long since a conservative New York paper gave extended notices to six sermons. One was a fiery denunciation of heretics, another made a plea for endowed playhouses in which to present "strictly moral shows," a third was a high-flown eulogy of ex-President Cleveland, a fourth was a defense of Sunday golf, and another concluded with a prayer condemning certain Mormons who were in the congregation. Several years ago a Sunday newspaper contained a "Sermon on Soap." Of course the "sermon" concludes with the terrifying statement that "there is no spiritual laundry on the way between this world and the hereafter," and a man had better look out. He is all right if he has religion; religion is a soap of ex-

cellent quality, and every one should have some of it handy.

It is not to be thought strange if such pulpit jugglery brings a certain contempt upon the whole church. The medical profession can purge itself of quacks, the lawyers also have their remedies against shysters; but the ministry continues to suffer. It is true that the rocket soon goes out, and that would be a consolation were it not that there is a constant renewal of the rush-light pulpiteer. It would not be entirely evil if the state should forbid any one preaching who is not properly accredited by some recognized denomination. This would at least end the Mormon propaganda and a dozen other products of dishonesty or disease. And a minister, expelled from a denomination, could not become the persecuted hero continually exposing his wounds to a credulous public.

Sensationalism has its following as the circus clown has his, and the reproach attaches to the following as well as to the leader. Without curious crowds to feast upon trivialities, the sensational sermon would not be preached. It comes in response to a demand, and that demand has a certain psychological basis. Those who run after the clerical mountebank are marked by one, or both, of two characteristics. They either are unable to think upon a high theme or are unwilling to suffer the reproach of contemplating their own sins and duties which a faithful sermon will point out to them. The majority are not inclined to rise in their thinking above the commonplace which feeds their daily lives. Their ordinary conversation, reading and amusements are such as

make the least possible demand upon thought. A "lecture course" is nowadays a series of entertainments where fun, magic and music are almost exclusive. A generation since, a lecture was not chiefly stories and buncombe. Said a manager of comic opera, "The folks who pay their money do not care about your pretty music. They don't want to think, they want to laugh. This piece gives them plenty of laughs, and we shall make a barrel of money."

It is not true, however, that all who enjoy the light and frivolous are light-minded or dull. With some, the comic and burlesque is a relaxation from business cares and the serious burdens of daily work or profession. For a couple of hours they forget their anxieties and have a restful evening without exertion of body or mind. But man has a serious side to his nature, and it is the function of the pulpit to attend to that. If it descends to the vaudeville, an age will pass before it can ascend to the real.

The character of the general public's reading creates a distaste for what is solid and substantial. An electrician says, "I read my engineering journals thoughtfully; the newspaper and the magazine, I read with as little thought as possible, and I never read a book." Few persons read the newspaper with the least intention of remembering its contents or considering it for a second time. The popular magazines present everything in pre-digested form, and the articles are seldom mentally stimulating.

In Wisconsin a canvass was made in a beautiful town of more than average advantages to learn what the people were reading. Less than one hundred re-

ligious papers were taken by the population of five thousand while there were nearly four hundred subscribers to papers such as *The Police Gazette*, *The Weekly Novelist*, *The Nickel Library*, etc. More than half the population was reading this class of printed matter, or worse. This soil for the planting of the Word is surely shallow, weed-encumbered, thorn-covered and stony.

How shall the minister adapt the message to such hearers and yet keep the message true? Says Mr. Spencer, "Men must think in such terms of thought as they possess." And "generally, the religion current in each age and among each people, has been as near an approximation to the truth as it was then and there possible for men to receive; the more or less concrete forms in which it has embodied the truth have simply been the means of making thinkable what would otherwise have been unthinkable." ("First Principles.") If the minister prepares a sermon on "The Gospel of the Grab-Bag." or "The Devil in Dowie," he will probably attract a large congregation who will find nothing in the discourse that will have any influence upon character. Very often a positively evil effect is produced. A gentleman, usually careful of his words, said, "My wife is wild over a series of sermons by Dr. B. on 'Damnation after Dark in D——.' He does not know what he is talking about and he knows it, but he draws a crowd who think that they are mighty near the kingdom as compared with the majority of people in D——. I did intend to join the church, but if I want to be a Christian I'll have to keep away from such trifling."

On the other hand, there are sermons so superior to the average mind that apprehended truths come to the ordinary hearer like fire-flies in the night. What can nine out of ten persons make of "The Religion of Transcendentalism," "The Philosophy of Stoicism" or "The Metaphysics of Mysticism"? A visiting pastor some time since gave a sermon to a congregation of more than usual intelligence on "Literature's Contribution to the Higher Life." For literary finish and careful arrangement of thought nothing more could be desired, but nodding heads and closed eyes were the congregation's response.

Such messages, the sensational and the erudite, represent extremes which the commonest wisdom marks as unadvised and inefficient. The congregation is a heterogeneous body; all classes and conditions are represented, and they are to receive spiritual help at every meeting. To afford this help, the message should be such as appeals through its intelligibility, truthfulness and motivation to every hearer. It must not be purely intellectual, else it will be beyond some; it must not be commonplace, lest it reach only the untutored; if too emotional, the phlegmatic will be omitted; or if didactic, the emotional will not enter into its spirit.

Is there not a truth for the preacher in Spencer's idea of homogeneity in heterogeneity? Instead of addressing sermons to the peculiarities of individuals or classes, he may address men's likenesses and appeal to those faculties which all men possess. Lincoln's speech at Gettysburg leaves no one out, and Patrick Henry's cry in the Virginia House of Burgesses omits no American. Shakespeare's tragedies address the

composite man, Byron's Threnody is the wail of the race, Handel's Messiah is a prayer of the human soul, Raphael's Transfiguration is the reverence and supplication felt by all, and the words of Jesus are truths for the entire world.

When a preacher prepares his sermon it is for a congregation in which are the dull and sensitive, ignorant and cultured, obtuse and alert. He should touch those strings which awaken responsive vibrations in the hearts of all. He may not always be able to play the full scale, the upper and the lower notes he may strike only occasionally; the pervading melody is to be carried by the middle octave. There will be failure enough when the preacher keeps true to unquestioned religious verities, when the message is drawn from the life and teachings of Jesus Himself; and he will find that the greatest success for the preacher and hearer attaches to the messages which are found in the Book, and not such as are drawn from fantastic or unusual sources with just enough religious truth tied to them to save for them the name of sermon.

But, the question is asked, should not a pastor seize upon the great and vital themes which are agitating the people? In general, what has filled the minds and hearts of a congregation during six days, and connected with which there is no striking moral truth, should be avoided. Sunday is for rest and religious growth. If some great sorrow, some overpowering concern has come to the congregation, the pastor has a clear duty. But hearsay and themes from current reading are safely avoided. During the great labour strike of 1894, many preachers felt called

upon to enlighten their people upon the real relations of capital and labour. Professor Witherspoon, with much care, made a study of a large number of the reports of these sermons. He concludes, as a result of his studies, that almost exclusively young preachers were the perpetrators of them, that they cannot offer direct help to solve the problem because ministers are not often expert students of social conditions; and finally, he observes that the preacher has left his rightful province and lost an opportunity.

But after the message has been wisely chosen and prepared there is too often an apparent failure, there is no evidence that it has been fruitful. Of course, we comfort ourselves with the thought that the real result does not subject itself to observation and that it is many days after the sowing before the harvest ripens. But make what allowance we will, there may be good reason for disappointment. We have seen that the congregation may be so conditioned that the message falls upon unresponsive natures and that the preacher himself may lack those elements which make him an efficient medium for the presentation of the sermon. Furthermore, the theme of the discourse may be such a departure from what it should be as to have little gripping power upon conscience. But granted that these defects have so far as possible been avoided, there will remain a need that the sermon should possess other elements of power.

It has already been said that the message must be one with a purpose. There is not a great deal of difference between purposeless sermons and purposeless men. Such persons are serviceable in a census; they do not accomplish anything except by accident.

They are the dawdlers who fail in clearness of thought and in strength of volition. And there are too many shotgun sermons which scatter everywhere and patter upon all out-of-doors. Subjects are considered so superficially and perfunctorily that the hearer is soothed as by playful zephyrs. There ought to be nothing smaller than three inch gun sermons, and if they may be ten, or even thirteen inch, so much the better. The trouble is not always that there are no six or thirteen inch men; but they load up with bird shot as easily as the ordinary blunderbuss, except that one uses a more intangible shot than the other. A lawyer who had no more definiteness of purpose in his briefs and arguments than the average sermon would win a case only because the judge and jury knew the law better than he did. Purpose, clearly realized, is as necessary for a sermon as it is for a builder who assembles material or for a general upon a field of battle. The finest beginning for a sermon is the preacher's definite answer to his self-directed inquiries, "What do I wish to accomplish? What shall I say, and how, to effect this result?"

One inquiry in the list of questions concerned the influence of sermons which are characterized as emotional, intellectual, argumentative and doctrinal. A decided dislike is expressed by the majority for the usual emotional discourse. Scenes of children's death-beds, starving widows and murderous drunkards are not generally regarded as the best material for strong sermons. We quote from the replies, as follows: "they amuse me," "little influence," "not very helpful," "not favourably impressed," "like a vaudeville," "if simply to work upon my feelings, I

do not like them ; if genuine they are good," "effect is temporary, then a reaction of deep disgust," etc. On the other hand, there are a few who prefer them : "I enjoy them," "I like them occasionally," "a strong influence," "they stir me," etc.

With about eighty per cent. there is a desire expressed for a certain amount of emotionalism in the sermon if the emotion be wholly natural and sincere, if the emotion spring from deep conviction of the heart. No sermon is good without that ring of earnestness which profoundly moves the preacher and consequently appeals to the feeling of the hearers. But it is not to be so pronounced as to characterize the entire discourse as emotional.

The dominantly intellectual sermon is also repudiated, although a slightly larger number prefers it to the emotional. The following is said concerning the influence of the intellectual discourse : "stimulating and strengthening," "they cause me to think and the influence lasts," "they are a pure delight," "they appeal to me," "I retain more of such," "they enlighten me," "I want more than intellect," "the purely intellectual is not good," "if merely so they do little good, I want my soul satisfied," etc.

The argumentative sermon is less favourably mentioned than either the intellectual or the emotional. In sixteen per cent. of the replies it is found that the argumentative sermon "arouses combativeness." If the preacher realized that one-sixth of his congregation drew their swords against him whenever he launched forth his discourse of argument, he probably would have some hesitation in doing so. Yet the skillful pleader has ways of presenting an

argument which persuade without inviting resistance.

Concerning doctrinal sermons, it is found that forty per cent. are opposed to them; "they are a root of bitterness," "the time is wasted," "I do not dote on them," "they amuse and excite pity," "they anger me," "a disagreeable effect," etc. About twenty-four per cent. either like such sermons or regard them as necessary for the maintenance of the integrity of the denomination.

All in all, the preference is for the fervid intellectual sermon clearly declaring the revealed truths of salvation, the thoughtful message carefully wrought out and filled with enough intensity of feeling to carry the conviction that the preacher is in deadly earnest, knows what he is talking about and believes every word of it.

The preacher is not to be the echo of a voice; but out of the depths of a nature which has tested religious truths, he is to speak. He is to be a man of authority, of authority conferred upon him by virtue of having the indisputable evidence of what he proclaims. Any speaker having less than this is compelled to depend upon gilding and adornment instead of relying upon the clear ring of the true metal and the convincing unction of the indwelling Spirit.

XV

THE SERMON AND THE HEARER

"There are numbers who constantly come up to God's house with the very tempers and feelings which you would carry to a lecture room, with all that excited intellect and all that critical spirit which fit you for nothing but the sitting in judgment upon what shall be delivered, as upon a process of argument or a specimen of elocution. There is practically no recognition of the commission which is borne by the man who addresses you, no influential persuasion of his being an appointed messenger, through whom you may hope that God will graciously infuse light into the understanding and warmth into the heart. . . . And upon this account mainly is it, as we have been long painfully convinced, that there are such insufficient results from the services of God's house, that Sabbath after Sabbath passes away and scarcely leaves a token that good has been wrought."—*Melvill.*

XV

THE SERMON AND THE HEARER

THE problems of the preacher are himself, his message and his people. Not the least of these are his people. Every person is a thinking machine of immeasurable complexities and it is not strange that unanimity of thought and life is impossible. A thing that is black is black to all normal vision, but a proposition involving right may be met by as many varying judgments as there are persons to judge. In every proposition there are two terms. If one is clearly presented and the other is hazy, conjectural or deduced, the judgment itself will fail to have indisputable truthfulness. It is the conjectured term which gives rise to differences, and a sermon which forcefully presents one member of a proposition and neglects so to treat the other, offers to the hearers an incomplete basis from which to reach a well balanced judgment. The sermon which fails of normal proportions easily becomes a source of foible and idiosyncrasy ; or the prejudice, indifference or ignorance of the hearer may lead to like results when the sermon is blameless.

There is an unsuspected weakness in persons who lack the proper degree of power to imagine or to picture mentally. As previously mentioned, the very basis of a religious life is the recognition of incompleteness ; a man must see that he does not possess all that he should and could possess. "The

consciousness of an ought springs from a contemplation of the contrast between the real and the ideal." (Stuckenberg, "Introduction to the Study of Philosophy," p. 315.) Added to this knowledge of imperfection must be the recognition of the possibility of still further attainment. A consciousness of incompleteness with no hope of remedy would lead to despair. These two factors, the imperfect real and the attainable ideal, must be clearly perceived before there can be any recognized obligation and any active response to it. Herein lies the religious value of the imagination. The elements concerned in these two factors, the real and the ideal, are not simply imaginary; they are grounded in the actual. But in order to understand the incompleteness of the real, we must negatively be able to take into account the logical consequences of the real and positively be able to see the ideal over against it. For example; a man has no proper conception of the imperfection of a dyke when he simply observes the tiny stream that has broken over the banks. He must picture the total effects, he must see the stream enlarged to a torrent and the country flooded. An incendiary address is in itself no more dangerous than the pulsation of chiming bells, but it may logically breed disaster. Some acts stand at focal points whence issue results of stupendous moment. Moral causes are peculiarly so. In a legitimate sense sin can literally be regarded as a seed; yes, even as a seed of death and one should be able so to perceive it.

A person who is deficient in power to imagine can come to no just appreciation of what he really is, nor can he make attractive to himself any high ideals.

The sermon must measurably supply that defect; it should not be merely an abstract presentation of any theme, however true, but it must itself picture the truth, be concrete, vivid and stimulating. It should itself be imaginative and an aid to the imaginative powers of the hearers. "We look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen." Paul defines faith as the "assurance of things hoped for and the conviction of things not seen." "What is this," says Professor E. H. Johnson, "except a vision of them as sure as though they were already in possession—a mental seeing which is as convincing as a bodily seeing? And so, according to this epistle faith is imagination of things hoped for, imagination of things not seen. . . . The biblical teaching is that the faith which sees, the religious use of the imagination, is necessary to the best religious life. . . . The confession of every man who has turned from worldly, to spiritual, mindedness is that once he had no 'realizing' sense of spiritual things, and that, when the plain vision of them began, then began their ascendency over him." ("The Religious Use of the Imagination," pp. 152, 153.)

A man's life depends upon his ideals, and it is useless to try to have him follow the Christian course unless he can "see" it. Says Fourier, "A man's destiny is conditioned by his attractions," and these attractions are to be presented to him by the sermon in imaginable forms. The dull and sordid mind, unable to picture the beauty of a righteous life, unable to conceive the meaning of the incarnation of virtue, must be made to picture and to conceive. But it cannot be done by abstract statements. Any ab-

stract formula to be effective should be translated into concrete mental pictures. In his "Treatise," Hume says, "It has been remarked among the Mahometans as well as Christians that those pilgrims who have seen Mecca or the Holy Land are ever after more faithful and zealous believers, than those who have not had that advantage. . . . The lively idea of the places passes by an easy transition to the facts, which are supposed to have been related to them by contiguity, and increases the belief by increasing the vividness of the conception. The remembrance of these fields and rivers has the same influence upon the vulgar as a new argument; and for the same causes." (P. 110.) In another place he says, "There is not indeed a more ample matter of wonder to the studious, and of regret to the pious man, than to observe the negligence of the bulk of mankind concerning their approaching condition; and 'tis with reason that many eminent theologians have scrupled to affirm, that though the vulgar have no formal principles of infidelity, yet they are really infidels in their hearts, and have nothing like what can be called a belief of the eternal duration of their souls. . . . A future state is so far removed from our comprehension and we have so obscure an idea of the manner in which we shall exist after the dissolution of the body, that all the reasons we can invent, however strong in themselves, and however much assisted by education, are never able with slow imaginations to surmount this difficulty, or bestow a sufficient authority and force on the idea. I rather choose to ascribe this incredulity to the faint idea we form of our future condition, derived from its want

of resemblance to the present life than to that derived from resemblance. For I observe that men everywhere are concerned about what may happen after their death, provided it regard this world ; and that there are few to whom their name, their family, their friends and their country are in any period of time entirely indifferent." (Pp. 113,114.) Our inability to imagine explains, I believe, the remarkable sale of that little book, "Intra Muros" ; a book exaggerated, fantastic, absurd, possessing absolutely no elements of attractiveness except its purported descriptions of heaven. Because it offers concrete representations of man's future abode, it responds to the reader's unconscious need of imagining power. It has been said that any novel will meet with great popular success if it but give pictures of the future life.

It is largely this lack of conceptive power which negatives the appeals of a future good. Formerly a sermon on heaven was a description of a place with walls of jasper and streets of gold, with temple and people; and hell was described as lurid with flames and terrible with devils. To-day the sermon is often an abstract discussion of a condition that is hazy in the preacher's mind and doubly misty when expressed as a message.

Again to quote from Hume, "Any pleasure with which we are acquainted affects us more than any other which we own to be superior, but of whose nature we are wholly ignorant. Of the one we can form a particular and determinate idea ; the other we conceive under the general notion of pleasure." (P. 424.) "Pain and pleasure appear in the mind as impressions of the actual feeling or only an idea. 'Tis

evident the influence of these upon our actions is far from being equal. Impressions always actuate the soul, and that in the highest degree; but 'tis not every idea that has the same effect." (P. 118.)

In view of these psychological conditions, it is not surprising that many persons consider sermons very unentertaining and of little value for instruction. It is somewhat humiliating to the pride of intellect to be told that a hearer "received more good from your five-minute sermon to the children than from the other one"; but this is not inexplicable. The sermon to children was plain, picturable and in simple language. Any discourse, therefore, better enlists attention and secures an understanding if it live, describe, delineate and call out the imagining powers of the hearers. It is to be an educator of imagination. The preacher cannot imagine for another any more than he can do his feeling, but a sermon may be so suggestive as to become a ready stimulant for prosaic minds. Highly wrought imageries are not pleasing, but outline sketches, with details to be supplied by the auditor, will lend themselves to the desired results.

From the correspondents, I learn that the sermons which picture much are more desired than those of close reasoning. Spurgeon is still living before a great congregation of readers because he makes religious truth familiar through its relation to the ordinary scenes of life. "On the same principle is it that the true reformer of character seeks the conscience of men, not through methods of reasoning, or appeals to interest, but through scenes in the drama of life, exhibiting the conflict of the better and the

worse, within the range of intelligent possibility, yet a little beyond the range of realized experience; the story of the saint, the hymn of the martyr, the parable of the Samaritan, wielding a persuasion of which the pleader and philosopher may despair." (Martineau, "Types of Ethical Theory," II, p. 64.)

Every practicable principle lends itself to concrete picturability; and truth, other than *a priori*, must be mentally seen before it really can seize upon a person. Lord Kelvin, as a scientist, went still further. In his Johns Hopkins University lectures he said, "I never satisfy myself until I can make a mechanical model of a thing. If I can make a mechanical model I can understand it. As long as I cannot make *a mechanical model all the way through*, I cannot understand, and that is why I cannot get the electromagnetic theory of light." ("Nature," XXXI, p. 603; quoted in Ward's "Naturalism and Agnosticism," I, p. 119.) He was demanding a tangible demonstration of that which sought his acceptance; and in default of external aid to picturability, he was unable fully to understand a proposition of science. This, of course, cannot always be granted, and much less in the religious domain; but the human mind presses towards it and, failing of tangibleness, it seeks concrete terms of description. "So far from being an enemy to the truth," says Madam de Stael, "the imagination helps it forward more than any other faculty of the mind."

We realize, moreover, that this faculty is largely the seat of those motives which prompt to works of beneficence. To be able to see what results follow from effort expended on behalf of others is a never

failing well-spring of encouragement. And he who can picture the transformations wrought by his gifts to charity reaps a reward which continually invites him to keep on sowing. The person who is mentally unable to follow his dollar will be insensitive to appeals for money and incapable of the finest joy should he be constrained to give. The question, discussed in country lyceums, whether there is more pleasure in anticipation than in realization, depends upon the man. The day before Christmas is oftener happier than Christmas itself even though Santa Claus has fully performed his part.

Not only will the character of the discourse affect the imagination, but the imagination will materially determine how it is received. For there is a certain bias to the soul which enables it to see what it wants to see and to hold to what it conceives to be pleasing. This bias will give shape and colour and content to the imagination. If the bias be righteous, the imagination will act in a corresponding manner, calling forth and attending to ideals which woo to holiness. If the tendency of one's nature be towards iniquity, the imagination will tarnish and blacken the pictures raised in the secret sources of the ideal, or refuse to dwell upon those which are wholesome and corrective. "*Honi soit qui mal y pense.*" Every effort of the mind will measurably partake of the poison of the spring, and from its evil fountain send out conditions of thought and deed which bear the marks of unrighteousness. When such is the state of the hearer the work of the sermon is still more difficult. Its appeals to the imagination must be still more forceful and engaging ; the ideals to purity

of life must be so beautiful in their incarnate forms that any soul would choose them, the pictures of devotion must be so haloed with the glory of the heroic that instinctive courage leaps to accept them, concrete goodness must be so lovely that the meanest gives favourable judgment to his worth.

As has been said, the message should usually be clothed in the concrete, and I find from the respondents that sermons vivified by apposite illustrations are preferred to the forms of abstract reasoning. An illustration is mentally tangible and assimilable to those who cannot follow a continued course of reasoning. Most of us, too, do not desire a sermon to be an exercise in the severer processes of logic. We want spiritual help in the church and not university training. During the week we have had enough of perplexity and on Sunday we seek for the soul-strength which will enable us to carry on the fight, and with greater success. Not one of us escapes a world of sorrow and our bleeding hearts are aching for comfort, encouragement and inspiration.

There are hearers, too, who are like sponges, they take in everything that comes along, provided it be watery ; otherwise they get nothing. They have no organs for digestion ; they simply swell up, and when the sun smites and the winds blow they become dry and wait for another flood. They need something in the sermon which will stick in spite of wind and weather. The clear intellectual stream will evaporate, leaving not a trace ; boiling emotionalism, by its own heat, will distil off its essence ; hortative impetuosity overwhelms the hearer and he must throw it off before he reaches home. Sermons should con-

tain enough dye to leave their mark, however lightly they touch. A good dye is the appropriate illustration. "It is not enough that truth be pointed, like a straight, smooth piece of steel; it needs side points, as a dart, that it may not draw out when it effects an entrance." (Cheever.)

No one thinks of teaching children by logical abstractions; at least, no one who has ever been a child himself. Most of us never get away from childhood, we are "but children of a larger growth"; and the concrete illustration is often the flash which makes the entire message plain, the link which enables one to pull the whole chain into his hand. It is the key which opens the house and when once we are in we follow from room to room until we know the entire habitation.

Men are gripped by what they attend to; and there is no attention without interest, and there is no interest unless men are met under their own fig tree. I have not a particle of interest just now in the demonstration of the asymptote of the parabola, but it was overwhelmingly interesting when I was trying to pass an examination in astronomy. An illustration drawn from life arouses and holds with surprising effectiveness; we want to see if the preacher knows what he is talking about, to see how others acted under circumstances with which we are familiar. Few illustrations are so technical when drawn from every-day life as not to have a certain direct interest for every member of the congregation, if not because of personal acquaintance, then by virtue of men's interest in other men's interests.

Moreover, there is a tendency in human nature to

seek out resemblances; and when some resemblance, unthought of before, is pointed out, it immediately becomes an effective medium. It is meeting a new friend in company with one well known; we accept the introduction and welcome both. These tendencies, says Hamilton, are no mere freaks of men's fancy. "They have their foundation in the mind and method of Deity, whose thoughts are all in harmony, and whose works and ways are all connected with one another; so that what we call the imagination of the poet, if his reading be correct, is really the logic of Omniscience."

In the character of the sermons themselves to which hearers are accustomed we find the suggestion of an explanation why people who only intend the good so often fail to attain it. They are honest in their desires to do right and are willing to suffer for it; but at times they deliberately do that which others cannot explain, who yet believe in their sincerity. They go "off on a tangent," and lend themselves to works which are not righteous.

The moral consciousness is the term which may represent all that determines for a man what is right and what is wrong. It is not a function separate from, or coördinate with, that of thought, of feeling and of will. It rather is the union of the three for purposes of moral judgment. A case involving moral issues is presented. The intellect delivers to conscience a rational judgment concerning its rightness. Feeling will likewise give its preference, but it will be emotional. The will also offers its choice and it is volitional. Of course these functions are not distinct, they interpenetrate one another; but in

mental operations, when the mind is not perfectly balanced in its development, one function will be stronger than the others. They are intended to work together, like twelve men of a jury each having equal voice, and to render a verdict which represents the judgment of the total mind. Instead of this, however, we find that the decision often represents one mental function more than it does the others.

Now, if it be possible for a single mental phenomenon to be chiefly intellectual or emotional or volitional, it is also possible for the entire life of a person to manifest such dominance, and this is what actually occurs. We speak ordinarily of the man of intellect, of intense will power or of the emotional man. If he be a person of pronounced intellectuality, the intellect will be the leading function to determine for him what is right and what is wrong. Unbiased intellect could usually attain to truthfulness of judgment, but unbiased intellect cannot be discovered. The reason has a very unsatisfactory way with itself; if it can prove a thing to be wrong, it can also find a justification that "for me at this time it would be right." Or, if feeling largely controls the judgment of what is right, each person then has a standard of morals within himself dependent for stability upon no more certain basis than a fugitive state of feeling. The decision may be very fervent, but it will either evanesce or tend to root itself in bigotry. Likewise, if the will be the controlling function in moral judgments, it will fail of rational guidance; it will be as a ship with plenty of steam power, but having no directing helm.

"Nothing is more common than the appearance of

individuals in which either the volitional, intellectual, or emotional element predominates and yields as a result the practical, the intellectual, or the contemplative mystic type of mind. These variations are inevitable in a world of finite individualities. Again in the same individual the emotional, intellectual, and volitional may not always harmonize. There may be a sense in which the finite nature will express itself in psychoses which will not be inclusive of the whole, or there may be and is, not uncommonly, such a thing as schismatic and divided individual experience." (Ormond, "Foundations of Knowledge," p. 371.) We here see how judgments of knowledge or of ordinary fact may fail of harmony with the world of truth. However sincere and earnest, they may yet be untrue.

The safety of a man, morally as well as otherwise, lies in a normal development of the three faculties of the mind; any one preponderating greatly, or greatly deficient, exposes him to judgments which lack truthfulness. There should be as much emphasis placed upon the balancing of the functions as upon their development. When a person is led by the excess of one faculty into strange paths, he finds himself justified therein by all that he knows, and is helpless to understand the real situation.

Now what can the preacher's message do under such prevailing circumstances? It can at least avoid the conditions which produce these defective aspects of the right, it can refuse to be itself dominantly intellectual or emotional or volitional. The pastor should diagnose his congregation to learn its characteristics and then suit his sermons to develop the

neglected functions, just as a physician prescribes certain athletic exercises in order to strengthen undeveloped muscles and organs. Pastoral work, a study of the ways in which the church expresses its Christian activities, its social life, its plans for securing money, all these will be as pulse and tongue and thermometer in the diagnosis.

A church that for years has been under the influence of coldly intellectual sermons is a church which would probably be very respectable without any preaching at all, but which is liable abundantly to justify itself in activities and inactivities which appear out of harmony with evangelical Christianity. The emotionally fed congregation is often powerfully moved twice every Sunday and surprisingly indifferent to goodness during the week. The people who hear only the up-and-doing sermon are the pushers, but it is all one to them whether they are trying to save a soul or to hold a doll show for a three-potatoes admission. Herein we have a very plausible reason for the follies and idiosyncrasies of congregations which ordinarily are sensible.

In the endeavour to show how the message may attain the highest effectiveness when applied to the individual and to the congregation, has it seemed that we have departed from our original conception of what the message is? It was said that the message is God, Christ, and His Gospel. So it is; and it includes all that concerns human good. Among the Corinthians, Paul was "determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." But he preached and wrote to them about civil and social questions, habits and customs, as well as about things

purely spiritual. Dr. Carlos Martyn somewhere tells of John Pierpont being rebuked by an offended parishioner for preaching temperance and not Unitarianism and being taunted as a man of one idea; to which Pierpont replied, "Well, so I am a man of one idea, but it is a whopping big one!"

In this largest sense the preacher is to have one message and it is to possess him. It is great enough to include all vital human concerns. "It covers all that a man does and conditions all that he is." The truth is to be rightly divided, but the preacher's business first, last and ever is to seek the salvation of individual character; and the ways to this end are past being numbered. The declaration of dogma is not enough; the man is wanted and at the heart of every message should be the gospel's appeal to the individual. John Knox stood before Mary Stuart, Elijah confronted Ahab and Jezebel, John Baptist faced Herod, Paul denounced Felix; Luther, Wesley, Beecher preached on all themes relevant to human good: Jehovah, Christ, righteousness, the beginning, course and end of character. They wanted men to be and do otherwise than they were and did, and the efficient motive was one which centred in the heart, even the gospel of God. The gospel? God, Christ, duty, salvation, immortality. Is any human interest awry which will not be perfected in the light of this message? Is any man alien to its saving power? Recall the historical races and see if these have not been the five ideals which have remained from the beginning to the present. Inquire of the world to-day and learn if all the striving and the prayer, the agony and the uplift are not finally resolvable by these fun-

damental truths. They contain everything; the life, the truth, the way, and no man needs more. Changing conditions require varying methods, but the truths abide. They are the verities which satisfy. In them is the response to the soul's instinctive yearning for union with the good and true and beautiful. In them is the inborn philosophy of the race reaching its climax of realization; it is finite life fulfilling and completing itself in the Infinite.

BOOK FIVE

THE METHOD

XVI

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

"Worship, as we call it specially, is only separated from the rest of our doings in order that its spirit may flow through the whole of those doings. . . . He must either be very strong who does not need the prayers and ordinances of God's house and the preaching of God's truth, or very, very weak who does not know that he needs them."—*Maclaren.*

"Remember whither you are going, and why: to God's immediate presence; to the very throne of grace, that you may there receive mercy and find grace for future need. . . . Coming to the house of God hard and cold and impassive, no wonder if we leave it unmoved and unimpressed."—*Dean Vaughan.*

XVI

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

If the discussion of worship has been confined to its expression in the sanctuary, we have not forgotten that to the term the broadest meaning has been attached. It has been necessary to consider only those phases of worship which appear in the public sanctuary, because it would be impossible to discuss with any degree of fullness the multitude of other Christian activities which evince the spirit of worship. It may have seemed to some also that in the preceding parts certain things have been included which more properly belong at this place, but it will be found that everything which has been considered has, according to our definition, referred rather to content and character than to the ordinary forms of its manifestation.

It is proposed now to consider the methods of worship usual to a congregation and to call attention to the ways by which added effectiveness may be acquired. For truth is not indifferent to its garb, and it is a commonplace that one may so present a fact that it appears false and another may so clothe the false as to make it seem true. The way a thing is done is often a great deal more important than the thing itself. Fidelity is not the only element necessary to insure success; there must also be skill. And for the preacher, or the layman, to think that in a good cause God will make up for the shortcomings

of ignorance or laziness is presuming too much. Meagre congregations may sometimes be better accounted for by this than by saying that the people are tired of religion and the church. Religion has measurably lost its note of terror and the time is past when people are afraid not to attend church. They certainly do not go there in large numbers when there is little in the service to attract them. Coleridge once sought to know why people went to his church and he found upon inquiry that four-fifths came out of a sense of duty to the other fifth. If that diagnosis were correct in his day, it certainly will not hold at the present time, for the obligations of duty are not now considered so exacting in this particular. About sixty per cent. of my respondents united with the church because of a sense of duty, the duty, however, was rather towards God than towards other members of the congregation. The duty, furthermore, was voluntarily accepted and in nearly every instance the writers have gladly remained in the church. The others united with the church because of persuasion or for reasons which they cannot clearly formulate.

When it comes to the effect of church attendance the influence, as has been seen, is not so generally of one kind, although those who do attend find it pleasant and most always helpful. Those who do not attend really do not wish to do so; and the reasons offered are poverty, not welcome by the members, or unattractive services. These reasons are often no more than excuses. Poverty does not militate against other free public gatherings. Inability to dress well may indeed prevent a sensitive person

from feeling at home in the wealthier and more aristocratic churches, as the same conditions exercise a selective effect upon the audiences which visit the high-priced theatres and lectures. But in every city of size there are usually churches of the preferred denomination which are not missions and are yet of such character as to enable the poorest to feel at ease.

The second reason given, unfriendliness of the members, is, so far as personal experience extends, without sufficient foundation in fact. I have gone as a total stranger to churches in cities, towns and in the country and have always felt more than welcome. We have heard of the pastor who preached a sermon on "The Recognition of Friends in Heaven," and was told by a hearer that it would be better to preach on recognizing friends on earth, for he had been a church member twenty years and no one had spoken to him in church during that time. It is a good story for those who want that kind. But the query arises, What was the man doing meanwhile? He probably would not charge it against the management or the people if he attended lectures and concerts without being greeted. There are two handles to this criticism. There are timid people in the church as well as out of it, and a church that advertises its services as free and announces a welcome to all ought to be taken at its word.

However unwise it is to allow any supposed lack of brotherliness to keep one from the church, in view of this current criticism and the diffidence of many strangers, there is not the manifestation of cordial welcome there should be. The church member is in

a sense the host of a non-church member and visitor and should make a positive effort to greet the stranger. There is no defense for indifference. It is in my mind, however, that a chief source of this criticism is with the church members themselves. With some degree of regularity there have appeared before me self-constituted committees who wail over "the lack of friendliness in our church." When the time comes for the drying of eyes, this is accomplished by the query, "How long since you welcomed a stranger in the church? Why are you not friendly?"

Professor Wyckoff in his studies among the working men reaches a suggestive conclusion about this problem of church-going. He believes that the poorer people do not attend churches because they have too much self-respect. And he explains. Churches cost money to erect and to maintain. In some, each service is equal to the expense of a high-class lecture; the minister and choir are well paid. Everything is on an expensive scale. The poor person sitting in the pew knows this and realizes that he cannot contribute his share of the cost; he is uncomfortable because he does not wish to receive what he cannot pay for and he therefore remains away. This reason may apply to a few, but not to many. If self-respect will not let one be at ease in an aristocratic church, then a worthier self-respect would cause him to worship where he will feel at home. The best and finest church in the metropolis is none too good for the poorest outcast or the meanest Magdalene, but if the suggestions of the magnificence are not pleasant, one should still be a worshipper. We do not refuse the joys and comforts and protection of our homes

because they are not located on Commonwealth Avenue and faced with brown stone. And indeed these objections are not found to apply among Catholics where the churches and services rival in splendour those of the most prosperous Protestants.

It has been suggested by some that our plea for sociability in the churches is an attempt to create a social equality and that it fails because it is artificial and therefore impossible. Within the church building, members address one another as "Brother" and "Sister" and often forget the implied relationship when outside the doors. In business and in social life, the brotherhood is not recognized to any appreciable extent. There are certain reasons for this seeming indifference. There are barriers of temperament and training which prevent any one equally liking all others. Our likes and dislikes scarcely submit to an analysis, and friendship is based upon indefinable characteristics. These are not always consummated in the church, nor are they to be discovered by the casual meetings there. Furthermore, the ease with which one may become a member of a church exposes the organization to more dangers from imposture than we like to acknowledge; and however warm one's heart may be, he is soon forced to a painful degree of incredulity. All persons should recognize these necessary limitations and not hold the people of a church responsible for unavoidable conditions and insist when one enters a church he should immediately have every door open to him. But all Christians should constantly seek to have it said of them, "See how those Christians love one another." We have not attained to the

full statute of social equality which is possible. Social gatherings in the church and in the homes are of inestimable value when the object is sociability.

In this connection it is well to recognize the baneful influence of church fairs, tableaux, and all schemes to make money. They may promote sociability, but such affairs are almost exclusively managed by those who know one another well and the incidental fellowship engendered among those who are patrons is more than counterbalanced by ill effects. There is no more insidious evil within many of our churches than this everlasting scheming to make money by left-handed methods for paying the expenses of the organization. Our Lord's curse upon the money changers in the temple has never been lifted. They take from the church its dignity, make it an offense to those who most need its ministries and squander the energies which should be used to make men better.

If God has any claim upon our substance, it is fair and square and should be so treated. In the properly regulated church society, women will be saved the sweating and stewing in a church kitchen. We blame the ancient monarch who thought himself a king when spending his time carving faces upon cherry seeds, while we ourselves dissipate energies intended for weightier matters.

The church needs the social gathering, but it should be for no ulterior purposes. And thus will one line dividing the poor and the rich be erased, thus will it be feasible to constrain the unchurched to mingle with church members and both be helped. It is possible to train a congregation to give only by being

bribed, but it never makes for the spiritual well-being of that people. Nor do they really enjoy it after they have once learned the pleasure of paying to the Lord what they owe. Men prefer to be treated fairly ; and if so treated, they will pay for what they receive.

It may be an encouragement to know of a congregation which raised $55,000 for a new edifice without a single person being personally asked for a contribution. Sermons on giving were preached ; plain, descriptive letters concerning the proposed enterprise were mailed to all members ; blank, interest-bearing promissory notes were inclosed and on two designated days the offerings were received. No one except the members of the committee necessary to handle the funds knows what any person gave. Each one made his gift before God and not before men. The result was enough money and a joyful sense of honesty. There were many social gatherings at which refreshments were served, but the expenses were paid from the church treasury. Why not? Any unbusiness-like methods or childish devices employed to care for the church finances serve to make the church unattractive and destroy the genuine dignity necessary for a proper respect.

Another reason why people are not more generally found in the church is because the services are not sufficiently interesting. There are some unavoidable defects which no one more fully realizes than the preacher and his congregation. In the first place, it is simply impossible for a minister to prepare two sermons of merit each week and to be polished and faultless in their delivery. We are accustomed to

hear lecturers give an address whose preparation has cost them months of labour, which includes the best of all they know, which has been delivered scores of times; and because the next man we hear in the pulpit falls below that standard, we deplore the mediocrity of the clergy.

In the next place, nearly every church could offer better services if it had greater means. Often the building itself is utterly unfit. And the support for the minister is frequently barely sufficient to keep his body alive, leaving nothing over for the culture of his mind. I knew one pastor whose yearly expenditure for "literature" was a dollar for the county paper. Tradition tells of a man who on a wager once made a whistle out of a pig's tail, and another who donated two bushels of saw-dust to the Aid Society for a supper; but neither the whistle nor the supper was good. The vast majority of ministers and Christian people are honestly trying, and are earnestly doing the best they can with what they have. And they are limited in their success because of the small means at their command and because they themselves are naturally less than perfect.

Compared with those of the past, however, the sermon of to-day is immeasurably better. During the Middle Ages, sermons were comparatively few and mostly supplied by the preaching friars. A contemporary observes that by and by "their sermons had become mere strings of platitudes, freely interspersed with irrelevant, and even indecent, stories and jests to gain the popular ear." (*The Church Times*, London, Sept. 11, 1896.) For a century or more after the Reformation, the sermon assumed a greater promi-

nence, but it still was of an inferior sort. Samuel Pepys records in his diary that he heard "a cold sermon," "a poor dry sermon," "a poor cold sermon," "an indifferent sermon," "the preacher read all, and his sermon very simple," "went to church and heard a simple fellow." There are those who duplicate this testimony to-day, but they may not have the judgment of Samuel Pepys.

There is always danger that any work will become mechanical and perfunctory; and those who desire the church to increase in communicants seldom do more than assume a passive willingness. In every congregation the duty of maintaining and promoting the church is really accepted by about one-third or one-half of the membership. A fruitful revival would be such as quickens the dormant self; and tactful persistence towards that end may well engage the vitally interested. Many social calls upon the indifferent with frequent reminders of the services, the expressed conviction that every member should contribute to the church though it be but a cent a week, and the emphasized assurance that the church belongs to all, cannot fail to result in good. The careless wish these attentions; many are inactive because they think they are not needed or not wanted. I find countless hearts hungry for the insistent invitation to join the hewers of wood and drawers of water; but they will not leave their place of mere on-looking unless they are convinced that they are needed and wanted.

Were the entire membership of a church, however small, actually living up to the privileges offered and genuinely believing the profession made, the result

would be an influence upon the community simply irresistible. One may recognize the objective hindrances to such complete success, but they would largely vanish were the subjective apathy kindled to an aggressive faith that God is actually in the midst of His people and that perfect trust in Him is highest wisdom.

XVII

THE DELIVERY OF SERMONS

"Preaching is . . . to struggle with ignorance, and discover to the inquiring minds of the masses the clear cerulean blue of heavenly truth."—*Ballou.*

"The heart is the source of all true eloquence."—*Longinus.*

"I want my pastor to come to me in the spirit of the gospel, saying, 'You are mortal; your probation is brief; your work must be done speedily. You are immortal, too; you are hastening to the bar of God; the Judge even now standest at the door!' When I am thus admonished, I have no disposition either to muse or to sleep."—*Daniel Webster.*

"I would have every minister of the gospel address his audience with the zeal of a friend, with the generous energy of a father, and with the exuberant affection of a mother."—*Fenelon.*

XVII

THE DELIVERY OF SERMONS

THE sermon is the leading feature of public worship. By it the truth needful for the transformation of life is presented. Instruction precedes reformation, for one must know whither and how he should go before he will leave his present course. The sermon is charged with the duty of declaring how man may find God and complete the relationship of Father and son; and the manner in which this is presented is not of negligible unimportance. Bare truth is not always convincing; certainly not so convincing as the same truth glorified by its proper setting. Charged with the momentous work of persuading souls for eternity, the preacher may well hesitate until he has brought to his aid every power which he can summon or acquire.

To speak of the delivery of sermons is to open the entire field of rhetoric and elocution. We can no more than here suggest what seems to us some practical helps towards rendering the message more effective. From the questions and answers there comes the unqualified judgment of fifty-six per cent. of the respondents that sermons delivered without the aid of manuscripts are better than those which are read. Only eight per cent. express so strong a preference for the sermon which is read; while sixteen per cent. have no choice in the matter. The remainder either do

not express a judgment or say that it all depends upon the delivery, some preachers reading better than they speak extemporaneously and others excelling without the manuscript or notes. There is a strong preference for the extemporaneously delivered sermon when other things are equal. Two of the correspondents criticise the poor language of the unwritten sermon, but all find a fire and freedom in it that are potent and much liked. A congregation wants to feel that the preacher is masterful ; that he not only knows his subject but is also in full possession of himself. The manuscript is a sign of weakness, or, at least, of not having attained the highest ability possible. The inexactness of speech which attaches so often to sermons without manuscript will disappear if there be much careful, concise and perspicuous writing, and if all conversation be guarded. When one is careless of his speech for six days, he cannot be circumspect on the seventh.

One of the most serious obstacles to cogent preaching is ministerial mannerisms. Their only explanation is gross ignorance, indolence, or inattention. One preacher still in the "effective ranks" emphasizes his deliverances by violent blows upon his chest and stomach which send forth the final words of a sentence like the expiring spurt of a force pump. A stranger is overwrought with anxiety lest something give way, and later he is afraid it will not. Another preacher is continually stretching for an invisible something about six inches higher than he can reach. I had a boyhood preacher who contributed to his prayer by seizing his knee and beating it violently against the floor. Then there are the walkers, a few

jumpers, hair-tearers, weepers and nose-blowers. Every obtrusive and unusual activity distracts the hearers, dissipates attention and unconsciously offends a normal taste. Vocal mannerisms are as common. The monotone, the sweetness of a crooning baby quickly mounting to the wail of torture, the "holy tone," the hysterical sniffling, the ponderous outpour, thin words lost in inaudibility, the purring pleading and the volcanic shriek—these are not wholly indigenous to the political platform. A preacher should have a truthful friend who will tell him what he does in the pulpit; one who can perceive the first rootings of an evil way, who can indicate the too frequent recurrence of certain phrases and expressions, who is able to measure effects, good and bad, of various kinds of sermons, who will serve as a kind of thermometer for the preacher. It is an invaluable help to a public speaker to have the unsparing and competent critic.

In some quarters there is a belief that elocutionary training is a simile for unnaturalness and insincerity. If it can produce an unnaturalness which is different from the "naturalness" sometimes observed, there is little risk assumed in receiving such training. There are few indeed who will not find that their ordinary methods of speaking are less cogent than they could be. The orator is not born; he is born with potential oratorical gifts which may be developed. These gifts to some men are greater than to others, but no man has the fullness of his powers without cultivating them. And there is no more danger of insincerity resulting from the training incident to effective public speaking than there is in the study of English grammar,

than there is in laying aside the colloquialisms of a district for the chaste expressions of correct rhetoric.

Without exception, so far as I am informed, the greatest orators of the world have been the greatest learners in the art of oratory; and they learned by studying. It is true that a genius cannot make a Laocoon out of a piece of sandstone, nor will a genius carve out the marble angel unless he gives heed to the highest principles of sculpture. Says Curran, "It will never do for a man to turn painter merely on the strength of having a pot of colours by him, unless he knows how to lay them on." But plus what God gives, a man must be what he can give himself. He may know better how to train himself than any teacher does, but trained he must be. God's plans never contemplate success for a person who does not earn it by work. Did they do so, we would be a race of soft idlers.

All men are not intended to be orators of the first order. They are needed. And a minister's call ought to include the consideration of whether the man has the native capacities for effective pulpit leadership. One of the highest endowments for such masterfulness is a good voice. It is the voice which has an indefinable power to play upon the responsive chords of human souls. "The speaking eye, the apt gesture, the written word, and the sculptured or painted logic are comparatively dead things; it is the voice that has life,—that has power to thrill, to exalt, to melt, to persuade and to appeal. It is the instrument of passion as well as of thought, and is capable of the most wonderful varieties of modulation.

By distinct and significant sounds the emotions are betrayed; and when these sounds reach the ear simultaneously with the appeals of the looks and the gesture to the eye, the effect is irresistible. Even persons unaffected by music, are often subdued by the gentle accents of the voice or roused by its deep intonations." (Mathews, "Oratory and Orators," p. 74.) It is possible to bring out of the normal voice capacities which are undreamed of. Correct habits of life, proper methods of breathing, alert attention to catch the sweet note, the flat and high tone, faithful practice in the use of pleasing intonations, will by and by transform the harsh guttural to rhythmic tunefulness. Madame Malibran, the talented singer, was able to embrace three octaves in her vocalism, but it was by study that she added a full octave to her range. Concerning the last note, she said, "For three months I have been running after it, I have pursued it everywhere."

How many times the comment is heard as we pass out of church, "An excellent sermon, but marred by a bad voice!" Said a friend, "You will not enjoy hearing Mr. A the first time, you will have to get used to his unpleasant voice." On the other hand, we have been delighted by sermons which were chiefly sound, but it was sweet and entrancing. In fact some of the most successful ministers have little to recommend them except a voice of singular melody, a pleasing accent, a round fullness, a vocalism that never lets slip a suspicion of roughness or nasality. They charm their hearers as does the flute player or an accomplished singer. And when the sermon is finished you are in a spell, but if you ask yourself

what you have received, it will be difficult to tell. You know, however, that an impression has been produced upon the soul which is wholesome and you resolve to live up to the plane of that strange music which thrills you.

If the minister is not willing to pay the price for an excellent voice he is certainly culpable if he does not master it sufficiently to make himself easily understood. Hearers must not be compelled to waste energy in an effort to understand the words which are being used. The mumbling and the mincing, the ranting and the shrieking are at the ends of a scale that ought either to be shortened or tuned to distinctness. But there is no reason why a man should be understood only as he speaks the middle tones. A little attention would show the minister that really he is foolish to attempt to lead people by unintelligible sounds which blur and hide the pregnant words of a sentence which cannot be spared.

There is too great a tendency to expect that truth will itself be convincing. Truths which amount to anything must be put into a man's life by dint of effort; if it is to change his life it must be driven to his heart, and a single stroke seldom suffices. The lawyer goes over one fact again and again, holding it up to all points of view until he is sure it has entered the mind of the last juryman. He uses feeling as well as reason and presses a man on every side.

The preacher is disadvantaged in being obliged to secure the attention of his hearers. They are not compelled to attend to him. But they will attend to what interests them and they are interested in what personally concerns them. In securing interest,

primacy surely attaches to feeling. Ribot somewhere says, "The blind faith in the power of ideas is, in practice, an inexhaustible source of illusion and error. An idea which is only an idea, a simple fact of knowledge, produces nothing and does nothing; it only acts if it is felt, if it is accompanied by an effective state, if it awakens tendencies,—that is motor elements. The intellect is not a fundamental constituent of character; it is its light but not its life, nor, consequently, its action." In the same line, Dr. Hall says, "The value of your teaching is not the information you have put into the mind, but the interest you have awakened. If the heart is trained, the rest grows out of it." "*Le cœur a ses raisons, que le raison ne connait pas.*" (Pascal.) "If your heart does not want a world of moral reality, your head will assuredly never make you believe in one." (James, "Will to Believe," p. 23.)

These statements are true in a qualified sense. Out of the heart are the issues of life in the sense that the heart (or feeling) conditions interest, and interest is the essential of attention, and attention is the prerequisite of thought, and it is thought which is the immediate cause of action. Every person may to some extent verify another conclusion of Professor James that there does exist this absolute necessity for one to obey his thoughts. The importance of thought is self-evident and the value of feeling, as enlisting that attention and interest which enable one steadily to hold to one thought, is also of the highest order. We know that thought must precede every deliberate volition; and a principal reason why the Christian acts better than the non-Christian is because he at-

tends to thoughts which are wholesome while the other does not.

The secret of attention is interest. The Christian is interested in good, in charity, kindness, purity, helpfulness, forgiveness and the like. He holds such thoughts in his mind and they determine for him the very nature of his deliberate acts. The wicked man is interested in self on a low plane, in schemes of sensual enjoyment, personal aggrandizement and egotistic preferment. His attention is absorbed in the consideration of whatever conduces to such ends, and his mental content is dominated by unrighteous thoughts. The good man has evil thoughts also, but he thrusts them away as unwelcome intruders; the evil man has good thoughts, but he refuses to allow them to tarry in his mind.

Interest determines what thoughts shall be allowed to remain, and interest does largely depend upon how one feels about it. One of the wickedest men I ever knew was intensely interested in heaven when his little child died. Until that time he had hated preachers with a perfect hatred, but in the greatness of his sorrow he was able to submerge a thousand prejudices in the interest of what his breaking heart coveted.

How can a preacher enlist the feelings, is a practical question. The counsel of Horace is that if you would have me weep, you must first do so yourself. And we recall the advice given by Tallyrand to M. Comte when the latter was bewailing the meagre acceptance of his Positivism; he was to get himself crucified and then would people be moved to believe him. When Handel was composing the Hallelujah

he said, "I did think I did see all heaven before me and the great God Himself." And often during the writing of his compositions his tears fell upon the paper before him. An essential to moving others is to be first moved yourself.

A preacher does a formal work who is not possessed by his work so powerfully that, like him of old, he scarcely knows whether he is in the body or out of it. "Cold speech," "perfunctory sermon," are criticisms that apply to the sermon when the minister is not aflame with an earnestness of conviction. We do not mean to suggest that a preacher should work himself into a fury for the pulpit, or that he should become a weeping Jeremiah. But he must be alive or his people will be dead. Whitefield found that congregations were dead to the message because dead men preached it to them. There can be no real persuasion of another unless the speaker first feels with an intensity that burns from the heart. And I am willing to venture the opinion that any sermon worth preaching at all has enough depending upon it to make the preacher tremble and to fill him with a fervour and genuineness of feeling that will become contagious.

If a man fail to call forth feeling by the intensity of his own emotion, he may yet present his subject upon the plane of his hearers where their hearts and interests are. Home, business, love, marriage, children, patriotism, success, death, are themes which engage the very centre of one's being. Religion interfuses and sanctifies them all, and no preacher need lack for opportunities to put himself in such contact with human feeling as will permit him to

enter into the secret sources of an individual's motives.

Attention is furthermore secured by repetition. To quote again from Mathews: "It has been justly said that there is for every man a statement possible of that truth which he is most unwilling to receive,—a statement possible, so broad and so pungent that he cannot get away from it, but must either bend to it or die of it. By dint of perseverance and reiteration the orator may produce an impression which no single blow, however vigorously struck, would make. A lodgment is made in the heart, and if it be steadily followed up, though he cannot be stormed, he may be sapped, and at last find it convenient to capitulate." ("Oratory and Orators," p. 56.)

This is in obedience to the simplest principles of psychology. If a first impression is not sufficient to secure the attention needed for a motor discharge or a judgment of ratification, many impressions will be able to do so. The strength of the most powerful sermons largely rests in besieging the citadel of human consent upon all sides by presenting one principal idea under many forms. No illustration or incidental thought, however attractive in itself, should obscure for a moment the central theme. The temporary withdrawal and the return with added argument must not long keep the mind from the main thesis. It is a loss to allow sufficient time in which contradictory ideas may enter to interrupt the impression being made by the principal thought. No serious weakness is more common than the interfusion of many ideas, each one of which is worthy and influential; but any withdrawal from the leading

thought unconsciously obscures its importance. Sir William Hamilton says, "The act of the conative faculty is exerted by relation to a certain law of consciousness, or knowledge, or intelligence. This law, which we call the law of limitation, is that the *intension* of our knowledge is in the inverse ratio of its *extension*—in other words, that the fewer objects we consider at once, the clearer and more distinct will be our knowledge of them." ("Lectures on Metaphysics," Lecture XIV.) When a hundred drops of water fall upon one spot of the human body they will make a man writhe with pain, but if they are scattered the effect is that of a spring shower.

It is possible to name with some degree of accuracy those elements which are required in a preacher for the effective delivery of sermons. (1) There must be an undisputed conviction of the value of the truth which is being declared. Otherwise there is little ground to hope for that feeling of interest in others which is necessary to convince them. (2) Clear cut recognition of what is intended to be accomplished by a particular sermon at a particular time is most essential. This will give unity and forcefulness of presentation, and largely increase the chances of success. The western cowboy never sights along his revolver; he "sees" what he wants to hit and "throws" the bullet at it. A preacher should clearly see his object and be able intuitively to keep the entire discourse centred upon the one end desired. (3) Let the speaker be in sympathy with his congregation. Not only should his thought meet the thought of his hearers upon the plane of interest and like-mindedness, but his heart must respond to theirs.

If in anger he censures them, it would be a miracle if he accomplished what he purposed. But if he himself bears the sorrows of their errors, he can rebuke successfully. (4) The speaker must not enter the pulpit without feeling that God is with him, and supporting his message. The old minister who kept his congregation waiting while he prayed was making sure of a strong sermon. The messenger who heard him in prayer saying that he would not go a step unless God went with him, returned and told the congregation to wait, that soon they would have a sermon to remember all their lives. And they did. So also will every people whose pastor trusts much in the power of his own preparation for the six days and on the Sabbath claims God's directing promises and presence. But it should be remembered that God will not go with a man on Sunday who has been lazy during the week.

The method of conveying truth to another person in order to effect an active acceptance is one involving all the principles of intuitive and acquired wisdom. The preacher must know that circumstances alter cases and that he is largely to direct the circumstances which are to alter the soul-state of man. The conditions with which he is engaged are within and without the man who faces him asking consciously or unconsciously for help. When the minister has mastered the motives of the man and has a proper equipment for himself, he has gained the citadel of a human soul.

XVIII

THE MINOR PARTS OF PUBLIC WORSHIP

"The best days of the Church have always been its singing days."—*Cuyler.*

"O blessed prayer! Thou art the unwearied conqueror of human woes; the firm foundation of human happiness; the source of every during joy; the mother of philosophy."—*Chrysostom.*

"If thou desire to profit, read with humility, simplicity, and faithfulness; nor even desire the repute of learning."—*Thomas à Kempis.*

XVIII

THE MINOR PARTS OF PUBLIC WORSHIP

In addition to the sermon, the service of public worship usually includes vocal and instrumental music, the offering of prayer and the reading of Scriptures. To discuss the sacramental services, the occasional address and the place of money-giving as expressions of worship would too greatly increase the length of this paper. Having the aid of the opinions of many persons, we shall consider the minor features of the usual service that it may appear wherein they are attractive and helpful and wherein they fail.

Music has universally been an element in religious services, and in public worship it holds a leading place. Next to the sermon it ranks in capability for doing good. Thought is deeper than speech, and feeling is deeper than thought, says Christopher Cranch ; and in every soul there lie feelings that are too deep for words, feelings that cannot be expressed by language and that cannot be awakened by language.

It is music which plays upon those hidden chords of man's nature, revealing his treasures to himself. There is no utterance so divine ; under its spell we cease to inhabit earth and find ourselves forgetful of time, dwelling in the eternities. Mozart wrote to his sister in musical compositions, being able thereby to open his heart in a way that words failed to do. So

the Infinite delivers messages to men in the concord of sounds, which they otherwise would fail to understand. There is no more powerful auxiliary for the preacher than good music. It prepares for the reception of spiritual truth by quieting, calming and uplifting the hearers. Under its sweet potency the inner strife is hushed and men, no longer following each his own thoughts, are swept into a common current of reverent aspiration.

Among those who reply to the list of questions there is not one who fails to speak of the very helpful influence of good music. Sometimes it is preferred to the sermon because of the character and permanence of its impressions. "It makes me want to be good," says one; and others say, "thrills me and lifts my gloom," "inspiring often when the sermon fails," "puts me in condition to receive the sermon," "appeals to the highest in me," "it brings back the songs of mother in my childhood," "takes me to the church oftener than the sermon does," "elevating to my soul," "inspiring," etc.

These judgments are sometimes qualified by the demand that the music shall be "not frivolous," "not difficult or slow," "good old-fashioned hymns," "not the soft-sawder that we have in too many Sunday-school books," etc. Others require that the choir shall possess something more than good voices. "I know a choir that might sing like seraphs and they would not reach me. Their singing has the effect of blasphemy upon me." "I heard coloured folks singing without instruments; it was very much better than your 'operatic,'" "the most obnoxious thing to me in connection with the church is the

character of those who so often have a leading part in the choir," etc.

If the moral character of a preacher affect his sermon, certainly the same is true of those who lead a congregation in song. It is a shame to give non-Christians a directing function in public worship. For if spiritual things are spiritually discerned, how can spiritual hymns be interpreted by the unspiritual? If the congregation seek entertainment and no more, the artistic rendering of music will suffice. The hymn writers interpret in their compositions the soul of God and man, and this interpretation should be made for the congregation by the leaders in song.

Vocal music is the choice of seventy-two per cent. of the correspondents, instrumental is preferred by twelve per cent., and sixteen per cent. have no preference. They desire the choir to lead the congregation and not do all the singing. The choir is also to sing intelligibly and not put up a sweet chorus of incoherence. The best singing is conceived to be that where all take part, the choir being capable and trained for leadership.

The difference in the effects of sacred and secular music is indistinguishable by twelve per cent. The other respondents say, "their suggestions differ," "sacred induces meditation," "secular is passing," "secular is often harmful," "sacred lasts, secular quickly passes," "in the one my soul goes out to God, in the other there is merely enjoyment," "the sacred helps, the secular pleases," "secular lacks the Spirit," "genuinely sacred is better; no difference if both be poor," "the sacred abides," etc.

With eighty per cent. the influences of music are

lasting, especially of sacred music: "sentiments never die," "the hymns are like the voice of God," "I hear it ever after," "yes, for years," "I hum the hymns for days about my work," "they last; they ring in my ears still," "I rejoice that what moves me so deeply is devoted in its best and most effective manifestations to God's service," "I am often found humming or repeating sentences of a song," etc.

The "soft-sawder" kind of hymn has been mentioned. Its only excuse is a catchy tune and that is often sensuous and suggestive of evil. It is really difficult to find an abundance of hymns which are first-class in words and music. Either the words will be soft and meritless or the tune will be a jangling jingle. A hymn is worship emphatically, and ought to be the out-breathing of a soul towards God. It ought to be able to represent the very deepest yearning, aspiration, confession, consecration and prayer. Words which do this are spoiled when attached to a senseless tune, and a good tune cannot redeem the weakness of frivolous sentiments. Each is helpmate to the other and neither is worth much without its complement.

Every hymn has to be young some time, but somehow the hymn of many years is greatly advantaged over the new, even though quality be not different. For hymns surround themselves with sentiments; the lullaby hymn of the mother attains a preciousness for the child which age serves only to increase; the hymns sung in boyhood when all of us were in the family pew are dearer than the finest now sung in richest cathedral; the hymns of the sacrament of holy communion that were sung when father and mother

and friends, with glad tears which then we did not understand, went to the sacred rail, have a power that never leaves them and which does not belong to other hymns. Every one has his favourite songs, but there is a considerable body of universal favourites which no church can afford not to use with great frequency.

The instrumental accompaniment to singing can contribute to, or mar, the wholesome effect of the entire service. There is a great deal of pianola playing in churches, "performers" whose souls are dormant, mechanical automatons whose executions are scientifically correct and religiously abominable. I have seen a congregation moved to tears by the playing of "Nearer, my God, to Thee," and I have seen persons keeping waltz time with their feet when another played the same hymn. Said Beecher in speaking of his organist at Plymouth Church, "So long he had been trained, that what words are to us notes were to him; and he expressed every thought and every feeling that he had upon the instrument. And you would think he did it if you heard him in his inspired moments on the organ. It has brought tears to my eyes a hundred times. I have gone in jaded and unhearted, and have been caught up by him and lifted so that I saw the flash of the gates! I have been comforted; I have been helped. And if I have preached to him and helped him—and I know I have—he has preached to me and helped me; and he knows not, and never will know, how much." ("Yale Lectures," II, p. 123.)

It will be a surprise to many to know that eighty per cent. of all who have replied to the question list pray

regularly. Prayer, perhaps more than anything else, reveals the real religious state of a person. And it tells us furthermore that, in spite of doubts and faults with the church and personal weaknesses, the individual yet acknowledges the closest relationship to God,—that of Father and child. Less than eight per cent. confess that they never pray, and even with some of these there is an act which corresponds to prayer. They "adore," "contemplate," or "will." Only one person repudiates the whole doctrine.

The necessity of prayer in the religious life is undisputed; it is the soul's breath, and spiritual development cannot proceed without it. In the public service it assumes a place scarcely less important than its private functions. Prayer is always personal, and he who "leads in prayer" needs every preparation in self-knowledge, sincerity and self-forgetfulness. He must enable other souls to bare themselves before God in personal communion. The time-tried prayers of a ritual have a force and beauty corresponding to that of the old hymns. They express the general heart state, the yearnings which are common to men; but the individual and particular, the real conditions which give potency and fervour to a prayer, are missing. A petition from a city or a state may go to the governor, and every citizen have a genuine interest in it; but the deepest prayer, the sincerest supplication, proceeds from the man who stands face to face with the ruler asking for some special thing for himself or loved one. We cannot dispense with the public prayer, even though the form be given to us; it is indeed direction, help, life to all, but the individual prayer, the private prayer,

has a depth and potency which lift and empower and enlarge as no other prayer can.

In some public prayers, it is true, all may unite. When the minister has the interpreting heart which gathers to itself the hearts of his people, when his sympathies are so broad as to take in every home, when he has a sensitiveness of spirit which causes him to quiver with the emotions of his hearers, he may then *lead* in prayer. The majority of ministers give but little preparation to their public prayers and this negligence shears them of strength to comfort and inspire. If a man prays for me as I would pray for myself, if he asks help for needs of which I scarcely was aware, he comes into my heart to guide my life ; if he interprets my life, he is God's prophet whom I gladly follow. The same prayer, however, service after service, with little sense or spirit, a five minutes' declaration of purpose before God, is a shame and blasphemy. A shepherd of souls should have done with it.

In the Protestant pulpit, the Bible has always held a preëminent place. Sometimes it has remained upon the desk as a kind of fetich, as it does in its ponderous tomes upon many parlour centre tables, but it is the word that is preached about even if it is not itself really preached. The usual Scripture reading in public worship, however, is like a bit of landscape flashed upon the screen before persons who are told that it is a scene in Manchuria, California, or Ethiopia ; and that is all they know about it. The preacher selects a few verses from the Bible, reads it and says they are found in Genesis, Jeremiah, or Jude. The context is a blank ; four inches square

are cut from a dress and the congregation is expected to have an intelligent notion about the whole garment. When the hearers have no further help, it is not strange that some conceptions of the Scriptures are grotesque and ignorant. No wonder that people are to be found who confess that they are not interested in the Bible. Can a person dip into any book in a haphazard way, read a page in the middle or at the close and be profitably interested? He may if it be a dictionary or encyclopedia, but the Bible is neither. A principal charm of Mark Guy Pearse's pulpit ministry is his reading of the Scriptures. Each portion receives a local setting, a few words sufficing to make clear its place in the context. A paraphrase, an etymological side-light, a hidden meaning, the significance of the whole lesson, all serve to make the selection interesting, intelligible and spiritually helpful.

Thoughtful consideration of purpose and careful preparation for each part will add much to the beauty and value of public worship. No part of the service will take care of itself. The minister is the responsible head, and it is his function to see that the entire service has a balance and a harmony which please, inspire and edify. A deficiency anywhere will weaken the total effect and send the worshipper away with a need unsatisfied. When, however, there is no felt incongruity but, instead, a sense of every want of the soul measurably supplied, the worshipper will realize that he has been sitting in a heavenly place and has caught a message from the heights.

XIX

OTHER SERVICES

"The soul needs the unity which comes from devotion to something infinite, perfect, the ideal beauty and goodness of things. This unites the heart and life, and prevents it from being wasted and distracted in the endless variety of nature."—*J. F. Clarke.*

"Mere sensibility is not saving. Many are affected by the tragedy of the cross, who will not deny themselves a single indulgence for His sake who hung upon it."—*Punchard.*

"Believers are mirrors to reflect the glory of God. A mirror, if placed opposite to a luminous object, will reflect its rays, and show distinctly its image. Such is the Christian man under the Gospel."—*Salter.*

XIX

OTHER SERVICES

PUBLIC worship is the principal source and support of the Christian life. It is a service of teaching, of acceptance of that teaching, of praise and of communion. It does not, however, adequately respond to all the complex religious demands of the people. Sufficient and definite instruction in the Scriptures is not afforded, and therefore the Sunday-school is maintained with classes suited to the scholars' abilities. Neither does public worship enough enlist the personal responsibility and free enthusiasm of youth, and consequently the young peoples' societies are organized. The six days between Sunday and Sunday are properly interrupted in their secularity for the mid-week prayer-meeting. The love-feast and class meeting respond to those who realize the further need of fellowship in Christian life, mutual care and testimony.

Missionary meetings, temperance meetings, aid societies, teachers' meetings, men's clubs, mothers' meetings and the like have more special objects and may not be discussed within our limits. A brief consideration will, however, be given to the principal religious services in the church aside from that of public worship.

The class meeting and the love-feast which prevailed in some of the denominations, notably the Methodist Episcopal, a few years ago, have largely

disappeared. The latter is a beautiful service. If the underlying thought of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper be the loving approach to God, the thought represented by the love-feast is that of the second commandment, love to brother man. It is a practical exercise of religious feeling and an encouragement to have "liberty." The spontaneous hymn and the testimony tend to overcome that inhibition of feeling which marks the "respectable" and dead church to-day.

The same considerations apply to the class meetings. But they possess the added value of the oversight rendered by class leaders. No preacher is able to be the pastor he should be and at the same time maintain the highest standard of preaching. It is simply a human impossibility for one man to do more than one man's work. Every class leader is an assistant pastor and his services have been strangely blessed. The meeting itself is a school of prayer, a forum of Christian experience, a family circle of counsel and a good Samaritan society of help. It gave power to a powerful church and it should be revived.

It is not pleasant to be reminded of the prevailing indifference to the prayer meeting, but it is less pleasant to learn that a large number of Christians do not find it of any benefit. Of the respondents to the question list, forty-four per cent. attend the mid-week service, sixteen per cent. do not for reasons unmentioned, twelve per cent. are unable to do so, while the remaining sixteen per cent. have not answered the question. It is regarded by twenty per cent. to be of no religious benefit, but many of these are of the

number who do not attend. Attendance seems not to be considered a duty as it is with public worship. Concerning the benefit that is received by those who attend, we quote: "It is a spiritual tonic," "better than preaching," "renews my spiritual strength," "the testimonies help me," "brings me near to God," "contributes to my spirituality," "gives me renewed courage," "takes away a pretty heavy burden," "binds the members of the church together," "as one is ready for each meal when it comes, so is one hungry for the services as they come," "helpful in the opportunity it gives me to testify," "it is the help of giving help," "a joint service helps all who take part," "I am there face to face with God in prayer," "by renewing my covenant," etc.

On the other hand, those who find no help in this service or who offer a suggestion for its improvement say, "too much lethargy," "those most prominent in the service are distasteful to me," "I disapprove of the long prayers," "drags out too long," "let it be more informal," "prayers that indicate a lack of confidence in God's wisdom," "members who give vent to statements they know nothing about," "proneness to get into a rut," "I regard them as hypocritical and unprofitable," etc. For the majority, the most valued parts of the service are the prayers and the testimonies.

The Sunday-school occupies a place second only in importance to the public worship. We find that forty-four per cent. of the respondents attend the Sunday-school regularly, a large proportion when it is recalled that all of the writers are adults, in years ranging from twenty to eighty-six. Of those who do

not attend, twenty-eight per cent. are prevented by distance from doing so, or by household cares, illness or age; eighteen per cent. are "not interested" or "do not know why," and the others do not answer the question.

With reference to the help received from the service, they say, "children attract me and I am in closer contact with people there," "I get my Bible knowledge there," "complete Bible study," "strength for daily needs," "gives me a knowledge of God's Word," "systematic study of the Scriptures," etc. The emphasis is almost universally placed upon Bible study as the real object and help of the school. It is here that an increasing proportion enter the Christian life and are conserved and indoctrinated throughout their later years.

The suggestions for the improvement of the school are such as one would naturally expect. "Our teachers are not efficient," "we need more parents there," "consecrated teachers are lacking," "the superintendent talks too much," "too much preliminary and not enough study time," "would go if I could find a truly great teacher," "competent teachers are rare," "do not particularly like my teacher," "use the Bible and not the quarterlies," etc.

With considerable regularity, the young people's societies are attended by forty per cent. Others say they are too old, have no such meetings, too far away or have family cares. Only one unfriendly criticism is offered upon their work: "They are a sham; seriousness is needed." Their influence is generally the same as that of the prayer meeting with the addition, however, of the opportunities for practical

work. The labours of mercy and help, such as prison visiting, waiting on the sick, the distribution of literature, flowers, food, clothing and medicine, have a superior value to the young. According to Professor James there is a tendency for a man to become what he does and, long before, it was promised that he who did the will of God should know of the doctrine. Out of the inspiration of the devotional services of the young people there grow these varied concrete realizations of worship which react upon life to make it still more truly religious. Much of the weakness and imperfection of the usual prayer meeting is traceable to the absence of these opportunities. If the meeting have a fervour which marks it as successful it brings the people to a high degree of feeling which ordinarily dies out without any response being made to it. Repetition tends to make the nature callous to real situations which actually call for genuine feeling and practical help ; and if the fervour of the prayer meeting does not express itself in some activity the whole service is apt to be merely a subjective pleasure of doubtful value. The young people are measurably saving themselves from this danger.

Among those persons from eighteen to thirty years of age there appears to be in general a finer type of religious life than is apparent among those who are from thirty to fifty years of age. This is evidenced by the larger place that the young are taking in the church, in philanthropic movements, in the cause of missions and in definite Bible study. If we confine ourselves to a somewhat extended consideration of the one subject of Bible study, I think we shall find reasons for this belief.

Of the respondents, every person of fifty years and over reads it regularly and has an orthodox belief concerning it. And the younger class treat it generally as do the older persons ; but the middle-aged are those who do not receive it with such approval and who read it but little or not at all. All of the following quotations are from this latter class : "a very poor Jewish history, the Old Testament and the New the writings of cranks and fanatics," "a standard book for information," "not different from the Koran," "it is like any other good book," "a very doubtful history of Jews and Gentiles," "it is very painful for me to read the New Testament because it reminds me of things I am not willing to do," "I simply enjoy reading parts of it," "I have respect for its philosophy, admiration for its poetry and disgust for its filth and cruelty," etc. The favourable opinions mentioned in another place are from the other two classes.

This surprising fact, in connection with a similar situation in regard to attendance at the regular public worship, at prayer meeting and at the young people's meeting, leads us to seek an explanation. There are two general reasons worthy to be offered ; one is negative indicating a destructive influence, and the other is positive speaking of a constructive movement.

The negative influence arose from an unsettled state of mind, religious and scientific, which was produced by the doctrine of evolution and the consequent critical studies of the Scriptures. The immature results of those researches were current a generation since. The church and science were grappling

with each other and, while each had much truth on its side, there was great bitterness and no essential matters were settled. The thought of the time became infused with questionings and doubts, having intensity of feeling sufficient to crystallize any belief into the stubbornness of bigotry. The blame must be divided : there is as much of unreason in science as in religion ; the bigotry of negation is just as intolerant as the bigotry of affirmation.

This unsettling period of transition occurred at the time when those who are now passing middle life were in their formative and receptive stages ; they were then receiving the content and method of their present thought, and these largely produced the man as he is to-day. Those of older years were fixed in their thought, preferences, methods and convictions before this wave of unrest struck them. They are the last of that Puritan type of religion in which man was taught that he stood face to face with God and who really believed it with his whole life. The younger generation has been met by a more fixed and settled state of thought than that with which its immediate predecessor was greeted. The great claims of science have been disproved and its predictions have not materialized. The unbending adherence to literalism on the part of religion has been broken. A vast content of essential truth, undisputed by either side and confirmed by both, has come to the present. It is truth which has been tested, it has passed through the fires, it bears the seal of approval of both science and religion. The young life of the present has been nourished on this, rather than on disputations and sweeping iconoclastic smashings.

A second reason for the improved religious life of the young is found in the rise of the young people's societies for Christian work. When the history of the last century shall have attained a proper perspective there will be no fact in the sphere of religion, and few in any other domain of affairs, that will appear to be of more significance than the growth of organized work for the kingdom among the young people. In these societies there is a return to the stable piety which was missed by the middle-aged, a return to faith which is now received, not blindly but upon a rational basis. In the work accomplished by the Young Men's Christian Association, the Young Women's Christian Association and the denominational societies there is a positive emphasis placed upon the study of the Scriptures. Within a few years a considerable literature has appeared upon methods and helps for Bible study. It is addressed principally to the young; and there is in this a reason for hope that succeeding times will witness a higher, a more substantial and rational religious life than ever before. A low estimate of the Bible and its neglect are both cause and consequence of irreligion; and the converse is equally true.

The present increasingly settled state of mind concerning the great doctrines of life, the unity of truth discovered by both religion and science, and the endeavour actively to incarnate those doctrines and truth in humanity assure the future of greater efficiency and satisfaction than have been known by the past for some generations.

No service of the church completes itself in an æsthetic or intellectual enjoyment. If the services

are strengthening, that strength must be used or it will be taken away; and if used, an increase of power results. The church is a centre of inspiration, of teaching, of enlistment; the world beyond its walls is the field for incarnating the vision and fighting the battle. No religious function begins to be all that it should be unless there is somewhere in it a place for blessed service. Any ritual, hymn or sermon that does not extend beyond the church is a seed sown upon bare rock, it is a plant shut out from light, heat and moisture. Attached to it is the eternal woe of selfishness, and a church which lives not beyond itself is a church that has no Divine life within itself.

Preachers are quite generally under the impression that pastoral visiting is appreciated by all the members of their congregation. They, of course, recall that the small boy at home years ago did not like to see the preacher coming, but they think that he got over it when he left knickerbockers. Some have not, if our correspondents are at all representative. True, there are few who do not care for the pastoral call, but the qualifications necessary to make the call fully acceptable so differ for each person that the pastor should have the omniscience which the small boy used to think he had, in order not to run into serious blunders. Concerning the lack of helpfulness in the call, we quote: "Very little," "if the pastor is helpful otherwise, I had rather he would not come," "I excuse the minister in favour of those who need him," "the same as a friend," "no way helpful," "not by my present pastor," etc. Those who are not helped constitute only twelve per cent. of the total number.

From those who appreciate the call, the following are quoted: "I like to be a comrade with him," "I never had a minister visit me without being helped," "certainly we are always glad to have him call," "it is good to know that he seeks out a poor parishioner," "Brother A. could preach, Brother B. could not; the latter visited us and he is all right, but A. failed with us," "let him always come with a message of cheer," "I feel he is interested in me," "seldom get a pastoral visit" (says a poor fellow in the penitentiary), "they are helpful visits," "yes, and I want him to inquire about my soul," "yes, but I do not want him to talk about my soul," "yes, but no shop talk," "I want him to point out my duty," "yes, but not professionally," "yes, I am helped when he prays in the house," etc.

Perhaps one-fourth of all go to some length in recommending more frequent pastoral visiting; and I am inclined to believe, in spite of the difficulties incident to it, that there is no more helpful function of pastoral duty and privilege than this. One intelligent college-bred woman sadly writes, "I never had a pastoral call. Once during an illness a member of my church called and repeated only a few verses of Scripture. It was very comforting and stands out a very sweet experience in my Christian life." And another says, "I think it would help one to feel he has the interest of a true minister of God. Cannot answer from experience."

However much the pastoral call is desired and necessary, there is a general aversion to the perfunctory, professional call. Neither do the people like the white tie, the long coat and the holy tone.

They prefer a man among men. In no part of a minister's work are more tact and intuitive judgment needed than in this. At what home to pray and where not to, when to speak of religious matters and when not to do so, what to avoid and what to discuss are the questions which no rules can determine. Each pastor must decide that himself upon the basis of all he knows of men in general and of the individual in particular. Certainly great discriminative judgment is needful, but let it be clearly acknowledged that the usefulness of the pastoral visit as such is not past. The man most influential spiritually among fifty pastors in a certain city is one who has never been an average preacher. A parishioner says of him, "His sermons are simply 'Be good and you will be all right,' but he is the greatest man we ever had in the church." He is an untiring pastor, calling day and night and missing no one. His is the loving heart, and his people find it their joy to be led by his sweet persuasiveness.

A pastor must visit in order to know his people; and know them he must for they are "side-lights" upon his texts. No man can do effective preaching Sunday after Sunday and not know the home and heart-life of those who sit before him. He must know them for his own sake. His ministerial conferences, his social gatherings, his formal functions will give him an unreal conception of life. He literally saves his influence by mingling closely with all kinds of people. The nondescript quack who administers cure-alls from a central office a thousand miles from the patient has as many chances of making the body well as the preacher has of making soul

cures who does not know his hearers. Pastoral visiting is a preacher's salvation from narrowness. It is his school of psychology, his laboratory wherein he acquires the knowledge that is to make him a user of methods suited to the ends desired. If he neglects that school there is no other that can supply its place.

In all the services of the church it is an important function of the minister to see that they are kept true to their proper object. Often there is an unconscious tendency for the merely incidental to become the leading feature. In some Sunday-schools two-thirds of the time is taken to open and close. Young people's societies easily become social gatherings or money-getting clubs. And the prayer meeting frequently resembles a preaching service or degenerates into a series of exhortations where four or five older persons admonish, adjure and intreat the absent membership. For all such there can be no satisfactory success religiously.

To avoid these results, the minister needs, first of all, a clear vision for himself of what the different services are intended to accomplish. Then with tact, courage and persistency, he may keep his hand on the helm and guide his church to wisdom and efficiency.

XX

CONCLUSION

"There is a face behind a face, which is sure to reveal itself, and if it be a face of light, it will scatter the clouds."—*F. N. Zabriskie.*

"If we work upon marble, it perishes ; if we work upon brass time will efface it ; if we rear temples, they will crumble into dust ; but if we work upon minds, if we imbue them with principles—with the just fear of God and our fellow man—we engrave on those tablets something which will brighten to all eternity."—*Daniel Webster.*

"If shadows are to fall from the truth, and falsehood die, the times challenge and demand souls who shall be filled with the instinct of help and wear on helmet and brow *Ich Dien*, souls ablaze with that love which ever 'seeketh not her own,' and who, trained for resolute, aggressive, and undaunted leadership, are examplars in interpreting every least task by the largest ideals."
—*M. W. Stryker.*

XX

CONCLUSION

DESPITE the errors of thought or of omission which the foregoing pages may indicate, I am certain of the truth of the two principal propositions. I am certain that the full purpose of the minister is embraced in the work of bringing man into conscious and practical relationship with God. This simply includes the upward reach of the human soul in its finiteness towards God, its eternal Source and Centre of being; and the outgoing manifestations of the inspiration and motive generated by this union with the Infinite.

I am also certain that in this work, the minister must consciously or otherwise employ the principles of psychology. His *pièce de résistance* is man himself, for as Phillips Brooks declares prayer to be, "not the conquering of God's reluctance, but the taking hold of God's willingness," so may we speak of religion as taking hold of God and using the new life received. It is never a service of propitiation, an endeavour to make God willing to bless man, but always an endeavour to make man willing to receive Him. Or, as Daniel Webster said, "Religion is the tie that connects man with his Creator, and holds him to His throne."

Psychology will have little to say to us of God directly. It is useful herein only as it enables man more accurately to know himself; to judge of

his states, to avoid every hallucination and self-deception, and similarly to understand his brother-man. It is to be a revelator of motives; their source, moment and end.

As a preacher stands before his congregation so, in some measure of likeness, God stands before the preacher. Certainly before every other person too, but the minister is seeking to know Him directly and fully in order that he may make plain to the congregation the means of reaching Him. God has no other approach to a man's soul than through his thought, feeling and volition. If the preacher knows the highway upon which the King is coming he may meet Him and lead his people with him.

Psychology will render a considerable service to the minister in enabling him more clearly to understand the Scriptures. Human nature is about the same to-day as it was when the books of the Bible were written. The writers have, to some extent, put themselves in the Scriptures and a student ought to be able to calculate the "personal equation" when he reads. The doings of the Scriptural characters are illustrated and explained more fully by bringing to the task of interpretation a working knowledge of mental phenomena. And men to-day are better understood in the light of the typical persons of Holy Writ, if it be that they are truly understood.

Especially valuable to a preacher is an insight into the conditioning influences and subjective methods of his people. It is confessedly apparent that a message appropriate for the educated congregation of a city church would fail to be efficient if given to a people having few advantages in some remote district. The

same principle applies to every congregation wherever located. The differences between greatness and mediocrity are relatively not extreme, but those differences are what distinguish efficiency from non-efficiency. And the separation between good and poor sermons is comparatively not great, but the elements of that distinction are vital. Those elements may not be intellectuality or emotion or spirituality, alone or together ; but they do rest in the touch, the atmosphere, the discerning insight which bring the message home to each hearer. There is need for every available adornment, the greatest depth of thought and perfection of arrangement, but these may be known of a sermon which fails to accomplish its purpose. Contrariwise, there have been many sermons of powerful influence that were crude, illogically arranged and superficial. They, however, exemplified discernment of human nature and were adequate to correspond to its wants. The one kind of sermon was hard and fast in a fixed type ; the other was adaptable to the unique necessities of the hearers.

It would seem openly clear that a preacher ought to discover to himself the bible of human nature as well as the Bible of revelation ; if the two are to be united, the one who fits them together must know with what he is working. The sermon "barrel" is a legacy from one parish which should never be carried to another unless the coin be reminted. The sermon-coin which circulates at par among one people is marked down by others. It was a surprise in my early ministry to find that the best sermons in my first church fell with awful flatness when given in an-

other pastorate. The experiment has been tried a few times since and the result has generally been humiliating. It simply shows that each person and collection of persons want a particular food and they want it newly prepared.

At every turn of the road one meets facing him the tremendous fact that the price of success is unwearied toil; and there are no royal roads in the process of causing men to realize their need of God. And the world is full enough of sin's tragedies without adding to them the products of ministerial indifference and incompetency—which generally amount to the same thing. It were bad enough to keep men and women out of opportunities for culture and plenty; but the saddest feature, and that which especially attaches to the careless preacher, is to open no doors for the adequate self-realization of human souls.

It should be known that psychology is personal, individual. There is a "psychology of people" and of organizations which may not be neglected. But the cogent Christian psychology is reduced finally to that of the unit rather than to that of the mass; and especially in its guiding leadership for practical work. How to reach the masses is a Banquo's ghost question: it will not down. It will not down any more than the question of securing a living or an education will down. New times demand new duties and with every thirty years there is a new generation seeking its own satisfaction. And the church, as never before, is trying to reach the masses—but not as such. There are no masses; there are individuals. Over against the Christians in a community, there are great numbers who do not know

the fullness of life, but they are not masses ; they are individual souls. And the injunction to the one of old who sought to know who his neighbour was, is the injunction to each person now, "Go, and do thou likewise" ; for saving service is essentially individual.

This is the increasing trend of the present, and the way was never so free for mutual help as it now is. There is no war save that which may be called a war against sin. Science and religion have declared peace, merging their forces in the cause of humanity with God over all. The church serves the cause by saving the individual and, through him, calling out yet other effective forces until an environment is created which also becomes more religious in its influences. But the individual first !

We have endeavoured to show some of the services which psychology will render in this work of helping men. It will open to the Christian a knowledge of the materials which he is to be the helpful means of transforming. He will employ certain instrumentalities in the promotion of the cause he represents. The various forms of worship in the church are but means for the accomplishment of specific results, and he must know how to vary them to meet varying needs. The pastor himself is a means and he too must stand the research necessary for an adequate self-revelation. When the diagnosis is correctly made and to it there is brought the sincerity of honest endeavour, God will not fail, on His part, to give him the desires of his heart.

In the great work of making the world spotless there is no thought of lasting discord. Discourage-

ments may arise, but joy cometh in the morning. God is with the faithful, and evil is not to be victor. The need of the world is practical relationship with the life of God, and all must know that it is possible for an individual to enter that blessed heritage of satisfying life. Life is man's greatest possession. It is conditioned by its relationships and no earth-born kinship will satisfy. Only vital union with God through faith in His Son will bring man to his true estate. We believe God's words, and we can trust Him. Another has found, as have millions before and after him, that foreshadows of His truth, nay rather, foresplendours of His life have fallen on our souls. Sweeter than daybreak to weary wanderers in strange lands; more blessed than a mother's voice to children who stray away bewildered, weeping choking tears, come to us the wooing words of the Master. We are not left alone. The world is not dead, a charnel-house with only struggling spirits, but Christ-like and our Father's.

APPENDIX

THE circular letter and list of questions herewith presented were extensively circulated in obtaining much of the data used in the foregoing pages. To each person addressed, blank paper and a stamped return envelope were sent also.

DEAR FRIEND:—

It is a very prevalent belief that the church is not helping and saving as it should. Some have said that it has totally failed to fulfill its purpose; others, that it is an institution for the rich and educated; and still others have thought it good enough for the poor and ignorant, but not at all suited to a cultured class.

Extreme views are usually represented by a small number; and it is probable that nearly all will say that the church has a work to do, that it is doing the best it can with the available material, and that it does not do better because of the imperfections of its human agencies. Every one has a reason (sufficient so far as he is concerned) why he is a Christian or why he is not. It has therefore occurred to me as a pastor, that a study of these reasons might reveal a principle, and a study of this principle might disclose methods for remedying some of the weaknesses of the church. Valuable secrets are in the pews, although religion has generally been studied from the pulpit-end of the church.

The data necessary for a study of the church from the people's standpoint can be had only from individuals who will assist to the extent of permitting themselves to be interviewed. A series of carefully prepared questions is therefore enclosed, answers to which are very respectfully solicited. I trust that the honesty of my intentions may pardon any apparently impertinent questions, but you will readily perceive that to have any value the answers must come from the depths of each life. Question No. 9 may seem entirely too personal, and it is proposed only because its answers would be of exceedingly great value. With some hesitation, I include the question with the thought, however, that you are to do with it as you like. I shall most certainly hold everything in the strictest confidence, and in no case use anything in a way that could disclose the identity of the writer.

I bespeak your interest and kind coöperation in this endeavour. Please to answer each question fully on the enclosed blank paper. Use a separate sheet for each question and write on but one side of the paper. This uniformity will aid in the work of tabulating the results. Be free to make your answers full, using several pages for each question if necessary.

Yours very truly,

Carl G. Doney.

List of Questions

1. (*a*) Please give your full name and age. (*b*) What is your ancestry? (*c*) Are you married? (*d*) What is, and has been, your occupation? (*e*) Were you reared in the city or country? (*f*) Were you reared under circumstances that were poor, moderate or rich, and what are your present circumstances?

2. (*a*) What educational advantages have you had? (*b*) If college-bred, did you attend a sectarian or non-sectarian institution? (*c*) What influence did the college have upon you spiritually, and in what way?

3. (*a*) What was the character of your religious training up to the age of sixteen? (*b*) Were your parents Christians? (*c*) Did they in any way observe family worship? (*d*) What was your earliest idea of God? and what have been, and are, your later ideas of God? (*e*) Did you ever seek religion? (*f*) What led you to do so? (*g*) Were you ever troubled about your soul, and are you now?

4. (*a*) Were you ever converted, and at what age? (*b*) What were the circumstances? (*c*) Did you ever unite with a church, and if so, at what age? (*d*) If you became a church member, what induced you to do so? and if not, why? (*e*) Are you a member now?

5. (*a*) Do you believe in God? (*b*) Do you believe in Jesus? (*c*) Do you believe in the Holy Spirit? (*d*) Do you believe in heaven? (*e*) Do you

believe in hell? (*f*) How much do you read the Bible? (*g*) How do you receive the Bible? (*h*) Do you pray regularly, sometimes, or not at all? (*i*) Why do you pray, and for what? (*j*) Are your prayers answered, and in what way?

6. (*a*) What is your state of health? (*b*) Are you nervous or phlegmatic? (*c*) How do your state of health and your religious experience appear to be related? (*d*) Have there been any crises in your life, such as serious illness, bereavement, or disappointment, and what was the effect upon you spiritually?

7. (*a*) If one time a Christian, or a church member, and not now, why did you cease to be such? (*b*) Were doubts the cause? (*c*) Were preachers at fault? (*d*) Was it occasioned by lay-members, or non-members? (*e*) Was it the result of your own indifference, or any desire on your part to do what the church did not approve?

8. (*a*) Wherein do you think the church fails most seriously? (*b*) Is the weakness due to the ministry? (*c*) Is the fault with the members? (*d*) Is the failure the result of counter-attractions? (*e*) What remedy would you suggest? (Please do not give a general opinion, but state wherein *to you* the church is weakest, and wherein *to you* it may be strengthened.)

9. (*a*) Do you openly or secretly do that which you would have to give up if you became a Christian? (*b*) If so, would you dislike to give it up, and would it be hard for you to do so?

10. (*a*) What effect has church attendance upon you? (*b*) What is the physical and mental influence

upon you of being in an audience? (*c*) Is the influence of a religious congregation upon you different from that of audiences of another kind, and in what respects? (*d*) Can you distinguish the influence of the congregation from that of the speaker? To what extent and in what respects?

11. (*a*) Are the influences of a religious congregation and of the speaker enduring? (*b*) To what extent and in what way do they effect you after you have left their presence? Do the influences merely linger and gradually die away, or do they affect your views of life and your daily spirit and conduct? (*c*) Do you ever experience a reaction, a more or less definite revulsion of feeling after the service is ended? (*d*) Are you able to progress religiously, or even maintain your present religious state, when you neglect church attendance?

12. (*a*) How do emotional sermons affect you? (*b*) How do intellectual sermons affect you? (*c*) How do argumentative sermons affect you? (*d*) How do doctrinal sermons affect you? (*e*) Which influence you most and which help you most? (*f*) Are you influenced more by sermons delivered extempore than by sermons which are read from the pulpit? In what way are the effects different?

13. (*a*) How does church music influence you? (*b*) Is there any distinction between the effects of vocal and instrumental music? (*c*) Is there any difference, and what, in the effects of sacred and secular music upon you? (*d*) In either or both cases, are the effects lasting? In what way is the influence manifest to you?

14. (*a*) Do you attend prayer meeting? and if not, why? (*b*) Is this service helpful to you, and in what way? (*c*) How could it be made more helpful to you? (*d*) What features of prayer meeting do you most approve, and what do you disapprove?

15. (*a*) Do you attend Sunday-school? and if not, why? (*b*) In what way does it help you? (*c*) How could it help you more? (*d*) Do you attend young people's meeting? and if not, why? (*e*) What part do you take in the service? (*f*) What help, if any, do you receive from it? and how can it be made more helpful to you?

16. (*a*) What is your conception of the perfect church? (*b*) What is your conception of the ideal minister? (*c*) Are you helped by pastoral visits? (*d*) In what way are you helped, and how could they be made more serviceable?

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