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Powell, Lyman P. b. 1866. |
Heavenly heretics

By LYMAN P. POWELL

The Emmanuel Movement

The Art of Natural Sleep

Christian Science

Heavenly Heretics

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By

Lyman P. Powell

Author of

“Christian Science: The Faith and Its Founder,” “The Art of Natural Sleep,” “The Emmanuel Movement in a New England Town,” “Family Prayers”; and Editor of “American Historic Towns,” etc.



With Portraits

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LYMAN P. POWELL

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To

MY TWO SONS

Talcott Williams Powell and Francis Wilson Powell

PREFACE

FOR more than ten years past it has been my custom to speak now and then from my Sunday evening pulpit, of representative preachers who have profoundly influenced the religious life of their contemporaries.

The chapters which make up this little volume, after first finding expression in the pulpit, appeared at weekly intervals in the pages of *The Hampshire Gazette*, one of the oldest daily papers in the land, and are reprinted here through the courtesy of the editors.

Books in abundance have been written about Edwards, Wesley, Channing, Bushnell, Brooks. In some volumes, the facts about the men have been set forth; in others, their place in Church and State has been designated. In no book, perhaps, has there been briefly stated all the

average reader wants to know in order to visualise as well as understand.

In attempting a hitherto neglected task, I have realised at every stage the difficulty of both interesting and edifying. To meet this difficulty, I have thought it worth while to make full use of local colour, to call in the testimony of contemporary listeners, to analyse specific sermons, and through the gateway of analysis to lead on to each man's general philosophy of life, and finally to state the salient facts and illustrative incidents in every instance in order that the rootage as well as the fruitage of America's best preaching may be evident even to the casual reader.

The selection of an appropriate title for these pulpit essays was a problem. From certain points of view, the five preachers might to some appear arch heretics. But if, as Coleridge says, heresy signifies "a principle or opinion taken up by the will for the will's sake," no one of them ought to be classed as a heretic. Their opinions one and all were taken for the

spirit's sake, not for that of the will. Without denying what was good in the past, they were in the main looking for a larger faith than those around them seemed to hold. That which was said of the men of faith in the Epistle to the Hebrews could as truthfully have been remarked of them by their contemporaries,—“they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly.” And therefore to satisfy both the conventional and the unconventional, I am venturing to present this little book under the alliterative title of *Heavenly Heretics*.

L. P. P.

ST. JOHN'S RECTORY,
NORTHAMPTON, MASS.,
August 1, 1909.

“The ordinary heretic is likely to prove a mere crank and eccentric. Still, there arises a heretic every now and then who is simply a surpassing spiritual genius, and leads us into wider and profounder reaches of yet undiscovered truth.”—From *A Valid Christianity for To-day* by the Rt. Rev. Charles D. Williams, D.D., LL.D., Bishop of Michigan.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
JONATHAN EDWARDS	I
JOHN WESLEY	31
WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING	57
HORACE BUSHNELL	77
PHILLIPS BROOKS	111

ILLUSTRATIONS

FACING PAGE

JONATHAN EDWARDS	4
From the engraving by John Sartain, after the painting by C. W. Peale	
JOHN WESLEY	34
From the engraving by I. Faber, after the painting by John Williams	
WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING	60
From the engraving by D. Kimberley and J. Cheney, after the painting by S. Gambardella	
HORACE BUSHNELL	80
From the engraving by S. A. Schoff, after the drawing by S. W. Rouse	
PHILLIPS BROOKS	114
From a photograph from life	

Jonathan Edwards

1703-1758

“From the days of Plato there has been no life of more simple and imposing grandeur.”—*The Westminster Review*.

“Not only the greatest of all the thinkers that America has produced, but also the highest speculative genius of the eighteenth century.”—A. M. FAIRBAIRN.

“He that would know the workings of the New England mind in the middle of the last century and the throbbings of its heart, must give his days and nights to the study of Jonathan Edwards.”—GEORGE BANCROFT.

“He that would understand . . . the significance of later New England thought, must make Edwards the first object of his study.”—A. V. G. ALLEN.

“His errors, his weaknesses, his great inconsistencies, and what Prof. A. V. G. Allen calls ‘his Inferno’ have had altogether too long a history in New England thought. It is time that his original principle—the absoluteness of God—were allowed logical and unre-served expression.”—GEORGE A. GORDON.

“Absolute sovereignty is what I love to ascribe to God.”—JONATHAN EDWARDS, at the age of seventeen.

“We are to conceive of the divine excellence as infinite general love, that which reaches all, proportionately with perfect purity and sweetness; yea, it includes the true love of all creatures, for that is His spirit, or, which is the same thing, His love.”—JONATHAN EDWARDS.

“His work was preaching rather than the cure of souls.”—H. T. ROSE, the present incumbent of Jonathan Edwards’s pulpit.

JONATHAN EDWARDS

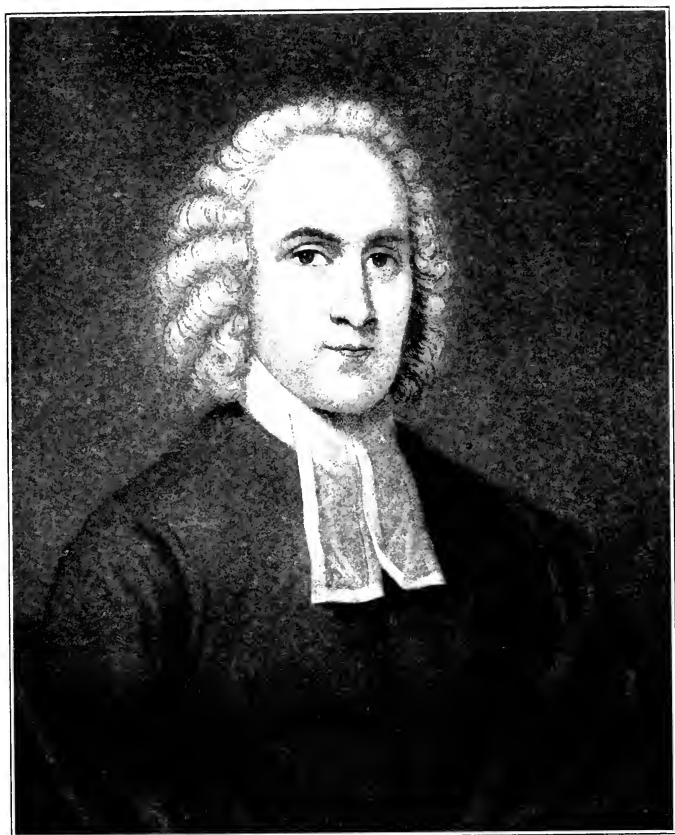
IT is Sunday morning in Northampton, June of 1741. The church toward which the people make their way is not uncommon or impressive. There is another somewhat like it in Boston and Springfield, in Hatfield and Longmeadow. It makes no sensuous appeal to the imagination. No dim religious light streams in through stained-glass windows. No long-drawn aisles lead on to any mystery-enshrouded altar. No deep-voiced organ sends rich involutions echoing along a fretted ceiling. The First Church of Northampton was in 1741 conventional.

The place and people were, however, less conventional. Far more strategic in its situation in those days of untracked wilderness than now, Northampton was as beautiful. The twin mounts were already keeping vigil over river, meadow, and elm-shaded town. The people were,

in spite of (perhaps even by reason of) all the isolation and the hardship of their frontier life, among New England's best. Thrifty, high-spirited, and self-confident, Northampton folk even at that early day were accumulating wealth, acquiring learning, establishing an aristocracy of brains and piety, and beginning to enjoy a reputation scarcely second to Bostonians for culture and religion.

As nearly always in a strictly Puritan community, the service is a trifle tedious. The prayer is long; the psalm, lined out by the deacon, is unmusically sung. One by one, the congregation file up to the deacon's high-backed pew and place in the collection box their Sunday offering. About the time a modern service closes, the people settle down to give ear to the sermon. In the old-fashioned pulpit—"desk," they called it then—at the side, not at the end as now, the preacher stands beneath the overarching sounding board, the hour-glass by his side, to break the Word of Life.

This preacher is well worth the respect-



JONATHAN EDWARDS

From the engraving by J. Sartain after the painting by C. W. Peale

ful attention of the twentieth as well as of the eighteenth century. What his people could not know we know beyond dispute, that he was the greatest preacher of his time and clime. A black gown envelops his tall, slim form. The waving wig one sees in all his portraits crowns his broad and lofty forehead. The oval face with its clear, piercing eyes, prominent nose, thin lips, set and frequently severe, is always serious and almost always solemn, in spite of the suggestions of the spirit's sweetness which play now and then about the mouth. St. Paul and St. John composite look down on us from that highstanding pulpit.

The preacher's text is found in Deuteronomy xxxii., 35—"Their feet shall slide in due time." The sermon, terribly effective now, is to be preached with even more effectiveness in a few weeks at Enfield. He speaks without the arts and graces of the orator. His pupil, Hopkins, says however, that his delivery is "easy, natural, and very solemn." His voice, though clear enough, is neither

strong nor loud. Calm and pale, rapt and grave, he seldom moves his head or hand. His manuscript, which he deplores, though he is not servile to it, is "in his left hand, the elbow resting on the cushion or the Bible, his right hand rarely raised but to turn the leaves, and his person almost motionless." It is the manner that appeals, unperturbed but earnest, subdued but confident, restrained but authoritative. 'Tis as though a volcano were in eruption according to a law which calls it to activity without uproar. Mental sweep, relentless logic, definite conviction, vivid imagination turning lurid on occasions, large and elevated character, to which the episodic in experience and utterance are alike infrequent,—these and kindred gifts contribute to make this the most effective preaching of the age.

He was [says a biographer], almost too great a man to let loose upon other men in their ordinary condition. He was like some organ of vast capacity whose strongest stops should never have been drawn.

The immediate effect is indescribable; it would be incredible, were there not abundant testimony to it. Silence, awe, alarm, distress, tears, outcries as of animals in pain,—these are the responses of the congregation to heart-searching and heart-rending preaching, till at last the preacher has, in order to be heard until the end, to speak his “peace, be still” to the noise and the confusion.

What gospel is it that can so disquiet and distress Northampton’s chosen? The title of the sermon is *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*. Its content is Calvinism at its boldest. Sinners in the hands of an angry God are given a terrifying warning:

The wrath of God burns against them; their damnation don’t slumber; the pit is prepared; the fire is made ready; the furnace is now hot, ready to receive them; the flames do now rage and glow. The devils watch them; they are ever by them, at their right hand; they stand waiting for them, like greedy, hungry lions that see their prey, and expect to have it, but are for the present kept back; if God should withdraw His hand, by which they are restrained,

they would in one moment fly upon their poor souls. The old serpent is gaping for them; hell opens its mouth wide to receive them; and if God should permit it, they would be hastily swallowed up and lost.

Now he presses on from general to particulars. Lest some Northamptonian, confident that God has better things in store for him, should be listening unmoved the preacher says:

The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider or some loathsome insect over the fire abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked: His wrath towards you burns like fire; He looks upon you as worthy of nothing else, but to be cast into the fire; He is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in His sight; you are ten times so abominable in His eyes, as the most hateful and venomous serpent is in ours.

Then comes at last the application grimly personal:

If we knew that there was one person, and but one, in the whole congregation, that was to be the subject of this misery, what an awful thing it would be to think of! If we knew who it was, what an awful sight would it be to see such a

person! How might all the rest of the congregation lift up a lamentable and bitter cry over him! But alas! instead of one, how many is it likely will remember this discourse in hell! And it would be a wonder, if some that are now present should not be in hell in a very short time, before this year is out. And it would be no wonder if some persons that now sit here in some seats of this meeting-house in health, and quiet, and secure, should be there before to-morrow morning. Those of you that finally continue in a natural condition, that shall keep out of hell longest, will be there in a little time! . . . How can you rest for a moment in such a condition? . . . Let every one that is out of Christ now awake and fly from the wrath to come. . . . Haste and escape for your lives, look not behind you, escape to the mountains, lest ye be consumed.

Shocking doctrine to this age of ours it seems. Where did Edwards learn it? Not from personal experience. Even while a child he had assurance of his own salvation. At an age when other boys were interested in the usual adolescent problems, Edwards in his diary describes his inner life as "a calm, sweet abstraction of soul from all the concerns of this

world; and sometimes a kind of vision or fixed ideas and imaginations, of being alone in the mountains or some solitary wilderness, far from all mankind, sweetly conversing with Christ, and wrapped and swallowed up in God."

In adult life he was first and last exemplary in all relationships. Though lacking in social gifts and not wont to visit his parishioners save when the need was urgent, he was in the home and in the town and in the church conscientious to a fault, trying ever to lead the way he pointed out to others, illustrating by his works his own veracious words that "the soul of a true Christian appeared like a little white flower, such as we see in the opening of the year, low and humble on the ground, opening its bosom to receive the pleasant beams of the sun's glory; rejoicing, as it were, in a calm rapture, diffusing around a sweet fragranc; standing peacefully and lovingly in the midst of other flowers round about."

It was not from observation that he ever learned to speak of human beings

as "vile insects," "filthy worms," "fire-brands of hell." To be sure, his flock were fond of having their own way. Even in his great predecessor's ministry wilfulness was apt to lead to a church quarrel, and contentions were the order of too many a day. But his flock were no worse than were other Christians of the time; they were thought to be a little better. As to his immediate family, he had to wife a woman whose wifely worth tempted George Whitefield when he was their guest to abandon his fixed purpose to stay single. His children were almost as remarkable, if not as famous, as their parents, and the Edwards family have, in all the generations since, stood for godly character and extraordinary capacity. Not even of the one black sheep, Aaron Burr, could it be truly said, while he was still a baby in the arms of Edwards's daughter: "As innocent as children seem to be to us, yet, if they are out of Christ, they are not so in God's sight, but are young vipers and are infinitely more hateful than vipers."

This babe-damning doctrine lay at the end of a syllogism which started with a misconception of the nature of things and pursued a way as tortuous as it was faultless to an end impossible. Granted his premises, his conclusion followed irresistibly. And his premises were Calvin's, and before Calvin, St. Augustine's. There was no departure from the time-worn view of God as everything and man as nothing; of God as absolute and omnipotent and man in consequence even less than incomplete and impotent. It was to save God's freedom to Him that Edwards, treading on the heels of Calvin, was quick to take man's freedom from him and to dismiss man as "a vile insect that has risen up in contempt against the majesty of Heaven and earth."

In later years he modified this view as much as he dared without impinging on its central principle. He gave it a background new in spots. He emphasised as neither Calvin nor St. Augustine did man's inner motives and affections.

“But,” to quote Professor Gardiner—“as to the general scheme itself, the philosophy of religion, the philosophy of life it expresses, there is nothing in that which is essentially original with Edwards. In standing for these doctrines he but champions the great orthodox tradition.” He was orthodox from first to last, according to the tenets of New England Puritanism. He had to be. He lacked the special gifts of the originating thinker. He had the logic of the mathematician and the imagination of the poet, but they were rarely found in company with historic sense or common sense or sense of humour. Imagine, if you can, a symmetrical personality of any age gravely declaring that “although the devil be exceeding crafty and subtle, yet he is one of the greatest fools and blockheads in the world.” Pushed to its own proper end, the logic of metaphysics sometimes runs foul of the logic of events and pays for its presumption by leading off into a *cul de sac*, wherein Edwards sometimes found himself, though he never

knew when he was there and never knew how to escape.

Out of the pulpit there was perhaps one Edwards only, a firm, precise, and pious soul, aloof from all his kind and unaware of his aloofness. In the pulpit there were several Edwardses, and it depended on the circumstances as to which you found there on occasion. The Edwards of the Enfield sermon, preached, tradition tells us, in Northampton a short while before, was "the flaming revivalist, with pitiless logic and terrible realism of description, arousing, startling, overwhelming the sinner with the sense of impending doom." But there was yet another Edwards the revivalist, who could plead God's love as winsomely as in the Enfield sermon he called down the wrath of God upon the unrepentant. It is gratifying to find the preacher saying in another sermon:

God is infinitely good and merciful. Many that others worship and serve as gods are cruel beings, spirits that seek the ruin of souls; but

this is a God that delighteth in mercy; His grace is infinite and endures forever. He is love itself. an infinite fountain and ocean of it.

Edwards's sermons were oftenest perhaps distinctly doctrinal. Religion was to him more than a felt relationship with God: it was describable. It was a scheme of things that could be set down on paper and put into the limits of a sermon and made clear to the darkest understanding that would give attention undistracted. It was more, too, than a mere skeleton: it was a skeleton clothed in the warm flesh and blood of conviction and emotion and imagination. No matter which of Edwards's sermons you may chance to-day to read you are sure to find it alive. It may be "evangelistic"; it may be "doctrinal"; it may be "occasional"; it may be "practical." Whatever it may be, it is never a dead thing. It is always passionately throbbing with a vitality that recks not of the passing years; it is always equal to the final test of preaching, that whatever be the theme, the sermon shall come from the

preacher's heart, not merely from his head.

Often as Edwards emphasised the uses of the intellect in the religious life, he never put mind first; he knew that personality has a wider range of vision than the mind can ever furnish. In his exquisite sermon on *The Reality of Spiritual Light*, where Edwards may be found at his purest, he makes this point:

There is a wide difference between mere speculative, rational judging anything to be excellent, and having a sense of its sweetness and beauty. The former rests only in the head; speculation only is concerned in it: but the heart is concerned in the latter.

And then when at last in 1750 he preached his farewell sermon to the people he had loved and to whom he had preached for twenty-three years, he counselled them in tender words to choose for his successor one who, whatever gifts of mind he had, should have the higher gifts of heart, saying "Nothing else but

sincere piety of heart is at all to be depended on, at such a time as this."

Born of good Welsh stock October 5, 1703, fifth in a family of eleven children, Jonathan Edwards was amazingly precocious both in mind and heart. He began to study Latin at the age of six and at the age of eight was deeply interested in spiritual concerns. At ten he wrote, like a philosopher of forty, a quaint and humorous essay on the immortality of the soul, and at twelve an ingenious paper on the habits of the flying spider. Early taught by his distinguished father, the pastor at "Windsor Farmes," Connecticut, to use the pen abundantly, he almost from the first was accustomed to study with his pen in hand, making a record of his doubts, his difficulties, and his comments on every subject which came his way in reading or in thinking.

At Yale, from his thirteenth to his seventeenth year, he led his class, and yet found time as early as his sophomore year to read Locke's *Essay on the Human Understanding* with more pleasure, he

informs us, "than the most greedy miser finds when gathering up handfuls of silver and gold from some newly-discovered treasure." It was also in those days at Yale that he began to make his series of *Notes on the Mind* and *Notes on Natural Science* and to work out the principle of that idealistic philosophy which underlay his life-long thinking. More important far, he was by conscious effort growing all those years in grace, and making spiritual preparation for the two years more at Yale of theological study.

February 15, 1727, after eight months of ministry to a Presbyterian church in New York City and two years as tutor at Yale, at the age of twenty-four he began his work in Northampton. The position was not easy even to a man of Edwards's gifts. The first two years he was assistant to his remarkable grandfather, the Rev. Solomon Stoddard, a man as strong in some respects as Edwards and in others strong where Edwards was not strong, a man as masterful as Edwards and more practical and tactful

and in consequence more popular. To follow his grandfather was all the harder for the man of twenty-six, because he was scrupulously conscientious. While paying all deference to the prestige of his predecessor and nurturing the affection with which his memory was cherished, Edwards made no bid before or after Mr. Stoddard's death for popularity. Knowing he could not please every one, he was content to endeavour to please God, trusting that the sober second thought of his people would find a place for one who did his work in his own way but did it faithfully.

Humble to the verge of self-depreciation, thinking ill of his own talents in comparison with his distinguished predecessor's, he yet took himself too seriously to waste himself in what seemed to him unprofitable employments. No one ever was more careful in the use of time. He lived by rule, rising before five, spending thirteen hours in his study every day, reading the Bible and every book of worth he could lay hands on, catching

every thought that came to mind and putting it on paper. His habit of note-taking became with passing years so inveterate that even while he was at his daily exercise on horseback he was wont to jot down on scraps of paper stray ideas, pin each scrap to his coat, and come galloping home with papers fluttering to the breeze from shoulders, breast, and coat tails.

He was no parish visitor. He had no small talk in his social pack. "He was not able,"—says his pupil, Hopkins,— "to enter into a free conversation with every person he met, and in an easy manner turn it to what topic he pleased, without the help of others, and, it may be, against their inclination." And so, though not disparaging ordinary parish visiting, without which no minister can know his people well, he confined himself chiefly to visiting those in need in body, mind, or soul, and let the others come to him as they pleased and when they pleased. He was first and last the preacher, leaving all his temporal affairs

to the good management of Mrs. Edwards, from whom he learned, second hand, "by whom his forage for winter was gathered in, or how many milk kine he had, or whence his table was furnished."

The greatest day in his unusual life, was January 28, 1727, when Sarah Pierrepont at the age of seventeen became his wife. Allowing as generously as one may for the well-known rhapsody Edwards the lover left in writing of her character, the fact remains indisputable that she was a model wife. She never tried to duplicate her husband. She was no preacher in petticoats. She knew how to hold her tongue. It was not she who brought him into his great trouble. No indiscretion either as to word or creed was ever charged against her. She took her place among the women of the church a mother in Israel with her ten children, born in Northampton, receiving with gentle grace and modesty the deference due to her. She deemed it her first duty to give her husband the right conditions for his highest

usefulness. She relieved him from domestic care, guarded him from needless interruption, and thus contributed as much perhaps as he to his effectiveness in preaching. She was all the wife of any minister should be, and deserved the compliment one of her husband's best friends paid her when he hinted that the wife had found a shorter road to heaven than the husband.

These two simple-minded children of a Heavenly Father whom they feared far more perhaps than there was need, walked through life together singularly suited to each other, dreaming dreams and seeing visions such as are vouchsafed only in that "House Beautiful," of which it has been said that:

“Where there is faith
There is love.
Where there is love
There is peace.
Where there is peace
There is God.
Where there is God
There is no need.”

There in that holy home on King Street lay the source of Edwards's pulpit inspiration. There in love and prayer the great man grew in grace and in the knowledge of his Lord, and Sunday after Sunday whether he was preaching a doctrinal or evangelistic or practical sermon he gave out what with his helpmeet's aid he had stored up at home, the week before. As years passed by his preaching gained momentum. With increasing eagerness the people waited for the Sunday morning sermon and then talked about it all the week. While not one perhaps of all his flock ever actually suspected what we know, that Northampton had those days the greatest preacher in the land, there was everywhere increasing assurance that there was no longer any need to go to Boston to hear good sermons.

By and by came the Great Awakening. It had been foreshadowed in the days of Stoddard, in whose ministry 630 were admitted to the Church. Throughout New England the fierceness of Puritan-

ism had for years been burning out. Austere living was giving way to carelessness and looseness both in manners and in morals. Piety was languishing and irreligion had grown arrogant. Edwards became more anxious every year. He grieved and prayed. He called his people back beyond the days of Stoddard to a more exacting Puritanism both in creed and conduct. With all his earnestness he preached on sin and its sure punishment. In denunciation he had never before been so tragically graphic. One who heard him preach about the Day of Judgment said a little later "that he fully supposed that as soon as Mr. Edwards should close his discourse, the Judge would descend, and the final separation take place."

The Sunday morning sermon was soon supplemented by two more Sunday sermons. Then people came in crowds on week-days, too; until at last all business was at certain hours suspended, and everybody asked his neighbours, "Brethren, what must I do to be saved?"

Of the physical and mental phenomena called forth by the Great Awakening there is no need to speak. Of the nervous stress and strain, in which even children shared, the least said possibly the better. "What is chiefly important to note"—says Dr. Allen—"is, that the magnitude of the event was an adequate setting for the greatness of mind and character which Edwards now reveals." Edwards saw at last the travail of his soul and was satisfied. Here on this supreme mount of spiritual exaltation he would have stayed forever without so much as a tabernacle to remind him of the worldliness below.

To make his people fit for the high life he lived he unwisely tried at last to play the rôle of a dictator. In 1744 he ventured to censor the literature the young were reading with disastrous consequences to his popularity. Then, after four years, from the first applicant in all those years for admission to membership in his church he demanded evidence of conversion and required public profession of faith. Stod-

dard, with whom Edwards was still compared and by some to his undervaluation, had been wont to let any baptised person come to the Lord's Supper, and no questions asked. The effort to improve on "Stoddardeanism" was the last strain on Edwards's popularity. Everybody—even Edwards—now could see that the First Church was making ready for a change of pastors.

The unhappy controversy lasted two long years. Edwards through it all was dignified, but insistent on his rights. His people with the council's aid and by a vote of 200 to 20 drove out upon the world a faithful minister who had given them twenty-three years out of the heart of his rich life, who was too old, though but forty-seven, to learn any new method of supporting his family of ten children, and who could scarcely in the circumstances expect a call from any other church. On June 22, 1750, Edwards preached, not bitterly, his mournful farewell sermon and went forth into exile with the sad

but still undaunted heart which Dante took with him from Florence.

Of Edwards's latest years there is little to be told. Friends in Scotland cordially invited him to put the ocean between him and his people and when he would not go they sent him gifts of money. Stockbridge, then a little village farther in the wilds, called him in December, 1750, to be its minister, and at the same time came an invitation from the "Society in London for Propagating the Gospel in New England and the Parts Adjacent" to preach the gospel to the Indians in and near Stockbridge. The next year, 1751, Edwards went to his new work and tried to do his duty as though the light of preaching still burnt as brightly as in other days. But of the preacher we hear nothing after the removal from Northampton. The *Treatise on the Freedom of the Will* is the best output of those last dreary days,—and it is, of course, immortal even though its main contention is still in dispute.

In 1757 came the magnificent vindication of a call to be the President of what is now Princeton University. With much misgiving he accepted the new charge and entered on his duties without eagerness or gladness. But the next spring, March 22, 1758, he died of varioloid superinduced by vaccination, whispering with dying breath: "Trust in God, and ye need not fear."

"This high man
With a great thing to pursue
Dies ere he knows it."

Every reader who would understand Jonathan Edwards must read three books: Dr. Allen's monumental biography, Professor Gardiner's Selected Sermons of Edwards with his own excellent introduction and notes, and the addresses delivered in connection with the observance of the 150th anniversary of Edwards's dismissal from Northampton. Of the two earliest biographies, the first, which "has the quaint charm of Walton's *Lives*," is from the pen of his pupil and intimate friend, Samuel Hopkins, and the second, specially valuable because it brought to light Edwards's early papers on physics, natural history, and philosophy, is the work of Sereno Edwards Dwight. Trumbull's *History of Northampton* gives the local setting necessary to the appreciation of Edwards's relations with his parish, and there are various editions of the works of Edwards in the larger libraries of the great cities.

John Wesley

1703-1791

“The greatest figure that has appeared in the religious world since the days of the Reformation.”—
JOHN RICHARD GREEN.

“No other man did such a life’s work for England.”—
AUGUSTINE BIRRELL.

“I desire to have a league, offensive and defensive, with every soldier of Christ.”—JOHN WESLEY.

“I live and die a member of the Church of England, and no one who regards my judgment or advice will ever separate from it.”—JOHN WESLEY, writing in 1791.

“He took his stand upon his father’s tomb, on the venerable and ancestral traditions of the country and the Church. That was the stand from which he addressed the world; it was not from the points of disagreement, but from the points of agreement with them in the Christian religion that he produced those great effects which have never since died out in English Christendom.”—DEAN STANLEY, at the unveiling of the Wesley Tablet in Westminster Abbey, 1876.

“He was a man whose eloquence and logical acuteness might have rendered him eminent in literature; whose genius for government was not inferior to that of Richelieu; and who devoted all his powers, in defiance of obloquy and derision, to what he considered the highest good of his species.”—LORD MACAULAY.

“I look upon the whole world as my parish.”—
JOHN WESLEY.

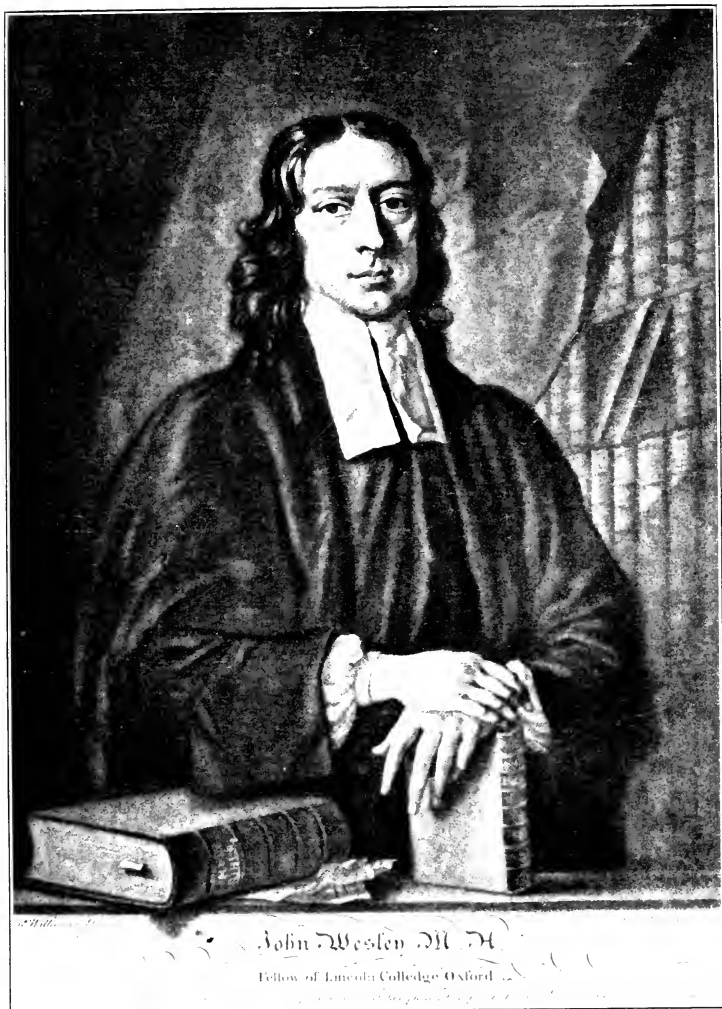
JOHN WESLEY

A GREAT denomination, that of Methodism; great whatever be one's point of view; great whatever the criterion! Would you apply the test of numbers? Methodism meets the largest expectations; nay more, she taxes the credulity of those who do not know about her wondrous growth. The Methodists in this country outnumber Episcopalians seven times, Congregationalists at least nine times, Lutherans and Presbyterians almost four times. With her 6,660,774 members, the Methodist Church outstrips considerably the Baptist Church; she leads all the Protestant Churches, and takes her place next to the Roman Catholic Church among the Christian bodies of the land. Surely Methodism ought to have the full respect of those who find a charm in numbers.¹

¹ The statistics were compiled in 1908. The writer

She has claims too on those who measure greatness by influence. In many places her influence is immeasurable. It well may be; for Methodism has always been a synonym for goodness, simple, unaffected, unmistakable, and uncompromising. On every public question Methodists have usually been right, though sometimes injudicious. In their eagerness to have the best accepted by the world, they have sometimes exposed themselves to the serious charge President Roosevelt has often made against reformers, of sacrificing the possible to the unattainable, but their purpose has been ever pure. Methodism has contributed powerfully to the forces which make for the betterment of public life, for world-wide peace, and world-wide federation. In her splendid history she has much to be proud of and little to deplore. To-day she prevails with men because she is good, and great goodness

was brought up a Methodist and therefore claims the right to speak with some appreciation of the Methodist type and character.



JOHN WESLEY

From the engraving by I. Faber after the painting by John Williams

always constitutes an undeniable claim to greatness.

Nothing perhaps impresses the casual reader of her history so much as her extraordinary power of adaptation to changing and to changed conditions. Springing into existence when, to quote a candid writer of the Anglican Church, "the dulness of spiritual religion in the Church of England was slowly chilling into death," Methodism came like John the Baptist, "preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." This one thing she did. Nothing else seemed of importance. Her machinery was constructed for the sole purpose of promoting personal piety at a time when religion had in some quarters almost ceased to be a personal concern. Her preachers were evangelists called, like the apostles, from their shops and nets and fields to warn men from a life of sin and to hold up before their sin-dimmed eyes the cross of Calvary. Education was not counted necessary; by some it was held in very low esteem.

The one thing required in a preacher was the spirit of religion. Having that, he could well forego all other gifts. He was to be merely an itinerant moving on from place to place, never tarrying long anywhere. And so the itineracy became the central feature of the movement.

By and by the need of a settled ministry grew evident. The teaching function of the preacher began to claim a place beside the preaching. Men who had been converted and were trying to lead the Christian life found but little nourishment in continuous appeals to come to Jesus. Having come to Jesus, they wanted to learn of him, they wanted to be taught the truths of Christian theology, and an ill educated, itinerant ministry could give them little help. Gradually the leaders of the movement awoke to the new necessities of the case. During the last half century they have placed increasing value on education. Colleges and universities have been developed. The standard of ministerial efficiency has been raised. The teaching function has

taken its place beside the preaching function.

The itinerancy has been gradually disappearing before the need of a settled ministry. First, the three-year limit was adopted, then the five-year limit, and at last the time limit was abolished altogether. Now a preacher may with the consent of the Bishop remain as long at any place as the people care to have him stay. This change is the more remarkable because it is the virtual abandonment of the distinctive method of the movement. Being such, it is the surest proof that could be given of the complete willingness of the largest band of evangelical Christians the modern world has seen to adapt themselves to changed conditions and to bring men to Christ at any sacrifice of tradition and of history. If adaptability gives evidence of greatness, Methodism is very great indeed, and her greatness may well be recognised by the Mother Church whom she abandoned in circumstances that can give small comfort to any one concerned.

Emerson's historic hint, that institutions are nothing but the lengthened shadows of great men, finds complete fulfilment in the history of Methodism. From the first, Methodism has been the shadow of the man who, measured by his deeds, can hardly fail to be recorded, says Green, as the greatest figure that has appeared in the religious world since the Reformation. All the distinctive features of the Methodist Church were contributed by John Wesley. The conference, the circuit, the class meeting, the penitents' meeting, the love-feast, the watch-night service, the rigid discipline, the governing body in the local church, and other marks of Methodism were placed upon it by the father of the movement. Every Methodist preacher, wittingly or unwittingly, takes John Wesley for his pattern, and John Wesley is still the patron saint of every pious home in Methodism. He means something to a larger number of people in this country than Shakespeare himself, and Epworth, the Wesley home, is

a pilgrim shrine precious possibly to as many as Stratford-on-Avon. It is fitting that a man so dear to millions should be honoured by all Christians as well as by his own denomination.

There have been greater preachers than John Wesley. In sheer oratorical power, he was not perhaps the equal of his colleague, George Whitefield, whom Benjamin Franklin called the prince of modern preachers. But few preachers have ever had the power possessed by Wesley to make a lasting impression on his hearers. Under his searching words men fell as fall the slain in battle. He could calm a howling mob and melt the hardest heart. Men who came to scoff remained to pray, to writhe in agony of soul, and to plead with God to put away their sins. Yet, there was nothing stormy in Wesley's manner. His attitude was easy, his action was controlled and calm, his voice not loud but clear and pleasing, his style simplicity itself. He never soared among the clouds, he used no far-fetched terms. Fine sermons

he abhorred. He seemed sometimes to be the teacher rather than the preacher in the pulpit. The words that rippled over his lips like a brook that babbles as it makes its way in half-broken silence to the sea always carried home, though no one knew just why.

I have sometimes thought that it was the unusual combination of unusual qualities in the man that gave weight to his words. His preaching may not have had the Demosthenic eloquence that rang through Whitefield's words; but it had what Whitefield's preaching never had, a rare combination of "the accuracy of a scholar, the authority of an ambassador, the unction of a saint, the power of God." It was always searching; but not often terrible or severe, except when addressed to congregations respectable, rich, and well contented with themselves.

Once a friend of Wesley was shocked to hear him preach to a well-groomed congregation a scathing sermon from the text, "Ye serpents, ye generation of

vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" "Sir," said Wesley's friend, incensed, "such a sermon would have been suitable in Billingsgate; but it is highly improper here." Wesley quietly replied: "If I had been in Billingsgate, my text should have been, "Behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world." It was the perfect fearlessness of Wesley in an age when many preachers were cowardly, when the poor too often received sermonic drubbings and the rich sermonic flattery, that made Wesley powerful among all classes. Men came with the expectation of hearing the truth, fresh and undiluted by cringing regard for wealth or social prestige, and they were seldom disappointed. Wesley always spoke his mind without fear or favour, and he never cast an anchor to windward.

Had he been asked what new doctrine he taught, he would probably have answered in surprise, "None, I am merely a good Churchman." The fact is he did say in 1739, "I simply describe the

plain, old religion of the Church of England." His doctrines all are found to-day in the Prayer-Book of that Church. Wesley added nothing to the teachings of the Church. He did this, however: He took out of their setting two or three of her most important doctrines to meet the special needs of the time. He used them to the neglect of other doctrines, and he so impressed them on the movement which he started that there is still to-day, perhaps, a tendency to emphasise them at the expense of other teachings as important now as were the special theories of Wesley in his day.

"Our main doctrines, which include all the rest," says Wesley, "are three: that of repentance, of faith, and of holiness. The first of these we account, as it were, the porch of religion; the next, the door; the third, religion itself." Turn the pages of your Prayer-Book and you will find that Wesley followed closely the natural division of the Church Catechism which Anglican children study every Sunday in the Sunday-school. In

season and out, he preached repentance. "Repentance absolutely must go before faith," was his continuous cry. He placed the new birth, as he called it, on a level with justification by faith, and when he was not preaching the one he was always preaching the other. The consequence was inevitable. Religion ceased to be a mere convention which men put on or off as they put on their clothes or took them off. It became real and personal. It clutched the hearts of men. It gripped the soul. It laid the conscience bare to God, and put into men's mouths a new song. No wonder the Church historian acknowledges that the revival of personal religion in England is due to John Wesley. No man can wrest that honour from John Wesley. No man well informed will ever try.

About his pedigree—he came of gentle, though not noble parentage. Perhaps the fact that he was born a gentleman gave him that delicacy in dealing with the poor which is rarely found in those not to the manor born. His father,

Samuel, was honest but rather commonplace. His mother, Susanna, ranks among the most extraordinary mothers in the history of the world. To her more than to all others, John Wesley owed his piety, his energy, and his indomitable will. It was from her that incidentally he acquired his profound belief in the active interference of spiritual agents in the affairs of this life, which even flowered out into belief in ghosts and witches.

At Oxford, where he became a Fellow in 1726, at the age of twenty-three, his religious life took on its lasting form. Dissatisfied with the careless living of many of the students and with the cheap scepticism which ran riot through the College, Wesley joined the little club of spiritually minded students which his brother Charles had organised a while before to promote personal piety in the College, and at once, by reason of his great ability and unusual spirituality, became the leader of the band. Their devoutness brought them, as devoutness often does, the ridicule of those

who lack devoutness. They were called ill names of various sorts: "Bible Bigots," "Bible Moths," "The Godly Club," "The Holy Club," and last of all, because they regulated all their days with nice precision, "Methodists." The name of Methodists, thus given to them in derision, they finally accepted in all seriousness, and their descendants to this day are proud to retain it.

In 1732 a Royal Charter was granted for the settlement of Georgia. Wesley went out with the first expedition, and in 1736 became minister in charge of Christ Church, Savannah. He tried there to duplicate his Oxford scheme of life. A High Churchman of the most precise type, he tried to force his views upon the little settlement. He forgot that the Church is catholic before all else, that there is room enough for all types within her ample fold. His mistaken zeal estranged the people from him. He converted estrangement into actual hostility by his folly in respect to a young woman whom he repelled from the Holy Com-

munion because she declined to marry him. And when at last the gathering storm of public indignation seemed about to break upon his head, he fled back to England, lamenting his mistakes and seeking God's forgiveness for his folly.

Of his life in England in the years that followed there is little time to speak. His labours were multiple indeed and varied. He was one of the hardest workers of the century. The days were not long enough for all the things he cared to do, even though he rose at four o'clock. The new religious impulse that came into his life in 1738 made him the foremost religious leader of the century. Though he was an ordained minister of the Church of England, that was no barrier to the widening fields of usefulness which lay before him. When he found men would not come to church he went out into the highways and the byways. He preached to the miners in their darkness, to the Newgate felons in their loathsome cells, to the sick and suffering

in the hospitals, as well as to the wealthy and refined in St. John's.

He seemed to many English Churchmen to be unduly negligent of the ordinary agencies of the Church. He seemed to many to appeal too much to men's emotions, and too little to their judgment. There were certain extravagances in his services which he appeared clearly to encourage. To hear members of his congregation shouting out Amen, interrupting the services by groans and cries, tossing and writhing on the ground as though in agony, seemed to the higher class of Englishmen indecorous if not indecent, and they held John Wesley to account for not suppressing what seemed to them disorder. More than this, by his insistence on the need of conscious conversion, of the same type of religious experience in all cases, he made it impossible for a bishop or priest of the Church of England to join him in a movement which the whole Church came later to recognise as in the main commendable. The majority

of Churchmen considered it indelicate to talk so openly about their inmost feelings as Wesley seemed to wish that Christians should do.

At last the churches were no longer open to him; even the hospitals and prisons were denied him and his followers. The streets and fields and mountain sides alone were friendly, and there in the open, under the dome of the blue sky, in God's great temple of nature, the Methodists grew into countless thousands. When they became too numerous for easy handling, Wesley broke them up into classes, set over each a leader, and sent earnest and fluent speakers out to travel over circuits and to preach the gospel wherever they could get a hearing. Such organisations as the Methodist Church has to-day, in the main he gave her in those days of bitter ostracism. He exercised more power than any bishop of the Anglican communion.

His labours seem in the retrospect incredible. Recall some of them.

During a period of fifty-four years he

averaged some five thousand miles a year, mostly on horseback. He preached on an average fifteen sermons a week, making altogether almost fifty thousand. He always had a book in hand while he was travelling, and it must have been a strange sight to see the little slender man astride his horse, his long hair given to the winds, his saintly face buried in a book, putting miles behind him. The number of his books and publications will scarcely be credited by the uninformed. There were several hundred altogether, among them grammars of the Greek, Hebrew, Latin, French, and English languages, a commentary in four volumes on the Bible, a dictionary of the English language, a history of Rome, a good-sized work on electricity, three books on medicine, seven large octavo volumes of sermons, controversial papers, and journals. "Few men could have travelled as much had they omitted all else. Few could have preached as much without either travel or study. And few could have written and published as

much had they avoided both travel and preaching." No minister in Christian history has ever done more things than the originator of the Methodist denomination. He is the Leonardo da Vinci of the Christian Church. No wonder he once remarked: "Leisure and I have taken leave of each other." And yet he was never in a hurry. "Always in haste, but never in a hurry," was his motto.

Long before the American Revolution broke out, the Methodist movement was growing unwieldy for one man to handle, even though a man of genius. It reached America in 1767. It had already spread over the British Islands. The great test had come. Could Wesley keep the movement in the Church or would he let it slip away? That was his hard problem. He solved it perhaps as well as any man could in the circumstances solve it. From the first he had carefully and strenuously insisted that Methodism was to be always a society within the Mother Church. When he sent out ministers to Scotland and Amer-

ica, he was careful to remind them that "this is not separation." Even after the formal organisation of the Methodist Episcopal Church had taken place in 1784, he refused to see that it was practically equivalent to a separation. He cried out in very pain of soul:

I never had any design of separating from the Church; I have no such design now. I do not believe that Methodists in general design it when I am no more seen. I do, and will do, all in my power to prevent such an event. None who regard my judgment or advice will ever separate from it.

The very last year of his life he wrote to one, "I live a member of the Church of England and die a member of the Church of England," and to another: "The Methodists in general are members of the Church of England. They hold all her doctrines, attend her services, and partake of her sacraments."

Why then did the greatest catastrophe in the last three centuries of the Christian Church occur?—for the separation of the Methodist denomination from the Mother

Church was for the cause of Christianity at large exactly that. Wesley was in part to blame. There were flaws in his personality which were responsible in part for the undoing of his work when the crisis came. Though his powers were gigantic, he had not full knowledge of men. He was too guileless to acquire it. He did not know how to have his own way, and retain the loyalty of those around him. He lacked the saving grace of *savoir faire*. When he needed most the counsel of his brothers, they were not at hand; the one because he doubted his sincerity, the other because after innumerable experiences with women, which proved that he had never profited by his Georgia escapade, John made a wretched marriage at the mature age of forty-eight, and was, until his wife deserted him, a hen-pecked saint. At a time when he needed the wisest counsel, there were no wise men close enough to him to give it.

The Mother Church too made a blunder. When the movement of Loyola began to

give large promise, the Church of Rome with characteristic wisdom, gathered it into her fold and made use of its resistless energy and enthusiasm. When the time came to make special provisions for the retention of Methodism within the Church of England, the Bishop of London, singularly blind to the signs of the times, declined Wesley's request for two priests who could administer the Sacraments to American Methodists. Despairing of securing the recognition and the help the Mother Church might well have given, Wesley, not without trepidation, sent Coke and Asbury to act as "superintendents" over the sea. They were ambitious to be bishops and soon assumed the title, to the disgust of Wesley, who wrote to Asbury: "How can you, how dare you suffer yourself to be called Bishop? I shudder, I start at the very thought."

American Methodists were alienated from the mother country by the Revolution. An ocean was between them and John Wesley. The ligature which bound

them to the Mother Church was sorely strained, and while Wesley sat at home and sent warning letters and anathemas across the sea, the cord snapped and Methodism broke away of its own weight from the Church of England.

The loss was mutual and very great. The Mother Church lost some of the enthusiasm, the emotionalism, the conscious experience, the unfeigned piety for which Methodism stands. And Methodism lost in part the ethical strenuousness, the broad liberality, the wholesome reasonableness, and the true Catholicity, which have in the main been characteristic of the Church of England.

Now in these days when the Episcopal Church is regaining part of what she lost, and as the General Conference of 1900 proves, Methodism has set her face toward the good things she abandoned when she went out from the Mother Church, the old relations might well be resumed in Christian love and unity. The theology of the Anglican and the Methodist is practically the same; their

ecclesiastical pedigree, and their purpose too. In fact, however it may be in theory, they stand exactly where John Wesley stood and with him they can truly say, We desire to have a league, offensive and defensive, with every soldier of Christ. They have not only one Lord, one faith, one baptism, but they are also engaged in one warfare,—the warfare against sin in every form, in every place, in every age.

Many of the books which have been written about John Wesley have the same temporary and contemporary value as the quadrennial campaign biographies of our Presidential nominees. Of all the earlier biographies Southey's is most readable, Whitehead's most credible. Of recent biographies the two most charming and authentic are Winchester's and Overton's. McConnell's history of the Episcopal Church is nowhere more suggestive than in its treatment of John Wesley. For unconventionality in view-point Snell's will always have peculiar interest, as will also Little's, written from a unique standpoint. Tyerman's three volumes and Wesley's published sermons will doubtless long continue as they long have been the mine which every serious-minded student will most deeply work for the facts procurable.

William Ellery Channing
1780-1842

“The most eminent representative of the Unitarian movement in this country.”—GEORGE P. FISHER.

“He was one of the spiritual forces of his time, and his watchwords are everywhere incorporated into life.”—D. D. ADDISON.

“Channing, if not a Christian theist, approximated that standing.”—J. W. CHADWICK.

“The differences between Unitarians and Trinitarians lie more in sounds than in ideas.”—CHANNING.

“Channing would, if alive now, find himself more at home in the Episcopal Church than in many of the Unitarian ones.”—EDWARD S. DROWN.

“I wish to regard myself as belonging not to a sect, but to the community of free minds, of lovers of truth and followers of Christ, both on earth and in heaven.”—CHANNING.

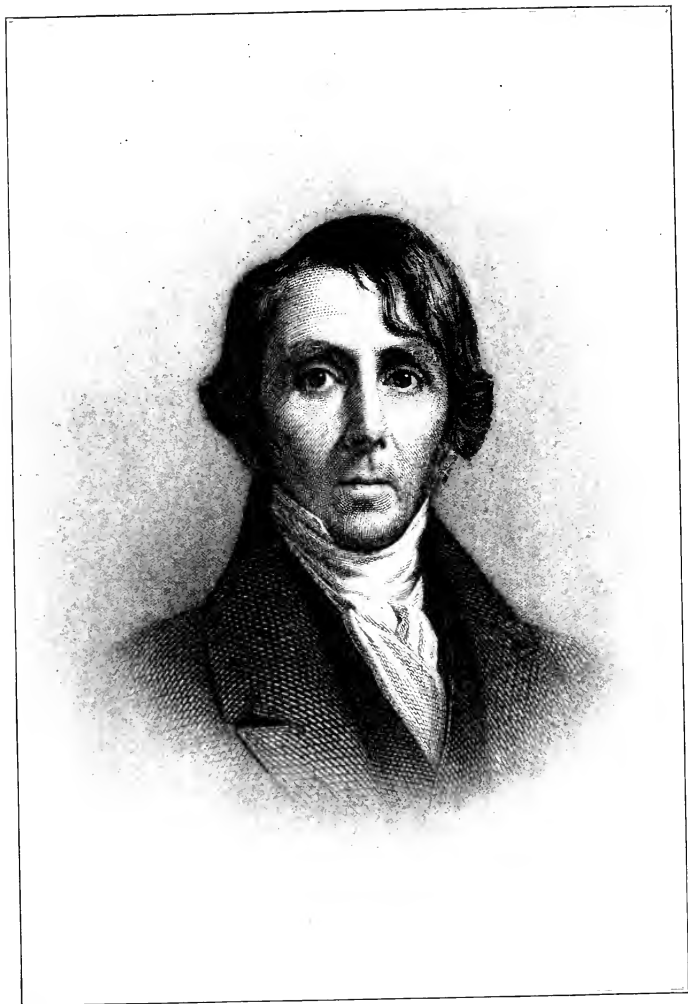
WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING

UNITARIANISM is almost as old as Christianity. Unitarians there have been from the earliest centuries. The most eminent of all came late in Unitarian history.

William Ellery Channing was more than preacher. His latest interpreter has said that "Channing's best work, his purest prophecy, was more upon the social side than on the theological." Publicist, philanthropist, patriot, semi-socialist, there was no public movement of importance either side the ocean that escaped his interest; scarcely one about which he failed to write or speak. Though he was late in giving comfort to the Abolition movement, he was always striking in his own way at slavery. "Always young for liberty," he was prompt to apprehend the import of the Revolution of 1830 and

to rebuke the blindness of New England to it. He took up early with socialism and admired the Brook Farm scheme and its promoters, though, fortunately, for his comfort, from afar.

A peace man at a time when all the world seemed bent on letting slip the dogs of war, the Massachusetts Peace Society was organised in his house, though till the end he held to the opinion that "sometimes we must fight." Against intemperance, his influence was ever cast, though he never for a moment thought that law could bring the evil to an end. In his views on education, he anticipated Bushnell and proved a friend and helper to Horace Mann when Mann had need of both. With prison reformers on either side the ocean he kept in friendly contact, purveyed their facts, and made their theories popular. His interest in the problems of the poor deepened with the years and widened so amazingly that Mr. W. M. Salter says that "Channing was ahead, not only of his own time, but ours."



WILLIAM E. CHANNING

From the engraving by D. Kimberley and J. Cheney after the painting by
S. Gambardella

By parentage and circumstances, by education and acquirements, Channing was prepared if not predestined for the pervasive thinking which he did and the far-reaching influence which he exercised. Born in Newport in 1780, a few days before Lafayette arrived there with the good news of French aid to the Americans, William Ellery Channing was fortunate to have a father whose manliness in mind and morals was saved from hardness by a love and liberality uncommon in that day of Puritanic mien and mood; happy to have a mother whose conscientiousness and straightforwardness, though not always tempered by the tact the father always showed, never stiffened into cold austerity.

In the boy the best in both the parents blended in the right proportions. There were in his character from the first strength and sweetness too. The integrity and moral purity which through a lifetime won him the respect of every chance acquaintance early made his schoolmates deferential to him, even

though his teachers were inclined to make a model of him for the rest to pattern after. The wealth of sympathy which he showered on the down-trodden slave in all those ante-bellum days of storm and stress was given in his boyhood to every bird that fluttered broken-winged across his path.

There never was a time when he was not religious in the truest sense. He was always brooding on religious problems. At Harvard from 1794 to 1798, where the moral tone was low, as he himself not immodestly remarks, "an almost instinctive shrinking from gross vice, to which natural timidity and religious principle contributed not a little, proved effectual safeguards." In Richmond, Virginia, "licentious and intemperate" as he described it, where he spent most of the next two years as tutor in a private family, he gave his leisure hours to a study of the Bible and the evidences of Christianity.

He called that period "the most eventful" of his life. He said:

I lived alone, too poor to buy books, spending my days and nights in an outbuilding, with no one beneath my roof except during the hours of school-keeping. There I toiled as I have never done since, for gradually my body sank under the unremitting exertion. With not a human being to whom I could communicate my deepest thoughts and feelings, and shrinking from common society, I passed through intellectual and moral conflicts of heart and mind so absorbing as often to banish sleep and to destroy almost wholly the power of digestion. I was worn well nigh to a skeleton. Yet I look back on those days of loneliness and frequent gloom with thankfulness. If I ever struggled with my whole soul for purity, truth, and goodness, it was there. Then, amidst sore trials, the great question, I trust, was settled within me whether I would be the victim of passion, the world, or the free child and servant of God. . . . In a licentious and intemperate city one spirit, at least, was preparing in silence and loneliness to toil not wholly in vain for truth and holiness.

Like Frederick W. Robertson in the Tyrol, Channing in those months at Richmond learned to beat his music out and emerged to become, after a year or two of special preparation, pastor of the

Federal Street Congregational Church in Boston, where he preached from 1803 until his death in 1842.

Greater preachers there have been than William Ellery Channing. He lacked the bulk most men count necessary to the orator. "He was small of stature, thin, with high cheek-bones and large dark eyes, having shadows about them almost as dark as the eyes." He looked his physical inferiority. He seemed to have barely enough frame, as Dr. Bellows once remarked, "to anchor his body to the earth." When he remarked to Dr. Furness that he "could n't strike a man," Dr. Furness wondered if any man would feel a blow from Channing's puny fist.

But even if there was no power in his small physique, there was magic in his voice. "His voice,—ah, that wonderful voice! wonderful," says Dr. Furness, not for the music of its tones, but for its extraordinary power of expression. Whether from the delicacy of the vocal organ or from bodily weakness, I do not know, it was flexible to

tremulousness. When he began to discourse, it ran up and down, even in the articulation of a single polysyllabic word, in so strange a fashion that they who heard him for the first time could not anticipate its effect,—how, before it ceased, that voice would thrill them to the inmost. I cannot liken it to anything but a huge sail, flapping about at first at random, but soon taking the wind, swelling out most majestically, as Sydney Smith said of Sir James Mackintosh that, “when the spirit came upon him he spread his enormous canvas, and launched into a wide sea of eloquence.”

To those who could not then foresee a Phillips Brooks with manuscript before him moving multitudes as though he spoke without a note, the sight of Channing “shooting with a rest” his balanced sentences and rounded periods forth may have at first appeared a trifle disappointing. Yet no less discriminating a listener than John Gorham Palfrey tells us that Channing’s pulpit utterances approached near “to what we imagine of a prophet’s or an angel’s inspiration.” And when to the lucidity and richness of his literary style, the purity and elevation of his

thought, the sincerity and intensity of his conviction, there was added a glow of chastened eloquence which now and then swept away the barriers of restraint, no wonder that rapt listeners reported as of a sermon preached in New York in 1826, "the man was full of fire, and his body seemed, under some of his tremendous sentences, to expand into that of a giant."

But his preaching always cost him dear. "The sermon over, there was little left in the preacher of that nervous elasticity with which he had hurried up the pulpit stairs. The virtue had gone out of him." The penalty was now to pay of sleepless hours and cerebral exhaustion. Here, too, as in the case of Shelley, was

"a power
Girt round with weakness, that could scarce
uplift
The weight of the superincumbent hour."

What was the sermon about? Go back with me to the age in which the great man lived. Calvinism then looked

its gloomiest and most forbidding. Tritheism was masquerading in the garb of Trinitarianism. Justification by faith had become justification by logic. Biblical interpretation was nothing more than unquestioning literalism. The Christ had turned into a mere lay figure on which to hang the outworn clothes of a belated theory of the Atonement. Human thought could scarcely get its breath. When men came to church they had to leave their generosity at home. Here and there a voice was crying in the wilderness; but not a voice articulate; and no one listened long. The stored-up indignation of the human heart at the most unchristian view of Christianity man can ever take was still unvoiced when Channing came and spoke the protest of the finest feeling and the sanest thinking against intolerance in thought and word.

He went the whole length of denial and repudiation. He challenged Calvinism to its face. He tore the mask from Tritheism. For justification by argument, he substituted a living faith

in a loving God. In the place of the constrictions of a severe literalism he placed the modern spirit which regards the Bible as a book, though best of books, and brings to its interpretation a consecrated common sense. For the metaphysical Christ of mediæval speculation he offered man a Christ more human and scarcely less divine, a Christ born of a Virgin, a worker of the miracles the Four Gospels narrate, a victor over death by rising from the dead, one who spoke as never man spake, in a special sense the Son of God pre-existent, though not perhaps eternally pre-existent.

These are Channing's very words: "I believe Him to be more than a human being; separated by a broad distinction from other men." Again, Channing says:

Jesus was what he claimed to be, and what his followers attested. Nor is this all. Jesus not only was, he is still the Son of God, the Saviour of the World. He exists now; he has entered that heaven to which he always looked forward on earth. With a clear, calm faith, I see him

in that state of glory; and I confidently expect at no distant period, to see him face to face.

Is it any wonder with these and similar expressions in mind, that Dr. Chadwick in his excellent biography, admits that "Channing, if not a Christian theist, approximated that standing"?

Christ and Him crucified Channing was always preaching; never, however, in traditional terms. If he was not technically a Unitarian as oftenest perhaps the term is used to-day, he was as surely not a thorough going Trinitarian. He had little patience with efforts to draw a sharp distinction between Unitarians and Trinitarians. Once he said: "It is from deep conviction that I have stated once and again that the differences between Unitarians and Trinitarians lie more in sounds than in ideas." If the cross did not signify to him what it signified to orthodoxy, it still signified. These are words of his:

I cannot receive from the Cross of Christ any good so great as that sublime spirit of self-

sacrifice, of love to God, and of unbounded charity, which the Cross so gloriously manifested.

Back of all his views of God and Christ, ever stood his love of man. When Henry George, in a private conversation, once said to me that he loved Jesus because Jesus loved man he pointed out the way Channing always took to Jesus and to Jesus' God. It was the human Jesus loving human beings that attracted Channing, and he was ready to believe any word that Jesus spoke because every word of Jesus appeared to be prompted by a love that passeth knowledge. It seemed to Channing that one who proved, as Jesus did, his love of man by dying for him and then rising from the dead had a right to be believed whatever he might say about himself, whatever claims he presumed to make about his person and authority.

The supreme value of a man,—that was Channing's fundamental formula. That was, in his judgment, the *raison d'être* of the Christian religion. But for

that there would be no occasion for religion at all.

I believe, he said, that Christianity has one great principle which is central, around which all its truths gather, and which constitutes it the Glorious Gospel of the Blessed God: it is the doctrine that God purposes, in his unbounded Fatherly Love, to perfect the human soul: to purify it from all sin; to fill it with his own spirit; to unfold it forever.

A perfect God of perfect love and man needing love and struggling toward perfection,—these were the two poles between which Channing's mind was ever moving. And so it is we owe to Channing, even in this day, something of that larger view of God the Father in which, when understood, there is no room save for love yearning to express itself mediately through the Incarnation and immediately through conscience, and for a clearer comprehension of the possibility and dignity of man in contradiction of all theory about man's inherent corruption.

Opposed at first to the organisation of

the Unitarian Association, reluctant to adopt the name of Unitarian at all, Channing was in his last years, however, swept into the Unitarian movement and by and by virtually accepted the leadership of it. The Unitarianism of his day was his own Unitarianism—or “Liberal Christianity” as he preferred to call it. Though not a well rounded faith, it was always noble, stressing as it did the moral perfectness of God, God’s purpose to uplift the world through Jesus Christ, the value of human life as such, and the simplicity and naturalness of religion. Many of New England’s truest sons and purest daughters have been nourished on the faith of Channing to the edifying of their kind and the strong upbuilding of the nation’s character. And the liberal movement everywhere discernible to-day is bringing many Christians nearer to some of the intellectual concepts Channing held about God and Christ, man and immortality, the Bible and its doctrines.

But it ought in fairness to be admitted

that not Channing's influence alone is responsible for this. Many circumstances have contributed to the growing liberality of Christian thinkers in our day, and elsewhere Channing's influence has not been as significant as it has been in New England. Liberality is now the very air we breathe as was liberty a while ago.

Again, it is noteworthy that Channing's attitude toward Christ was not the same as that of some who represent Channing's faith to-day. He wanted to believe the most he could concerning Jesus. He was never indifferent to the Person of Christ, however earnestly he emphasised his words and works. Indeed to induce men to become "one with Jesus in thought, in feeling, in power, in holiness" was the supreme purpose of his preaching.

Perhaps the best of Channing after all was not what he held and preached, but how he held and preached it. That is frequently the best in any man. The universe is full of truth, but no man gets even the smallest measure of it except he seek it along the highway of

absolute reality. To hold what we hold in all sincerity is better than to hold more with indifference. To hold the truth we hold, whether it be much or little, in heart as well as head, is indeed to hold it. Nothing entered Channing's spacious intellect that was not brought up promptly to the bar of a warm heart, and by the test at the soul's centre rejected or approved. As in the early autumn of 1842 he lay on his death-bed in the Walloomsac Inn in Bennington, he whispered to the anxious relatives and friends who gathered round him, "We need to feel the reality, the reality of the spiritual life."

"They turned him in his bed," says Dr. Chadwick, "that he might look upon the eastern hills, on which, and on the sky above them, the reflected sunset light was warm and beautiful. Through the parted curtains and a clambering vine, it stole in upon his face. None knew just when he passed but he died looking eastward, as if expectant of another dawn."

His last audible words were: "I have received many messages from the spirit." And every thoughtful man who has made himself acquainted with the character and achievements of "the little minister," as he was sometimes called, will be grateful to his God and Channing's God that the Holy Spirit chose to give to this great land of ours many messages through a medium so worthy to transmit them.

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"And thus the common tongue and pen,
Which world-wide echo Channing's fame
As one of Heaven's anointed men,
Have sanctified his name."

Much has been written, wise and otherwise, concerning Channing. Chadwick's biography, latest to appear, will probably remain the best until the last. The *Complete Works of Channing*, published by the American Unitarian Association, is the Channing student's comprehensive source book. Miss Peabody's *Reminiscences of Channing* can never lose the charm the author and the subject join in giving it. And the chapter on Channing in Addison's *The Clergy in American Life and Letters* and in *Pioneers of Religious Liberty in America*, being the Great and Thursday Lectures delivered in Boston, 1903, are as informing as they are interesting.

Horace Bushnell

1802-1876

“The preacher’s preacher.”—GEORGE ADAM SMITH.

“It was a live coal that he placed upon the altar.”—
BISHOP CLARK.

“His own ideal of his life’s work was that of discovery.”—AUSTIN PHELPS.

“I just look at truth from another corner of the room.”—HORACE BUSHNELL.

“He had no theology that he could not preach.”—
LEWIS O. BRASTOW.

“The gospel is nothing now any more than it was at the first unless it is reincarnated, and kept incarnate.”—
—HORACE BUSHNELL.

“If the dogmas against which he began his warfare in 1848 had been modified a generation sooner, the division of the Congregational body would never have taken place.”—WASHINGTON GLADDEN.

“It is really good and blessed, as I can testify, to be under any pressure that presses toward God.”—
HORACE BUSHNELL.

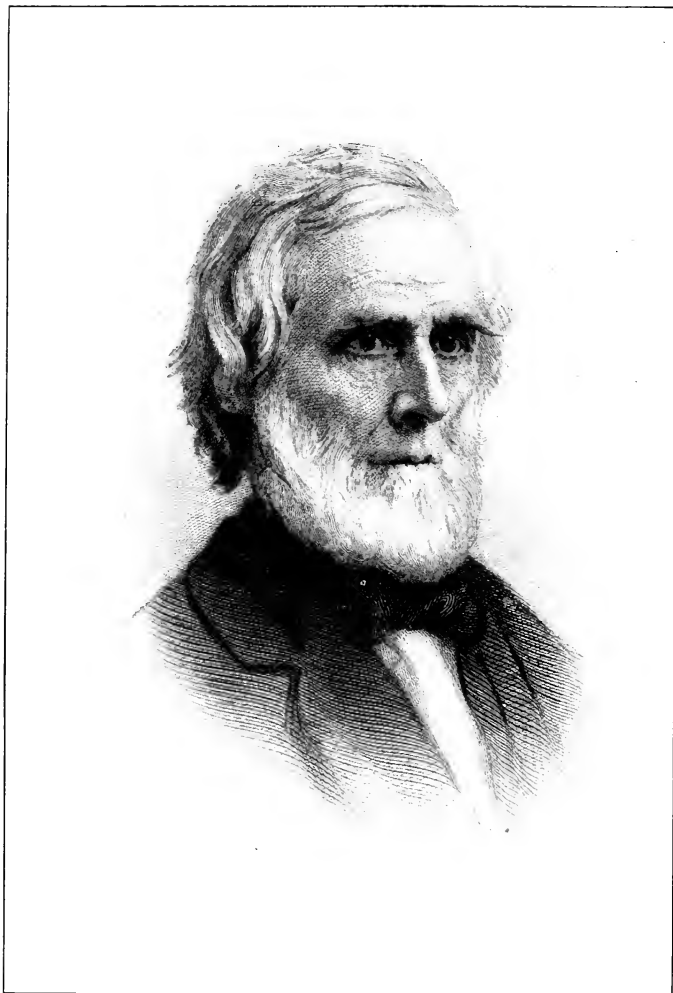
“He fought his doubts and gather’d strength.”—
TENNYSON.

HORACE BUSHNELL

WHILE in Boston Channing was with fearless hand uncovering for human souls the love of God hid overlong beneath His sovereignty, west and south within the borders of New England men feared more than they loved their Maker, and "Edwardeanism" still ruled religious thinking with a rod of iron. Edwards's son, who bore the name his father made immortal, and other satellites revolving at one decade or another in the Edwards orbit through more than three-quarters of a century, differed among themselves about details but not about the central principle of their theology, not about the need of offering continuous and stout resistance to the Arminianism which had been the lifelong bane of their renowned protagonist.

And yet in spite of them, Bellamy and Hopkins, Edwards junior and Em-

mons, President Dwight and Dr. Taylor, last of the line and second in ability to none but Edwards senior, though always tethered at the stake which Edwards drove down deep and firm, each in succession in the instinctive search for richer pasturage than Edwards had enjoyed, grazed farther afield than he, seeing something worth their while even in certain aspects of Arminianism, foreseeing even with unwilling eyes that which in colonial days no one could foresee, that American democracy triumphant through the daring exercise of freedom of the will in politics and government was not long to be denied some freedom in theology. One or other of them openly or secretly was pruning orthodoxy of its mediævalism, eliminating the theories which imputed unrighteousness to God, clearing away the rank absurdity of the doctrine that Adamic guilt was transmitted with Adamic sin, working steadily, year in, year out, at the trying task of reconciling human dependence with personal responsibility.



HORACE BUSHNELL

From the engraving by S. A. Schoff after the drawing by S. W. Rowse

But with a clear field for the discovery of new truth, or rather for the rediscovery of old truth lost to sight with the separation from the Mother Church in the Elizabethan period, the "Edwardeans" were not making all the headway which they should and could have made. They were too loyal for the truth's good, to the memory of Edwards. Like him, they set too high a valuation on metaphysics. They thought too much of dialectics as an agency in seeking truth, and they used it even when they were most conscientious as "a dodge"—to quote Professor Jowett—rather than a science or an art. Whether of the "ultra-Edwardeans" or of the more moderate "New Haven School" which Dr. Taylor started early in the nineteenth century, the "Edwardeans" multiplied so many inconsequential differences and filled up their minds with so many nice distinctions without difference that their thinking one day reached the unhappy plight humorously and veraciously described by Horace Bushnell as

“the sedimentary subsidence of theology itself, precipitated in the confused mixture of its elements.”

It was into such an atmosphere that Bushnell was born and in such an atmosphere that he learned to think. Like Channing, Bushnell was quick to have done with “Edwardeanism.” Like Channing, he was glad to voice the growing sense of freedom both in religion and in politics. Like Channing, he became with passing years the publicist as well as preacher, the patriot as well as parson, ever emphasising the coextensiveness of life and religion. His sermons, like Channing’s, were too substantial and compact to make the man who preached them popular with the unthinking. Like Channing’s, they were regarded as obscure by those who could not or who would not listen closely. And Bushnell like Channing never dared till late in life to speak without a manuscript, ever confident that what the preacher loses in directness he makes up in the solidity which the manuscript assures.

Whatever men might think of Bushnell in the pulpit, they never thought him commonplace. Anywhere, everywhere, he was original and impressive. Young or old, his was a spare and sinewy figure. The face, beardless as in early manhood, bearded as in later years, was always delicate in outline, sensitive in the play and interplay of the emotions which it pictured. The mobile mouth seemed ever uncertain whether it would break into a smile or into raillery, never bitter or sardonic. The broad and spacious forehead was always threatened by a tangled mass of turbulent and shaggy hair. The grey eyes, habitually kindly, could flame with righteous wrath when there was hypocrisy in sight. Though the voice was never strong or rich and in his later years had small compass, it never wanted carrying power and was not unsuited to his jury style of simple and downright persuasiveness in public speech. In all his preaching there was an abruptness not unloving, a fiery ur-

gency not intolerant, and a nervous impetuosity invariably accompanied by a "peculiar emphasising swing of his right arm from the shoulder," as though to swing himself without delay into the heart of theme and listener.

Many pictures of the preacher as he appeared to those who knew him best have been drawn for the enlightenment of those who never saw him. This by President D. N. Beach, a student at Yale when Bushnell preached there at the age of seventy, makes the strong man's pulpit presence perspicuous, his pulpit power explicable.

Gaunt was he, grey, ashen of skin, thin-voiced till he got under way, stopping time and again to cough, no elocution, nor rhetoric (albeit scarce ever such rhetoric, soberly conceived): making us his by no *ad captandum* themes or illustrations, or metaphors; the plainest, most matter of fact person that ever stood there. This invocation, which we could scarcely hear, would still us. The Scripture lesson, plain speech (as if uttered on yesterday's half holiday) about some valiant soul, read as only one reads who dwells forever with realities,

would change our temper for the entire day. Then the prayer.

I can hear it yet. Nothing about Bushnell so holds me, though I cannot recall a sentence of it. You dreamed, like Jacob at Bethel, that God was there. All conventions, too, were dissolved betwixt Him and you. Our seer must have held Him with his glittering eye. Then the great argument began,—a shorter “pastoral” prayer than we had ever heard, that spake to the Infinite as a man to his friend; reverent but familiar; grateful but self-respecting; diction the simplest, the weightiest; hesitating not to assume for us responsibilities, nor to lay answering responsibilities on God; . . . and done, as all straight, pregnant speech is done, soon, simply, confidently. The world has changed when you lift your head. To have heard Bushnell pray, and to have prayed even a very little with him, was already to have entered the world of spirit. Our Saviour’s unique prayer life was explicable.

The sermon I remember best, better than all except that “On the Mount,” was the one entitled “The Dissolving of Doubts.” “Doubts are not peculiar to Nebuchadnezzar,” he begins, putting into that monarch’s lips words belonging to Belshazzar (and it so stands in the printed volume); but if you notice this, you do not mind, any more than you mind Shakespeare’s anachronisms. No, they are not peculiar to Nebuchad-

nezzar; you even have had yours. Thereupon in the space of some three coarsely printed pages, say in five minutes, he has given you what an earlier metaphysician would have called the "natural history" of your own mind. Then, while you sit breathless, he describes whither you are come. "His suns do not rise, but climb." Next he proposes a way out. It appears to you the more alluring because he shyly implies that he has tried it himself. . . . "O God, if there be a God," he quotes, and you take heart.

"A dismal sort of prayer," he comments, while you whisper Amens, "but the best he can make, and better than some." The tears by this time are streaming down your face, but you sit bolt upright on those timber benches, not fearing, at least for now, the face of man. But it is his application that lifts you. "Never be afraid to doubt." "Never try to conquer doubts against time." "Never force yourself to believe." "If you try this way, you must be anything that it requires, a Jew, a Mohammedan, ready to go to the world's end, anything; most probably you must be a Christian." All this with a calm, a stillness, a solemnity of emphasis, a cheerful confidence in you and in God, that by this time have bathed that sombre place as in a soft and warm and heavenly light. The president, who sits beside him in the high pulpit, and who will rather have chosen the theme "Sin not Self—

Reformatory," lifts his glasses to clear the mists that are even in his piercing eyes, and you walk out into a new, an unfearing, a believing life.

Professor George Adam Smith once in private conversation said that Bushnell is the preacher's preacher, as Spenser is the poet's poet, and that his sermons are on the shelves of every manse in Scotland. The distinctiveness in Bushnell's preaching lay in its immediate competency to satisfy the most exacting taste. He was the preacher for the thoughtful and refined.

His effectiveness [says Dr. Munger], was peculiar. If he gained any hearing at all, he won the consent of the whole man,—not agreement always, but intellectual and moral sympathy. The sermon never lost its power to move and inspire such hearers through lapse of years. He lodged so vast an amount of truth in heart and mind and conscience that it could not be forgotten. . . . He was the most democratic and most human of preachers, and at the same time one of the loftiest and most spiritual. He spoke to men as on equal terms and in a direct way, taking them into his confidence and putting himself in their place, feeling their needs,

sharing their doubts, and reasoning the question out as one of them. He never berates, and if he exhorts, it is in the same spirit of comradeship over the matter in hand. Still, he is dominated by his subject and its demands, following where it goes, and if any of his hearers falter, he does not stop with them, but leads the rest on to the final solution, or up to the last look into the mystery.

Make a careful study of almost any sermon which he preached and the secret of its charm will be disclosed. There was usually a felicitous relationship between the title and the text. In the coining of the one he was as careful as in the choosing of the other. The sermon's central thought was sure to be embodied in the title, and then the text threw such a bright light on the thought that the entire sermon seemed to stand out plainly and to betray its import at the start. What could be more allusive than a title and a text like this: "Every Man's Life a Plan of God," "I girded thee, though thou hast not known me?" Or this: "Unconscious

Influence," "Then went in also that other disciple?"

Some preachers never know what they will write when they take up the pen. In Bushnell's rapt imagination every sermon seems to have been visualised before he put his pen to paper. It was apparently never his lot to have to grope vacuously for an idea. His mind was free at every stage of sermon preparation to give his thoughts their right proportions and their proper dress. His sermons all bear evidence of artistic care in their construction. There is never any patchwork; never any fortuitous concurrence of materials; never any rhetoric for the sake of rhetoric; never a metaphor or simile hung on the outside but always fused into the body of the sermon. Thought and sentiment, the ordinary and original, fact and fancy—every sermon had all these in it. But it was not these that made his sermons instantly effective. It was the preacher's vision, his insight into the heart of truth, into the nature of things, at a time when most

New England preachers were not wont to look life in the face and see things as they are. Seek where you will the explanation of the power of the man, you will, I think, come home again to find it in his ever vivid sense of what is real and lasting. There never has been a preacher in the entire history of American preaching more resolute to live up to the lines of Clough:

“I will look straight out—
See things—not try to evade them.
Fact shall be fact for me, and the truth the truth
forever.”

Horace Bushnell was born in 1802 in the village of Bantam, a mile or two from Litchfield. He was brought up, says his younger brother,

in a household where religion was no occasional and nominal thing, no irksome restraint nor unwelcome visitor, but a constant atmosphere, a commanding but genial presence. In our father it was characterised by eminent evenness, fairness, and conscientiousness; in our mother it was felt as an intense life of love, utterly unselfish and untiring in its devotion, yet thought-

ful, sagacious, and wise, always stimulating and ennobling, and in special crises leaping out in tender and almost awful fire. If ever there was a child of Christian nurture, he was one; . . . nurtured in the facts and principles of the Christian faith in their bearing upon the life and character; and if ever a man was true to the fundamental principles and the customs which prevailed in his early home, even to his latest years, he was.

Sent to the local school like other boys, he was always good-natured, thoughtful, self-contained, mature beyond his years, conscious of the latent power within him and yet without conceit. A full-grown man, handsome and agile, he entered Yale at twenty-one, led his class both in work and play, and in spite of his bluntness and a provoking exemplariness, which sometimes makes a man unpopular among his college mates, he was through his four years extremely popular. Graduated in 1827 at the age of twenty-five he taught a school in Norwich for a while, and then served ten months on the editorial staff of the New York *Journal of Commerce*. Next he studied law for

a half year in the law school at New Haven, and at last in the autumn of 1829 he entered on a tutorship at Yale, where for a year and a half he kept up his law studies.

Joseph Cook once said that Bushnell was at college an infidel of the Tom Paine type. It were more accurate to say that in his twenties Bushnell made no profession of religion and long believed that at college his "religious life was utterly gone down." But he makes haste to add: "I had run to no dissipation; I had been a churchgoing, thoughtful man." His difficulty was more with the theology than with the religion of the time. He was yet to find that he could break with "Edwardeanism," and still be religious.

In the winter of 1831 there was a revival in the college. Inclined impatiently to pass revivals by, he had to take account of this. His students were becoming interested. Some of them looked to him—and told him that they did—for light and leading. There arose

from the very exigencies of a situation unexpected and unwelcome, an obligation to the higher interests of his students which he was quick to recognise and prompt to set before his mental difficulties.

But the mind was not yet ready to follow the heart. He was sorely puzzled. Says a friend of his:

On one occasion he came in, and, throwing himself with an air of abandonment into a seat, and thrusting both hands through his black, bushy hair, cried out desperately, yet half laughingly, "O men! what shall I do with these arrant doubts I have been nursing for years? When the preacher touches the Trinity and when logic shatters it all to pieces, I am all at the four winds. But I am glad I have a heart as well as a head. My heart wants the Father; my heart wants the Son; my heart wants the Holy Ghost—and one just as much as the other. My heart says the Bible has a Trinity for me, and I mean to hold by my heart."

And holding by his heart, he came trudging up the steep incline of duty till at the top a rush of feeling swept his doubts away and brought him the assur-

ance that Christianity is not so much a doctrinal assertion, however fortified by logic, as a life to live in Jesus Christ.

After such a complete change of heart as this—conversion they then called it,—was it any wonder that the next summer, his law course completed, Bushnell gave up his college work and began to study for the ministry? Was it any wonder that in the New Haven seminary, fresh from his profoundly moving heart experience, he found little interesting, little worth his while, in Dr. Taylor's teaching with its under emphasis of heart and over emphasis of head? Was it any wonder that he turned from the dry bones of theology, at their driest then, to Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection*," through whose heaven-looking pages he caught glimpses of "a whole other world somewhere overhead, a range of realities in higher tier"? Was it any wonder that he made haste to join "the goodly fellowship of the prophets," whose vision and whose utterance ever bear witness

to the truth of Schleiermacher that "the heart makes the theologian"?

Bushnell's actual ministry began—and also ended—in the North Church at Hartford, in which he was ordained May 22, 1833. A little later, September 13, 1833, he was wedded to Mary Apthorp, whose contribution to his spiritual development and his pulpit usefulness seemed to him, and others, beyond description. Of those first years in Hartford we know scarcely more than this, that he lived a quiet life, well within his small income, paid his bills with promptness, and was ethically clean in all his dealings with his fellow citizens.

Like Phillips Brooks he ripened early. Some of his first sermons read as well as any which he ever preached. His "Every Man's Life a Plan of God," prepared and preached in those initial years, was placed awhile ago by the *New York Tribune* among the three greatest sermons in existence, and his "Living to God in Small Things," which bears the

date of the fifth year of his ministry, is just as satisfying.

Singularly happy in his home life, reverent as every normal father is of child life, Bushnell put into his book on *Christian Nurture* (1846) his first clear protest against the "Edwardean" view that God "leaves the little children of our homes to be practically orphans,—in their spiritual relations, destitute of a heavenly Father's care until they have grown old enough to pass through the ordeal of conversion." The book in fact was written simply to establish the proposition now self-evident in other folds besides the Episcopalian, "that the child is to grow up a Christian, and never know himself as being otherwise." But his claim was not to go unchallenged. The book invited and evoked the sharpest criticism, and brought its author under a cloud of suspicion and disparagement which never lifted till the last.

The supreme experience in the great man's life came in 1848. Europe was seething with revolution. Events al-

ways dramatic, often tragic, were passing sharp and clear across the world's horizon. Human thought was keen to decipher the meaning of affairs. Bushnell's mind, ever active, was intensely active now, turning over the new thought materials presented to it, striving to interpret and explain in terms of spirit incidents and movements seemingly political alone, looking for some special revelation of the possibilities before his ministry in the new and brilliant light of the world stress and the world need.

It came. Mrs. Bushnell tells us when and how.

On an early morning [she says], in February his wife awoke to hear that the light they had waited for more than they that watch for the morning, had risen indeed. She asked, "What have you seen?" He replied, "The gospel." It came to him at last, after all his thought and study, not as something reasoned out, but as an inspiration,—a revelation from the mind of God Himself.

The sun of faith which has hitherto been mounting slowly up the eastern sky, now

reaches the zenith, and pours down its light full-orbed upon the prophet's soul. No more broken lights; no more partial and defective seeings. Now in the noon-tide of his life and love and faith he makes a "personal discovery of Christ and of God as represented in Him," satisfying, controlling, and directing through the rest of life.

The next year through the pages of his *God in Christ* he takes the world into his confidence, and shares his vision with it. But the world—at any rate the world conventional—sees something else than vision in the heart-coined book. In his zeal to beat down the time-long falsehood of "Edwardeanism" that in order to pardon guilty man God had to lay the heavy hand of punishment upon His guiltless Son, Bushnell appears to have slipped into the heresy of the modal Trinity with its conception of the Three Persons in the Trinity as having but a temporary and revealing purpose.

But he only appears. There is in the book a subtle point his critics failed to

notice. He does say that the Trinity is modal as relates to man. He does not say, however, that the Trinity is in its essence modal. These are his very words:

I will only say that the Trinity, or the three persons, are given to me for the sake of their external expression, not for the internal investigation of their contents. If I use them rationally or wisely, then I shall use them according to their object. I must not intrude upon their interior nature, either by assertion or denial.

To take God's revelation of Himself at its face value, in its obvious import, and to make no assumptions as to what God has chosen to withhold from man,—this was Bushnell's purpose; and the fault was not wholly his if to some his book seemed, in its tendency at least, Sabellian. However, in his next book, *Christ in Theology* (1851), he took pains to restate the Trinitarian case and to cast it more dexterously into Nicene form.

It was then too late to make amends to New England orthodoxy. Days of accusation followed the appearance of

God in Christ. New Haven, Bangor, East Windsor, even Princeton tried to bring him up with a round turn. The religious journals had their fling at him. Clergymen once cordial passed him by with icy faces and with formal greetings. There were years when not one preacher in all Hartford would exchange with him, and when his unwished for accession to a company of ministers made them ill at ease and stilled the give and take of spontaneous conversation. A few, a very few,

“On whom the Spirit came,”

drew closer to him in his hour of trial, and compensated all they could by love and trust for the heart-hurts he was receiving at the hands of others. The Congregational system, fortunately, does not lend itself with readiness to trying heretics, but his enemies did their utmost to adapt it to their will. When his own Association failed outright to convict him they brought in a dubious verdict, of which Bushnell wrote a friend,

“that though I am a frightful being, I am nevertheless substantially orthodox.” The Fairfield West Association kept up the fight against him for several years till from sheer weariness—not cowardice—he removed beyond their reach by making his church independent of all others, and living out his public life apart from all religious organisations save his own loyal local church.

During all those years of nerve strain and soul suffering Bushnell kept his temper and maintained his poise, saving the discussion when he could from bitterness, answering in love whatever the provocation, ranging ever deeper into the truth which underlies all efforts to express it in human speech, discovering now and then that some earlier statement which had given offence was not after all so much untrue as inadequate in the light of his increasing knowledge, realising as the years went by that truth in the spirit’s realm can at most be hinted at and the language of theology is in consequence at best suggestive.

Perhaps Dr. Trumbull is correct; it may have been Bushnell's use of language rather than the views he tried to express in language that created the suspicion of his heresy. In an age in which theologians thought they could do everything with language, even to the splitting of the finest hairs of metaphysics, a man was sure to have his troubles who discredited the theologian's best-loved tool in words like these, "Language . . . is not so much descriptive as suggestive, being figurative throughout, even where it deals with spiritual truth."

For his other books, important as they are, a word must serve. His *Nature and the Supernatural* (1858) with its exquisite chapter on the character of Jesus, was perhaps the first American book to attempt to prove in some detail that the distinction between the natural and supernatural is artificial and untrue. In *The Vicarious Sacrifice* (1866) he set forth comprehensively the moral view of the Atonement widely held to-day that the sufferings and death of Jesus fall under

a law of universal sweep which makes it possible for every human soul both to enter into the Christ passion and to interpret it to others. The principal volumes of his sermons are *Christ and His Salvation*, *Sermons on Living Subjects*, and *Sermons for the New Life*, which won for Bushnell the reputation of "the most independent and muscular sermoniser in the American pulpit."

There were, besides, four volumes of essays and addresses, some of which, especially those on *Work and Play*, are as readable as Emerson's. It was in the address at Yale in 1843 that he cut from under slavery the Scripture basis some Southerners were then insisting was irremovable. His oration on "Our Obligation to the Dead" has on it many of the marks of Lincoln's Gettysburg address. No abler word perhaps on either side the Woman's Suffrage Question has been written than his *Reform against Nature*. But it is in *The Moral Uses of Dark Things* that we find the man and preacher at his best. Nowhere else do mind and soul

seem so superbly mated. Nowhere else does his genius coruscate so brilliantly. Nowhere else is there such a wealth of memorable phrase and clever epigram, in the making of which Bushnell was always past master.

He wrote as well as spoke on many themes, and if you are of a mind you can find much to criticise in what he wrote. He sometimes overstressed his theory of language. His exegesis was not seldom wholly fanciful, and in the light of higher criticism it sometimes seems absurd. He turned out theological books too easily; at any rate too rapidly. Some had too soon to be revised. He was seldom widely read or deeply read on subjects he essayed to discuss in print. No man ought to write as though he were the first to write unless he is the first. There were several centuries of Christian apologetics before Sabellianism was disposed of in the history of the Church, and Bushnell would have had less inconvenience in his lifetime and his reputation would have won its way less hardly had

he found this out first hand before he wrote his *God in Christ*.

But there are, at any rate, in his books no *membra disjecta*. "He had," his daughter says, "no unrelated facts." Sermons, essays, addresses, all seem to belong together; all bear the stamp of the same personality. In the crucible of a highly spiritualised intellect all the truths that came his way were fused together into a perfect unity which makes Bushnellism a precise and lasting fact in the history of theology this side the Atlantic.

The best about the man was that he came closer to living what he preached than most of us. He had all sorts of trials in his stormy life. He was almost always "troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." He had to beat out all the music which he made. Much of the criticism he received was at the hands of men whom forms completely satisfied, while he was ever hun-

gry for the spiritual reality behind the forms. Then, too, he had to pay the penalty men always have to pay who key their life up to a higher pitch than mere expediency. These words pencilled in an old-age soliloquy might well be in the heart of every minister for the sake of admonition and example: "I have never been a great agitator, never pulled a wire to get the will of men, never did a politic thing." Men do not get the offices of life who walk the way that Bushnell walked. But they get something else and better; a few true friends, a zest for life, a fine sense of the fitness of things, an uplook and an outlook vouchsafed to no others, a peace the world can neither give nor take away, and that goodwill at the heart of life the other name of which is God.

Through practically all his public life Horace Bushnell was an invalid. He never learned how to use his voice. Clergyman's sore throat first visited him in 1839, and the soreness soon began to travel lower. He broke down more

than once, and after 1844 he sought health successively in Europe, the West, the South, and Cuba, and in 1856 in California, where he was invited to become the president of the University of California, for which he chose the site. Discouraged by the persistence of ill health which was accentuated by the fierceness of his critics, he gave up his church to the sorrow of his people, always loyal to him through his troubles and unceasingly sympathetic with him in ill health. Then still hoping against hope for better health he spent a year or two in Minnesota and at Clifton Springs, New York, and in 1861 returned to live in Hartford till his death in 1876.

Though no longer in a settled pastorate he was as busy as ever, speaking, writing, serving in one way or another the higher interests of his city and his land. Almost as versatile as Franklin, he turned his hand in his old age to many things. He drained a city, laid out a park, planned a house or two, taught the public a few salient lessons in political

economy, and incidentally gave the Adirondack guides some useful points about the woods they thought they knew already well enough.

His last days were his happiest. "God spared his life till all men were at peace with him." Everybody did the grand old man the honour which was due him. His appearance on the street was the signal for hats off in his neighbourhood. Till the last, spare, muscular, agile, a spring in every step, his white hair stubbornly atoss above the eyes that gleamed with kindly humour, his tongue sharp one minute with keen wit, blunt with homely frankness at the next, in instant touch with everybody whom he met, and never quite so happy as when the joust of argument was on and he was mounted for the hot encounter, Horace Bushnell was the old man eloquent of Hartford, and nothing ever pleased him better than the news which reached him on his dying bed that the park he had conceived was to be named in his honour.

He was slow to die. His spirit seemed to tarry overlong in this world.

“His stainless earthly shell
Was worn so pure and thin,
That through the callow angel showed,
Half-hatched that stirred within.”

When in the early morning of February 17, 1876, while the stars were still shining in the frosty sky, there could be no longer any doubt that he was passing, the family gathered round his bedside for his last tender blessing, and this—so characteristic of the man—is what they heard: “Well, now, we are all going home together; and I say, the Lord be with you—and in grace—and peace—and love—and that is the way I have come along home.”

And it was.

Besides Bushnell's own writings, there are two books one must read who would know much of Bushnell. The first, which appeared last, in 1899, is Dr. Munger's biography, the only full and connected account ever given of the preacher and theologian. The second, prepared by his two daughters and published in 1880, bears the title *Life and Letters of Horace Bushnell*, and tells us what the man was like as husband, father, friend. The best critical estimate of Bushnell as a homiletical genius is found in Brastow's *Representative Modern Preachers*, ch. iv. His place among the leaders of Progressive Orthodoxy is pointed out by Dr. Washington Gladden in "*Pioneers of Religious Liberty*," ch. vii. About Bushnell as a literary force there is a chapter in Addison's *The Clergy in American Life and Letters*. And Dr. Henry Clay Trumbull's recollections of him, which appeared some years ago in *The Sunday-School Times* and are admirably supplemented in Howard's *Life Story of Henry Clay Trumbull*, shed many illuminating side-lights on his personality and preaching.

Phillips Brooks
1835-1893

“The spirit of reverence with which I commenced my work has grown deeper at every stage of my investigation.”—A. V. G. ALLEN.

“I have known a number of the men we call great,—poets, statesmen, soldiers,—but Phillips was the only one I ever knew who seemed to me entirely great!”—S. WEIR MITCHELL.

“Phillips Brooks is not only the greatest preacher in America, he is, perhaps, the greatest preacher in the world.”—EDWIN D. MEAD, in 1891.

“In this blending of perfect simplicity of treatment with singular fertility and elevation of thought, no other of the famous preachers of the generation that is now vanishing approached him.”—JAMES BRYCE.

“He translated the terms of the spiritual of the past into the terms of the spiritual of the present.”—TALCOTT WILLIAMS.

“God the Father loving all men, man the child getting near to his Father, those were the thoughts that formed his being, and inspired his tongue, and crowned with glory his life and death.”—ARTHUR BROOKS.

“The great truth of Jesus Christ is, that God is pleading with every soul, not merely in the words which we read from His book, but in every influence of life.”—PHILLIPS BROOKS.

“You are in God’s world; you are God’s child. These things you cannot change; the only rest and peace and happiness for you is to accept them and rejoice in them.”—PHILLIPS BROOKS.

PHILLIPS BROOKS

IT was to the Phillips-Exeter boys that Phillips Brooks in 1886 remarked of the great man as a type: "This man, great as he is, is of the same human sort that I am, and so I may attain to the same kind of greatness which he reached."

But neither could his audience then nor can the readers of his memorable address on Biography now, years after his taking off, find in the words he used the comfort which they brought to him. For after all is said, Phillips Brooks was different from most of us. He had a unique right, not ours, to claim close kinship with the world's supremely good and great. He was of their class. When he spoke to them, it was deep calling unto deep. When he spoke for them, he spoke as a representative worthy and accept-

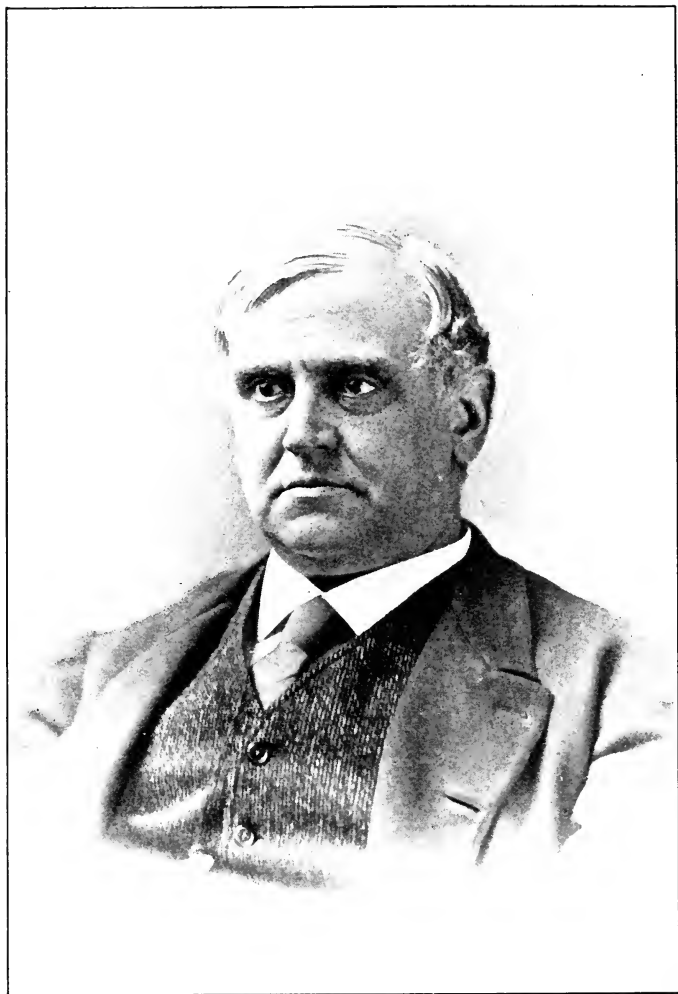
able. When he spoke of them he spoke as one having authority, which indeed he had in full.

To read what first-rate men dispassionate and philosophical have said of him all but takes your breath away. The sad news that Phillips Brooks was dead crushed Boston into silence as unbearable as it was unutterable until Dr. George A. Gordon struck the responsive chord of the bereavement in the words:

“Never to the mansions where the mighty rest,
Since their foundations, came a nobler guest.”

Dr. Holmes a little later placed him first among peers, “the ideal minister of the American gospel,” and Dr. Weir Mitchell a while ago wrote the official biographer of Phillips Brooks: “I have known a number of the men we call great,—poets, statesmen, soldiers,—but Phillips was the only one I ever knew who seemed to me entirely great.”

Elements not often found in one man dwelt together in perfect harmony in



PHILLIPS BROOKS
From a photograph from life

Phillips Brooks. There was physical bulk towering and majestic, intellect colossal and lavishly endowed, heart capacious, rich, and tender. The mental and the moral nature of the man were so nicely blended that you cannot see where one left off and the other began. "You are unable to tell"—to quote his words concerning Lincoln—"whether in the wise acts and words which issue from his life there is more of the righteousness that comes of a clear conscience, or of the sagacity that comes of a clear brain." Nobody—and many have tried—has ever given an analysis of his character so accurate as he himself unwittingly afforded in his graduation essay at the Alexandria Theological Seminary in 1858, when in speaking of the centralising power of the gospel, he pictured "the concentration of the moral life in Christ: the Intellect coming up to say 'Lord, teach me'; the Heart bringing its tribute of loyalty and love; the Will with bowed head echoing the first Christian question, 'What wilt thou have me

to do?' ” Nobody except perhaps Phillips Brooks has ever doubted the essential veracity of this auto-photograph.

He continued to the last so modest that once when a discussion was in progress as to the emptiness of churches he expressed surprise and incredulity. He even ventured to remark, “I go about a great deal; I preach everywhere; and I have yet to see an empty church.” When men complimented him upon his sermons, they embarrassed him. When they praised his deeds, they vexed him. Under criticism often unkind, not seldom malicious, he never spoke a bitter word. Under calumny cruel and vicious, he never lost his wonderful self-control. He had his faults. He must have had; he was a man. But after reading every important word which has appeared in print about him from the obituary notices to Dr. Allen’s biography, I would not care to make the effort to point out his faults. I would rather say of him what the Unitarian Chadwick long since said:

“Here was a man cast in such generous mould
Of body, brain and conscience, heart and
soul,
That if till now we never had been told
Of an eternal life and perfect goal
Beyond the verge of this our mortal space,
Straightway of such we should conceive, and
dare
Believe it builded in God’s boundless grace,
After this man’s great fashion, high and
fair.”

It is Phillips Brooks the preacher who is to-day our chief concern. And what a preacher he was! “The best because the most edifying of preachers,” is the judgment of England’s present representative at Washington. Asked “How does he compare with your great preachers in Scotland and England?” the late Professor A. B. Bruce of Glasgow University answered:

It is this way: our great preachers take into the pulpit a bucket full or half full of the Word of God, and then, by the force of personal mechanism, they attempt to convey it to the congregation. But this man is just a great water main, attached to the everlasting reservoir of God’s

truth and grace and love, and streams of life, by a heavenly gravitation, pour through him to refresh every weary soul.

Let us go back some twenty years and hear him preach in his own church when he was at the fulness of his fame. The church is worth our visit on its own account. Completed more than thirty years ago, it easily ranks first for beauty and impressiveness among the churches of New England. Modelled after the French Romanesque, without a spire, without the pointed arch, Trinity Church seems ever to be calling men away from conventional Christianity to a more inclusive faith which is as wide in concept and in application as is life itself. Richardson did much to make the church what it now is, and what he could not do La Farge with his elaborate decorations and Burne-Jones with his glorious windows did. The completed church ushered in a new era in church building in our land, and was done in miniature in many a community.

It may be a stormy Sunday afternoon on which we pay our precious visit to the church of Phillips Brooks. No matter; the church is overfull. It always is, whatever winds may blow or storms may come. The heavy clouds permit scant light to enter through the lofty mural windows. The chancel, vast and free of all adornments, is but dimly lighted. The pulpit, central in the thoughts of all, stands out conspicuous beneath its necessary sounding-board. The congregation is as choice as it is representative. Here in this pew near the pulpit is the noble scion of an old Boston family, the "Dear Bob" of many a charming letter in Dr. Allen's book. Not far away is the Speaker, in Daniel Webster's day, of the House at Washington, and as faithful in supporting Brooks as he was active in inducing him to come to Boston. There against that column immediately before the pulpit stands an unimpassioned editor, uncomplaining that there is no seat for him, and afterwards to tell me, "I thought

my heart would leap out of my mouth as I listened to the preacher."

Here and there throughout the congregation one sees a distinguished judge, a score of college professors, several scores of students, literary folk always close to Boston's heart, ultra fashionables taking their religion only from their one doctor and in dainty doses even thus, the common people in great numbers in the gallery and down below who always hear the master gladly, and possibly among them the poor scrub-woman who once asked the preacher if he would allow her daughter to be married in the chapel because the big church, she said, "is not for the likes of me," and received from him the prompt reply: "Oh, yes, it is, for the likes of you, and the likes of me, and the likes of everyone."

The choir and congregation are singing the last stanza of the hymn before the sermon. Out of the dim darkness of the chancel a kingly figure sweeps toward the pulpit, mounts the steps, looks out, before he announces his text,

for a brief, self-conscious moment, with solemn face across the sea of living faces soon in the passion of his preaching to melt "together into a unit, as of one impressive, pleading man."

Simply to see him in the pulpit is a sermon. Six feet four inches high, a body of such fine proportions that others seem undersized beside him, a noble brow crowned by a wealth of grey-brown hair and finely-chiselled features lighted by eyes luminous and large, which at one moment glow with indignation at some heinous sin of thought or word or deed, and at the next grow soft and tender with the persuasiveness of pleading love, a generous mouth with beautifully moulded lips formed specially, one observes, to speak the gracious tidings of peace on earth, good-will to men. Like Justice Harlan we cannot, even if we would, take our eyes off him. Like Justice Harlan we whisper to ourselves, "the most beautiful man I ever saw." Now at last we understand why men and women everywhere are wont to lose their hearts to

Phillips Brooks. Who can do otherwise that looks upon that king of men, like Saul of old, "higher than any of the people, from his shoulders and upward?"

Deaf from sheer amazement we look and while we look he speaks—speaks without notes. Not willingly does he extemporise; only because the multiplying of demands upon him in his later years leaves no time for writing. He vows in private conversation that he means to go back to the written sermon; no other seems to him in the long run altogether worthy. Now the solitary pulpit light becomes the sole illumination of the church. Its whole flame is cast upon the red cushion and the preacher's side and face, glow also with increasing fervour as out of the stillness and the darkness, out of the central gloom of the great building, a voice comes full and strong, swift and impetuous, a torrent of two hundred words and more a minute to the dismay of the stenographers obliged to work in pairs and seldom even thus successfully. Every cyclonic sen-

tence is freighted heavily with thought. The head is thrown high up and back, and now and then, as though impatient of the slowness and inaptitude of the vocal organs for such unusual speaking, the head is flung sidewise in protest. Thought, imagery, parable, argument, exhortation, leap out and on in quick succession, linked fast together, like a vestibuled express train sweeping all barriers away as it makes with matchless and majestic speed toward its terminus.

No mental luxury in listening to such a preacher! Even the trained listener grows weary under strain like this. Most hearers could not follow at all were not the language lucid, the diction simple, the style like Milton's large as the man, the whole treatment so inclusive that each may find in it some lesson for himself. He speaks no merely bright or clever words. His voice is solemn with the seriousness of its heaven-sent message, but it is singularly sweet and mellow, even in those higher flights where voices usually grow strident. Every

device known to the pulpit orator he eschews and he despises. He seldom makes a gesture. He never uses wit or pathos, and so he never ventures near the edge of bathos or sentimentalism. His illustrations are mere intimations. "Hurling out ripe premise after premise"—to quote a reporter for the *New York Tribune* in 1884—

suggesting, hinting, adumbrating great perspectives of thought, as heat lightning palpitating through the clouds silently opens up beautiful vistas that flit like thoughts in and out of sight, the wonderful torrent of this overcharged man rushes and deepens and broadens and all the time hastens with a speed that fairly dazes the brain. . . . It is not fever, nor excitement, nor mere enthusiasm. It is rather the head pressure of a vast reservoir plunging and fighting for deliverance. His great deep eyes, like Webster's, glow and shoot fire! He struggles with the torrent that assails him, and at times seems in pitiful straits to keep his footing.

But he keeps it. He neither flies the track like an ungovernable train, nor is swept from his course by the overcrowding feelings and ideas that surge up

within him. There is nowhere in his preaching, whatever the occasion be, however urgent and insinuating the temptation, any evidence of hasty preparation or vague thinking. There is always exactness, analysis, unity of subject; the total impression is definite; the central theme stands out clearly from the carefully related parts. The whole effort is artistic. It gives an impression of the accuracy with which a great force moves rapidly but with the swiftness of a perfect aim.

What is his text to-day? No matter. His sermon always is the same. Amidst countless voices of despair, the woeful wailings of misery, the manifold manifestations of indifference which lift unwelcome heads on every hand to silence or to drown his utterance, his voice rises above them all, proclaiming hope and the blessedness of life itself, the sacredness of man as such and the essential spirituality of all man's simpler and saner interests.

In every sermon, whatever be the

text, he seems ever to be saying: It is all true, this old faith of ours; only it has a deeper, larger, grander meaning and diviner beauty than we have ever dreamed it has. Take your creeds and doctrines out into a brighter light. Interpret them in terms of God's undying love and Christ's blessed Incarnation and the Holy Spirit's ever-present help and comfort. Take God to be your Father and Jesus Christ to be your Brother and the Holy Spirit for your faithful Friend, and believe that you would not have the privilege of such fellowship were you not worthy of it. Believe in yourself because you are the son of God. "Count always your highest moments your truest moments." Believe that in the time when you are most spiritually minded then you are your truest self, and strive to have no other moods or moments. It may go ill with you at first. But have no fear. God is on your side. Take one step at a time, and He will point out what comes next. "Be the noblest man that your present

faith, poor and weak and imperfect as it is, can make you to be. Live up to your present growth, your present faith. So, and so only, as you take the next straight step forward, as you stand strong where you are now, so only can you think the curtain will draw back and there will be revealed to you what lies beyond."

Is it any wonder that men go out from such preaching with a new grip on life, with a new zest for living? Is it any wonder that men come from Phillips Brooks's church singing those words of Browning which he loved well and often quoted in his sermons?

"How good is man's life, the mere living!
How fit to employ
All the heart and the soul and the senses
Forever in joy!"

Into the hearts of men discouraged Phillips Brooks comes in every sermon; and lo! men lift their drooping heads. Into the hearts of men so many times defeated in the war with sin that they

have lost all hope of victory he comes; and lo! the fight is on again. Into the hearts of men and women crushed beneath some sorrow or disaster he comes; and lo! they wipe their tears away and take up their burdens with new resolution. No wonder that we thrill when we hear Phillips Brooks. He uncovers all that is best and deepest in us and makes us glad to be alive.

Would you know the story of his life? He can answer for himself: "I have little to say. I have had no wife, no children, no particular honours, no serious misfortune, and no adventures worth speaking of." And yet he had a history. He was not the creature of a day. Born in Boston in 1835 of a long line of preachers on either side the family, born in an ideal home, "that love to Christ which glowed in his words and flashed in his eye," says his younger brother, "was caught from a mother's lips and was read with boyish eyes as the central power of a mother's soul and life." He entered Harvard at fifteen, "a tall and slender strip-

ling," says Mr. Joseph Choate, who was at Harvard with him, "towering above all his companions with that magnificent head, that majestic face, already grave and serious, but with those great, brown eyes lighting it, beaming with brotherly love and tenderness." He did his lessons decently, but he read a great deal more than he studied, and he excelled in essay writing rather than in public speaking.

His first thought after leaving college was to teach, but as usher in the Boston Latin School, his failure, thanks to forty unruly boys with shot and snowballs and on mischief bound, was so abject and so disheartening that he turned despairingly toward the calling to which his mother had dedicated him in prayer long years before. Of his three years at the Alexandria Theological Seminary from 1856 to 1859, we know much from his interesting letters home. His fellow students still delight in reminiscence of his sayings and his doings there. He studied harder there, and read more widely.

He took full notes of all the books he read, kept a record of his developing ideas, and even chronicled in verse his deeper feelings. It was a time of rich and swift development, and in his notebooks one finds the germ and outline of almost all he ever after preached.

He accepted with some diffidence and self-depreciation a call to be the rector of the Church of the Advent in Philadelphia and began work as soon as he was graduated in 1859. His preaching won for him immediate recognition. Calls came from the North and even from the Pacific coast, and in 1862 he moved to Holy Trinity Church. There he stayed till 1869, and in those seven years made a reputation to which he added little in the years that followed. He was publicist as well as preacher, and his services to the nation in those war days were second only to the services of Beecher. Now and then he paid a visit to his home in Boston and many who heard his prayer at the Harvard Commemoration service July 21, 1865;

count it the effort of his life. Colonel Higginson says that,

When the "Amen" came, it seemed to him that the occasion was over, that the harmonies of the music had been anticipated, that the poem had been read and the oration already uttered, that after such a prayer every other exercise might well be dispensed with.

Boston never swerved a hair's-breadth after that from her purpose to reclaim her own, loaned to Virginia for a time and then to Philadelphia. She brought him back in 1869, made him rector of her leading church, and her spokesman in the better things for which she long has stood. Was an address wanted for the anniversary of the Young Men's Christian Association? He was asked to make it. Was a speaker needed to commemorate in fitting terms the two hundredth birthday of King's Chapel? No one thought of anybody except Phillips Brooks. Did the Perkins Institute for the Blind need another member on its board of managers? Phillips Brooks was chosen by a vote unanimous.

Harvard made the largest claims upon his time and energy. Why should she not? He was her child, her boast, her glory. No preacher ever had such power over Harvard students. They thronged the chapel when he was announced to speak. They gathered round him at receptions. They gave him love and loyalty. They came to him for help in trouble and for absolution in their sins, and they never came in vain. After a night of folly a group of his young friends were huddled about a dying fire, unfit for duty, ashamed to look each other in the face, when their great friend came in by chance to make a morning call. No word of censure fell upon their ears; only a cheery greeting, a little friendly converse; and then as he was leaving he laid his great brown hand tenderly upon their leader's head, and softly said, "Well, boys, it does not make you feel any better, does it?" It was not much he did and said; but it was quite enough; it reached them; it touched them; they arose as one and

followed him straight back to duty and to God.

Never had people a more devoted minister. He could not give himself in later years to routine visiting. And yet his heart laid on itself the lowliest duties. Yes, the story is true that he sent a poor tired mother out to get some air while with book in hand he, who never was a father, cared with all a father's fondness for her sick baby. People asked service from him who should have sought it from another. Letters came by every post and from almost every point. One wanted money, another counsel; another wanted to express a heartfelt gratitude for some spoken or some written word of his. Every letter was at once acknowledged in a handwriting as beautiful as the style was charming. No man could be busier than Phillips Brooks. No man was more completely given over to the service of his fellows in God's Name and for Christ's sake.

In 1891, his friends proposed to make

him Bishop of his Diocese. But there was opposition. For the first time in his life he knew that some spoke ill of him. No longer could his friends, fearful lest his universal popularity might prove after all to be a fundamental weakness in his character, fling at him the Master's warning: "Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets." It was made painfully apparent that he had enemies. Some charged him with insincerity; others with disloyalty. Much was made of his preaching in a Congregational pulpit, and of his welcoming a Unitarian clergyman into his church, not into his pulpit.

He was asked to show his Churchmanship and thus dissolve their doubts. How could he show his Churchmanship? It was like asking a man to show his heart that men might know how pure he was. The only word he spoke was the word his Master spoke: "Why askest thou me? Ask them which heard me, What I have said unto them: behold, they know what

I have said." And they did know. They flung back all the charges made against him. They pointed out that he had never violated any canon of the Church. They referred to his profound belief, as voiced in scores of published sermons, in God, in Christ, in the Holy Spirit, in the Church, in life everlasting. To the charge that he did not believe the Bible is inspired, they answered back in his own words:

The great truth of Jesus Christ is this, that God is pleading with every soul not merely in the words which we read from His Book but in every influence of life; and, in these unknown influences which are too subtle for us to understand or perceive, God is forever seeking after the souls of His children.

It was a critical moment in the history of the Church. It makes one shudder even now to recall how near she came to losing the chance to bestow her best gift on her greatest son. She hesitated; but only for a few brief weeks. On the morning of October 14, 1891, he made the promise of conformity as Bishop of the

Diocese of Massachusetts in tones so reverent and impressive that whatever doubt there was of his disloyalty was forever dissipated.

How he filled the office everybody knows. He did the work with joy and without self-indulgence. He was busier than ever. He was afraid that official dignity would so hedge him around that he would lose some of his older friends. "Don't desert me," he wrote Dr. Cooper. He was simple, frank, and even boyish to the last. Bishop McVickar told me that once in the streets of Lucerne after some new revelation of Bishop Brooks's boyishness he said to him, "It is strange, Brooks, to think of you as a bishop." The naïve answer came at once. "It is so strange that sometimes when I am putting on my clothes I have to stop and laugh." Those who knew him best saw many changes in him in the first year of his Bishopric. They were alarmed at his reckless spending of himself. Toward the last he felt the strain himself. "He

was ready to do the preaching and make the visitations, but the social pressure, and the pressure of unnecessary duties and unreasonable people, wore him out." Boston was killing her favourite son with kindness.

No one was surprised when he broke down, but no one was prepared for the heart-breaking news which came January 23, 1893, that Phillips Brooks was dead. He had been ill but three days. Not even the doctor dreamed that a bad cold would turn into diphtheria. Boston was inconsolable. All America mourned. England was more than sympathetic, for he had preached in England many a summer. Praise seemed feeble. Panegyric was speedily exhausted. Sorrow found its truest voice in unvoiced silence, and for many a day in secret visits to Mount Auburn cemetery, where they laid his body down to rest among the ones he loved the best, and in such modest tributes as this, which Phillips Brooks, were he alive, would doubtless love more than any formal set

of resolutions or any journalistic peroration:

“ Pausing beside the master’s grave, I heard
 Low, anxious notes, like a beseeching prayer,
And, as I listened, lo, a little bird,
 A chickadee, was nesting there.
Had that great heart so recently consigned
 Unto the earth within Mount Auburn’s space,
Quickened the very iron, till it brought
 Forth loveliness and grace?
Surely in all that city of the dead,
 There was no fitter place for thee to rest,
To rear thy little brood so cherished,
 Than near that tender breast.
O little bird! bird of the whole year round,
 Perennial blossom of our northern year—
God’s peace be with thee, aye, the peace he
 found
 Who slumbers near.
May no rude hand thy confidence betray,
 But still environed by that wondrous love,
Sing long and low and sweetly, all the day
 His grave above.”

It is almost presumptuous to suggest the leading books to read concerning Phillips Brooks. The volumes of his sermons and Dr. Allen's large and lofty biography are literature, and will be read as long as men are interested in America's supreme preacher. There are, however, several small biographies or dissertations which deserve special mention: notably those by Bishop Lawrence, M. A. DeWolfe Howe, and John K. Hastings; Chapter V in Brastow's *Representative American Preachers*, and Chapter X. in Addison's *The Clergy in American Life and Letters*; the sermons preached by Revs. Edward Abbott and Leverett Bradley, and the magazine articles by Dr. Allen, Dr. Arthur Brooks, and Julius H. Ward. Dr. Talcott Williams's comprehensive collection of magazine articles and newspaper clippings contains many contemporary evidences of Phillips Brooks's character and influence which I have not found elsewhere.

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