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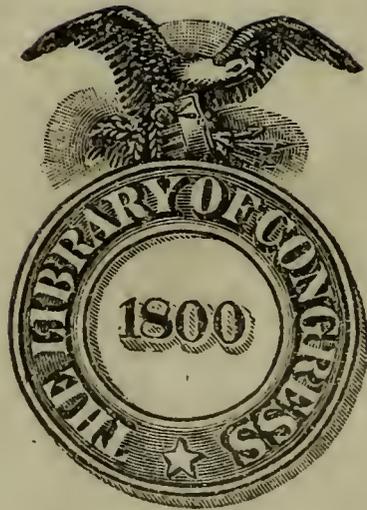
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A Living Book
in a Living Age

LYNN HAROLD HOUGH



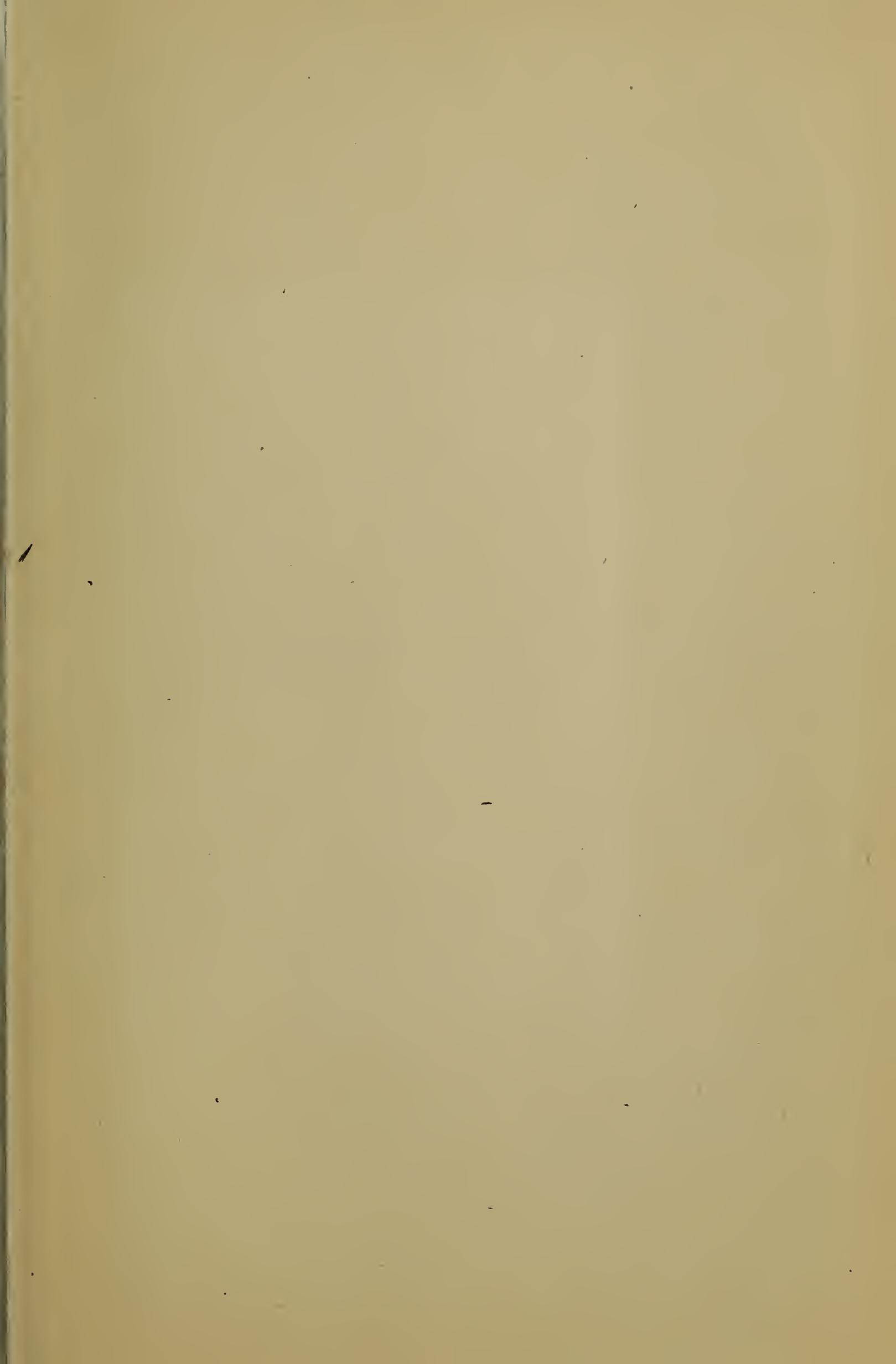


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EVERYDAY LIFE SERIES

A Living Book in a Living Age

LYNN HAROLD HOUGH

AUTHOR OF "THE MAN OF POWER," "THE MEN OF THE GOSPELS," ETC.

ASSOCIATION PRESS

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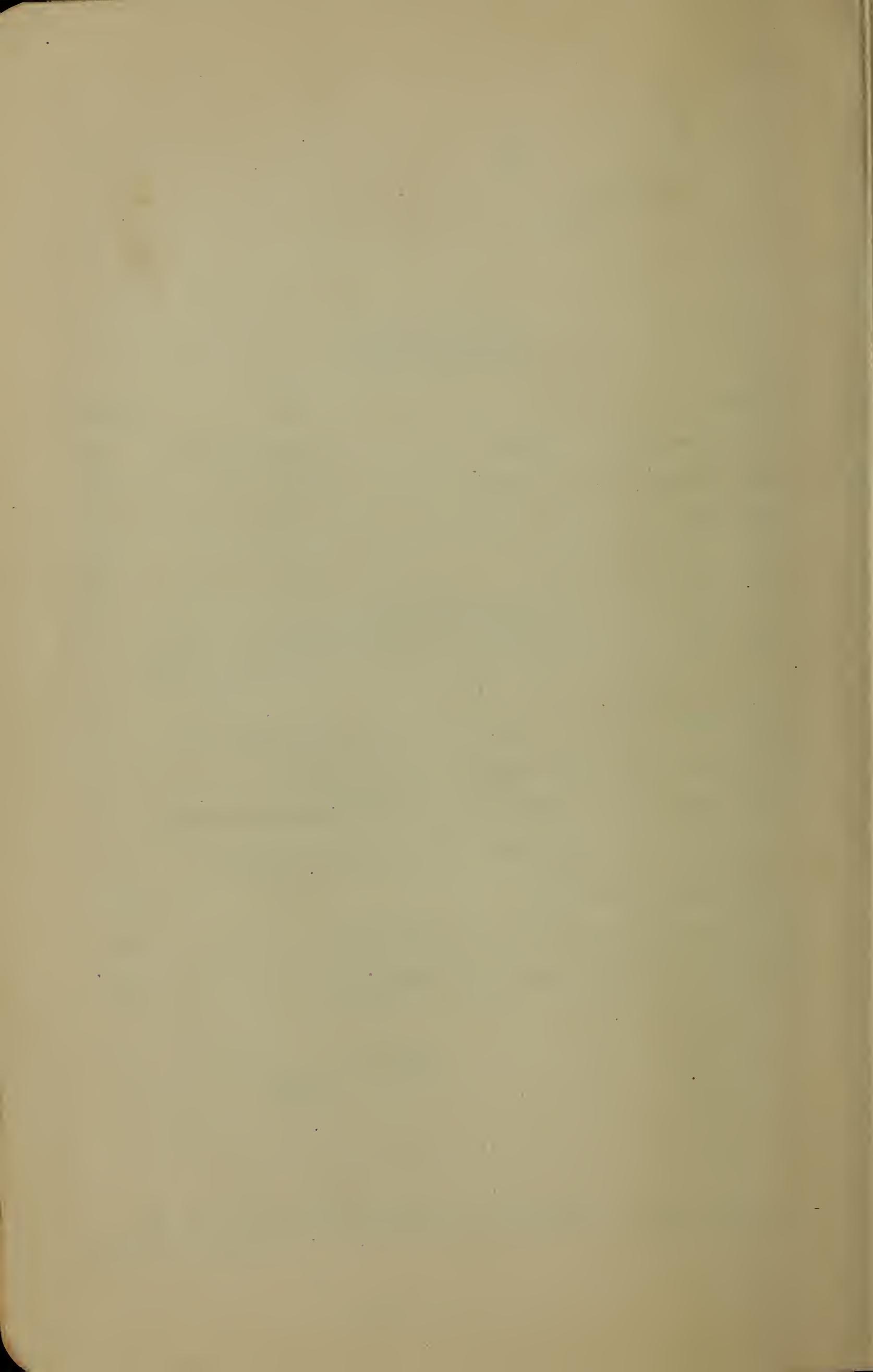
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CHAPTER I

The Living Book

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

“That man is dead and doesn’t know it.” So in a brief, cutting sentence a brilliant critic characterized a man who had wasted his vitality and was living out his years in dull lethargy, the mere husk of the man he had once been. People differ vastly in this matter of vitality. Some are vividly and contagiously alive, some have flashes of vital energy, and some seem to be curiously lifeless.

Books are like people as respects this matter of vitality. Some books are like stately cemeteries, dignified cities of the dead. Some books suggest a throbbing, busy metropolis; there are signs of life everywhere. The Bible thrills with vital power. It has a sort of stinging, inevitable vitality.

The Bible is alive because it comes out of life. You always hear voices whenever you go near the Bible. Sometimes you hear men talking with eager zest. Sometimes you hear them pleading. Sometimes you hear them praying. Sometimes you hear them weeping. Sometimes you hear them singing. But you always hear them. Armies are marching. Workers are laboring. Judges are hearing complaints. Kings are ruling. People are busy about all the interests of life. There is stir and movement everywhere. And above all the human voices is the high command of that great voice which speaks with the authenticity which comes from the Master of life himself. In the Bible human life becomes articulate. And deeper than that, in the Bible God becomes articulate, speaking in the language of men.

“There goes a Bible character,” said a shrewd observer, as the saint of the village passed down the street. “How do you get him inside the Bible?” queried a bystander. “I thought Abraham and Moses and Paul were the Bible characters.” “I don’t get him inside the Bible,” was the quick reply. “I get the Bible inside of him. Bible characters are not merely people the Bible tells about. They are people the Bible makes.”

It is this power of making people which is the deepest basis for our calling the Bible a living book. It has life in it. It sends life out of it. It masters men’s minds and rules their thoughts. It masters their bodies and keeps them clean. It masters their hearts and determines their feelings. It masters their wills and rules their actions. And this it does not as a book of rules to which men submit mechanically. Its supreme power is exerted by a strange ability to get a vital grip on the inner motives of men, and from within to work out. So it becomes bone of a man’s bone, flesh of a man’s flesh, and life of a man’s life.

Of course, mere white pages with black marks on them do not do this. The Bible is not a book of magical formulas. It is not a god to worship. It is not a shrine before which to kneel.

It is the adequate experience of a message which grips men and changes them and lifts them to a new quality of experience and activity. It is the message in the Bible which makes the Bible a living book.

A good many books have been written about man’s quest for God. The Bible is a book about God’s quest for man. The Bible is a book of which God is the hero. It tells the tale of his love for men, of his plans for men, and of all his passionate endeavor to win men to his own ideal for their lives.

The Bible tells of a God who cannot be discouraged. Men disappoint him. Men turn from him. He will not give

them up. He gives them prophets with words which sing and words which burn. He gives them leaders and institutions. He gives them poets whose hearts are glowing with a sense of the meaning of God's nearness and God's will. And at last, in his own Son, God breaks into life with the glory of a sacrifice which will go any length for the winning and the saving of men. Life is transfigured as we watch the gentleness and the virility, the patience and the strength, the steady poise and the noble passion of Jesus Christ as he lives among men. At length he gives the supreme gift. He flings himself against the Cross in one last deed of daring, suffering summons, of mighty ethical and spiritual achievement for the sake of men. And then, brushing aside the chains of death, he sweeps vital and regal and triumphant into the world which he has conquered. Stronger than sin, stronger than death, he opens the doors of a new life for men.

You cannot imprison this sort of thing in a book. It leaps from lip to lip, from eye to eye, from heart to heart, from life to life. It is the dynamic for the renewal of the life of the world. And perpetually when men forget and are heedless, fresh from the book leaps the life of it again, to work wonders in men's hearts and to send them forth on life's adventure with fresh new power.

To every man on every day the Bible is calling in the name of the strong, victorious life whose power it bears. And the true reading of the Bible is like stepping through a doorway. When you step through the doorway you find God inside.

DAILY READINGS

First Week, First Day

Will a lion roar in the forest, when he hath no prey? will a young lion cry out of his den, if he have taken nothing? Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth, where no gin is set for him? shall a snare spring up from the

ground, and have taken nothing at all? Shall the trumpet be blown in a city, and the people not be afraid? shall evil befall a city, and Jehovah hath not done it? Surely the Lord Jehovah will do nothing, except he reveal his secret unto his servants the prophets. The lion hath roared; who will not fear? The Lord Jehovah hath spoken; who can but prophesy?—Amos 3: 4-8.

These words are so hot and intense that they fairly burn. Life and religion were one to the prophet Amos, and he found them so full of exciting meaning that he could scarcely speak without shouting. He lived in the eighth century B. C. The people to whom he spoke were inclined to be religious without being righteous. They were inclined to make much of worship and to be careless about character. Gripped by a sense of what it means to worship a righteous God, Amos came to shock the people into a consciousness of their hideous, tragic failure. His words thrill with passion. They are the roar of a lion translated into speech. As you read the prophet Amos righteousness ceases to be merely an idea. It becomes a mighty force which you must put in command of your life. No book of the Old Testament has more surging vitality than this book of Amos.

First Week, Second Day

Woe to them that devise iniquity and work evil upon their beds! when the morning is light, they practise it, because it is in the power of their hand. And they covet fields, and seize them; and houses, and take them away: and they oppress a man in his house, even a man and his heritage.—Micah 2: 1, 2.

Hear, I pray you, ye heads of Jacob, and rulers of the house of Israel: is it not for you to know justice? ye who hate the good, and love the evil; who pluck off their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones; who also eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them, and break their bones, and chop them in pieces, as for the pot, and as flesh within the caldron. Then shall they cry unto Jehovah, but he will not answer them; yea, he will hide his face from them at that time, according as they have wrought evil in their doings.—Micah 3: 1-4.

The bitter cry against social injustice is lifted by Micah. He is another prophet of the eighth century B. C. He has seen the wrongs of the poor. He has watched the cruel and careless deeds of their oppressors. He does not remain silent. He dare not remain silent. In the name of God he cries out in protest. His voice has all the cutting edge of a great ethical indignation. And it is lifted with the sympathy of a man who has known with the most intimate and personal experience the intolerable lot of those who are the victims of social oppression. The very demand of religion, according to Micah, means the abolition of the oppression of the weak by the powerful. Social wrong must be repented of and turned from. A real opportunity for life must be given to the hard pressed men held under the burden of powerful social tyranny. The message comes out of life and it has significance for every age where men have ignored the rights of the poor.

First Week, Third Day

O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the dew that goeth early away. . . . For I desire goodness, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings.—Hos. 6: 4, 6.

How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I cast thee off, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboiim? my heart is turned within me, my compassions are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee; and I will not come in wrath.—Hos. 11: 8, 9.

Here we have another illustration of the fashion in which the Bible fairly palpitates with life. Hosea also is an eighth century prophet. His is a sensitive, tender, poetic spirit. He is the prophet of the suffering love of God. You feel that you have a sudden glimpse into God's own life as you hear his drawn and poignant words. You feel the heart of God torn with the tragedy of the evil of his people. You see how

wrongdoing on the part of men hurts God as if it were a wound. With awed and reverent eyes you watch the struggle of divine love with an erring people. You hear a sob of pain which comes from an agony greater than any human suffering. You see human evil as the thing which tortures God, who in spite of it will not give up the people whom he loves. You begin to know that a God like this must be the Saviour of his people. It is all deeper than any life you have ever known. It is beyond all your experience. But it grips and holds you with the power of the very life and passion of God.

First Week, Fourth Day

Jesus therefore said unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and go out, and shall find pasture. The thief cometh not, but that he may steal, and kill, and destroy: I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.—John 10: 7-10.

We remember the poet who cried out so vehemently:

“’Tis life, whereof our nerves are scant,
Oh life, not death, for which we pant;
More life, and fuller, that I want.”

More people fail because they lack vitality than because they lack ability. Some years ago a New York weekly published a gripping story of a young man who came to the metropolis and absolutely failed to make a place for himself. He sank lower and lower in poverty and discouragement. Then there came an experience which completely revitalized him. He wore the same clothing. He used the same body. But veritable fountains of vitality were now playing within. He went forth and simply commanded the hearing which he had been unable to obtain. Success lay easily within his grasp and he seized it and held it fast.

Jesus possessed a hundred secrets of vitality. He gave men a new intellectual vigor. He enriched their sense of every significant experience. He made conscience sturdy and strong. He stirred spiritual potencies undreamed of before. He took the man of waning personal power and made him into a man of magnetic energy. His gift to men was the supreme gift of life, glowing and triumphant.

First Week, Fifth Day

And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire; and it sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.— Acts 2: 1-4.

On the day of Pentecost the Christian Church was born. A few furtive, hesitating, confused men became a dynamic group ready to go forth to conquer the world. "Ye shall receive power," their Master had said. And right amazingly was that promise kept on this wonderful day. They received a baptism in vitality. They became more gloriously and splendidly alive than they had ever been before. Every power was lifted to its highest quality of vigor and effectiveness. Other men seemed half asleep compared with them. They lived as if life were set to music. They spoke as if speech were a triumphant song. They thought as they had never thought. They felt as they had never felt. They spoke as they had never spoken before.

The secret of Christianity is always with the men who have been revitalized by the potent presence of God himself. They do not need to speak new tongues. But they always have a new tongue. Life has been made over again by the vivid, renewing presence of God. And they go forth to help in the remaking of the world.

First Week, Sixth Day

But he (Stephen), being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. But they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and rushed upon him with one accord; and they cast him out of the city, and stoned him. . . . And they stoned Stephen, calling upon the Lord, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.—Acts 7: 55-60.

Stephen was probably the most brilliant young leader in the Christian Church before the conversion of Saul. He had a gift of effective speech, and he saw farther into the nature of Christianity than most of his fellow-disciples. With a skill in argument and a persuasive power of extraordinary character, he set forth his interpretation of Christianity as a great emancipating faith. He raised a storm of hostility which culminated in his violent death. And in the face of death his experience of the new life filled him with a serene gladness which the world has never been able to forget. With words of trust and forgiveness upon his lips, he swept in triumph through the gate of death. Not even the darkness of the tomb could cloud the gladness of a man in whom the new life was reigning. Death itself became an incident. Life was all in all.

First Week, Seventh Day

And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the midst of the street thereof. And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. . . . And there shall be night no more; and they need no light of lamp, neither light of sun; for the Lord God shall give them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.—Rev. 22: 1, 2, 5.

Carlyle once wrote an amazing passage about the strangeness of life: "Like some wild flaming, wild thundering train of Heaven's artillery we emerge from the inane, haste stormfully across the astonished earth and plunge again into the inane. But whence, O Heaven, whither? Sense knows not: faith knows not. Only that it is from mystery to mystery, from God to God." In the words from the book of Revelation which we have quoted another note is struck. In wonderful symbolism the great future is declared to be a time of perfect life and perfect light. The incomplete is lost in the complete. Evil is overthrown. Death is finally conquered. In the presence of God life is triumphant forever. The Bible, which surges with human life, which glows with the wonder of the new life God sends to men, closes with a vision of life perpetual, in fulness of joy, in radiance of light.

PERSONAL SUGGESTIONS

The reader cannot avoid the challenge which the living book brings to his own mind and conscience. Such glowing life is a promise and a hope and a prophecy. The last word is not the life of God in the soul of Amos or Micah or Hosea or Stephen. It is the life of God in the soul of the reader. Whittier cried out once, "I have opened all the windows of my soul." The man who does that does not read about life. He receives it.

CHAPTER II

Some Sleeping Ages

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

The wife of a blunt, shrewd farmer was finding excuses for their son, who was very difficult to arouse in the morning. The father listened in impatient silence and then gave a contemptuous snort.

“Humph!” he said. “If a man is asleep all the time, he might as well be dead.” There is a difference, however. Sleep may be inactive. But it has potential power. The sleeping ages are those when civilization did not function well. But all the while the lurking vital forces were there. Some day they would make themselves felt.

In the fourth century A. D. the Roman Empire became Christian. After centuries of persecution the Church came to the throne. In the fifth century A. D. Rome fell. Barbarians were swarming everywhere. The culture which was Greece and the government which was Rome lost their grip upon the world. A chaotic period followed. Lawlessness and anarchy lifted their heads. It seemed as if that high energy of thought and feeling and organization which had wrought out the civilization of the ancient world had sunk into slumber. And while civilization slumbered, wild and furious forces raged unchecked.

One power emerged to tame the barbarians. When the senile and decrepit powers passed trembling off the scene, the sturdy young Church came forward with firm and dauntless step to do its work. It cannot be said that the Church which tamed the barbarians was the Church of simple

brotherhood of apostolic days. It had become a vast organization. It had become a method of government. The new life was often lost to view in the movement of the complex machinery. It seemed as if that fresh and inspired life which had swept like a flood of light around the Mediterranean in the first century had been changed into a wonderful machine with endless wheels and belts. Simple, vital Christianity seemed to have gone to sleep, even as civilization had gone away to slumber.

But the great machine was not without Christian power. And with all its limitations and weaknesses, it did tame the barbarians and it did make the way for the modern world.

On the political side, at length feudalism began to assert some real authority. With no centralized government, men developed personal loyalties which helped to restrain lawlessness, and it must sadly be confessed sometimes made for a sort of organized confusion.

A terrible impact upon Christendom from the new world of Mohammedan power in the eighth century found power enough in the Christian world to force back the fierce warriors of the Crescent. Later Charlemagne rose with greater authority than had been seen since the fall of Rome. But his empire fell apart after his death. In the tenth century the Holy Roman Empire in Germany came to light. Then greater popes arose and century after century pope and emperor fought for the throne of the world.

A great dream possessed the mind of Christendom and one great crusading expedition after another sought to rescue the sepulcher of Christ from the unbeliever. Men were more occupied by the thought of reaching the tomb where the dead Jesus lay than by the desire to follow the principles of the living Christ. Fair, fantastic, and romantic were the dreams which floated before the mind of Europe. Chivalry itself was a moonlight vision of the night-time of the world.

Religion was being bent to the purposes of ecclesiastical

lordship. Worship tended to become the observance of ritual rather than the direct approach to the Lord of all. The observance of rite seemed to many minds more important than the doing of the right. The priest was like a master of magic who waved a potent wand. Devotion was often clouded by the darkest and crassest superstition. Conscience had its own times of sleep.

To be sure, there were many noble Christians in the sleeping ages. Such a man as Anselm shines like a light in the eleventh century. As you read of his life you feel very near to a true man, a keen thinker, and a lofty-souled saint. But the sky is not full of such stars as Anselm in this sleeping time of the world. Ignorance had cast its blight upon Europe. Lawlessness and barbaric war had left their blight. In many places evil was rampant while goodness slept.

Many men turned from the world in despair. The monastic movement in its original form represented an endeavor to escape from the world rather than an attempt to serve the world. The choicest spirits fled from the turmoil and the wild disorder and in the quiet solitudes sought to live their life of devotion, free from all the hard pressure of the world. They did unconsciously serve the world as they cultivated desert spots and made waste places blossom as the rose. They did unconsciously serve the world as their patient scholars laboriously copied old masterpieces. They did render service when the suffering poor came to the convent gate to beg. But all the while the eye of monasticism was turned inward toward the soul to be fed and disciplined and trained, rather than outward toward the world to be served. The spirit which would remake the world after the fashion of the will of Christ may have been a latent power in the life of the monk. But at the time it was soundly sleeping.

The great dream of the Middle Ages was the dream of the Holy Roman Empire. That was the dream of those who did

think in the terms of the world. Christendom was one world, they believed. It was one great state. The Emperor was its secular ruler; the pope was its religious ruler. These two represented God's will on earth. One carried the secular sword; the other carried the spiritual sword. This dream of the Holy Roman Empire never became a reality. But it haunted the heads of the sleepers and it became one of the most influential dreams which ever hovered before the minds of men. And in days of lawlessness and barbarity it did do something to give spiritual unity to men's thought of the world.

These ages were full of meaning. The sleep was the preparation for a new day. And by and by the dreams of the Middle Ages were to be exchanged for the realities of the modern world.

DAILY READINGS

Second Week, First Day

Now Solomon purposed to build a house for the name of Jehovah. . . . the house which I am about to build shall be great and wonderful.—II Chron. 2: 1, 9.

And he garnished the house with precious stones for beauty. . . . and the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs, of gold, and that perfect gold.—II Chron. 3: 6; 4: 21.

“He is as hungry for beauty as some men are for bread.” So said a wise student of men regarding a young poet whose whole life seemed palpitating with desire to find loveliness everywhere. The sense of esthetic beauty was not an outstanding feature of the life of the Old Testament people. A sense of moral beauty was deep in their life. But the artistic sense does find expression in such words as those we have quoted above. There is a definite desire to make you feel, not only the value and the size of Solomon's temple, but also its beauty.

It was the Greeks, however, who gave to the world its sense of symmetry, of artistic loveliness, and of all the won-

der of esthetic charm. It was poured forth in hauntingly beautiful poetry, in architecture which seemed a part of nature's own beauty, and in art of a noble, chaste grandeur the world is unable to forget. The sleeping ages had forgotten most of this, and it was long before the old Greek life spoke again its great message to the world. But in the ages of twilight and of dark, Europe was developing a new sense of beauty which was to find memorable expression in Gothic architecture. And this new sense of beauty had moral power as well as loveliness of form. Beauty itself must be made a Christian thing if it is to help and not to hurt the world.

Second Week, Second Day

Thou shalt therefore keep the commandment, and the statutes, and the ordinances, which I command thee this day, to do them. . . . All the commandment which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which Jehovah sware unto your fathers.—Deut. 7: 11; 8: 1.

“Men cease to be barbarians when they have to think in terms of law.” So a judge of wide reading and profound thought once declared. The sentences from the book of Deuteronomy which we have quoted are full of the sense of the importance of law and its loyal acceptance. And the Old Testament has a place all its own in relation to the moral law and its demands upon men.

In a certain practical sense, however, Rome was the law-giver of the ancient world. With a wide and careful organization, with a far extended and consistently worked-out administration, Rome became the legal ruler of vast masses of men. When, in the sixth century A. D., the Justinian code was collected, it represented the supreme legal wisdom of the world up to that time. The Eastern empire did not keep its grip upon the West. The Western empire had passed away. As an organizing lawgiving power for Europe, Rome was no more.

But just at this point the Christian Church became the heir of Rome. It became a lawgiver on its own account. It developed a kinship with the legal spirit of the Old Testament and the legal mind of Rome. It developed its own wonderfully articulated canon law. There is a very real sense in which the Church became a new law rather than a glorious Gospel. In the sleeping ages the Church kept a sense of law and a system of order for all men alive in the world.

Second Week, Third Day

For thus saith Jehovah unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live. . . . Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live; and so Jehovah, the God of hosts, will be with you, as ye say. Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish justice in the gate.—Amos 5: 4, 14, 15.

A distinguished professor once made a remark to the effect that one of the great achievements of the prophets is the pronouncing of the word *righteousness* with unforgettable power. The words from the eighth-century prophet which stand above are sharp with moral demand and vigorous with moral power. And they are characteristic of Old Testament religion at its highest. If Greece taught the world beauty and Rome taught the world law, through the Hebrews came the gift of an ethical religion. Worship must spell itself out in righteousness.

A right relation with God involves a right relation to men. Religion must make men virtuous and fair and faithful. The religion which has divorced itself from ethics is a foul and loathsome thing, which is worse than no religion at all. Hebrew prophecy joins worship and character in indissoluble bonds.

This deepest word which came from the Old Testament was often forgotten in the sleeping ages, as indeed it is often forgotten among us. The darkest blot on the Church has always been the man who supposed that he could be adequately religious without being righteous.

Second Week, Fourth Day

I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die.—John 11: 25, 26.

“I cannot forget Him. I cannot ignore Him. I cannot get away from Him. He has become so great that He seems to fill all the sky. He has become so compelling that I think of Him all the time.” Thus spoke a man roused out of a careless life of many years, with the impress of the gospel stories fresh upon him.

In the first century a new thing happened in the world. The great power of moral and spiritual renewal entered into human life. The One who had the secret of righting all relationships and giving men the power of a victorious life lived in the world. His estimate of himself is well seen in the words spoken to Martha in her hour of tragic suffering after the death of Lazarus. Quite simply, and yet with strange, august authority, he declared himself the center of power, the giver of all vitality. He has a relation to his religion which he shares with no other founder of a religious movement. Jesus Christ is Christianity.

In the sleeping ages the Church quietly usurped the place which belonged to Christ. He was shifted from the center. While verbally admitting his supreme authority, the ecclesiastical organization with the pope at its head took the place of power. Practically, the Church declared, “I am the resurrection and the life.” And that was one of the saddest tragedies of the time. The Church can make no sadder failure than when it obscures Christ.

Second Week, Fifth Day

I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Yea, though ye offer me your burnt-offerings and meal-offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your

fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.—Amos 5: 21-24.

Again we hear the thunder in the voice of that mighty eighth-century prophet, Amos. Again we see lightning in his eyes. He is letting flash the sword of his condemnation. He is smiting with terrible and biting words the people who make ritual and ceremonial a substitute for character. He feels himself the very voice of God as he hurls forth the divine hatred of a worship which has left the life of the worshipers uncleaned.

The sleeping ages fell into the very evil which Amos condemned. As the Church became a great governing institution, it developed a deeper sympathy with the ritualistic side of religion. If it was a new Rome in law, in a sense it became a new Jerusalem in worship, and it was the priestly rather than the prophetic side of religion which came to the front. Christianity was made into a vast and elaborate ceremonial. And sleep held the age so fast that when men did read the biting words of Amos, they did not know that they might have been written for them. And these are not old tragedies which have no meaning for to-day. One of the subtlest temptations of our time is that which comes when we surrender our hearts to worship without surrendering our wills to God.

Second Week, Sixth Day

And behold, a man named Joseph, who was a councillor, a good and righteous man (he had not consented to their counsel and deed), a man of Arimathæa, a city of the Jews, who was looking for the kingdom of God: this man went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. And he took it down, and wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid him in a tomb that was hewn in stone, where never man had yet lain.—Luke 23: 50-53.

“As goes the sun god in his chariot glorious,
 When all his golden banners are unfurled,
 So goes the soldier fallen but victorious,
 And leaves behind a twilight in the world.”

So wrote an English soldier, who later himself made the great sacrifice. And in these days of pain graves have assumed new meanings to us. But there was one death unlike any other death. And there was one grave which captured the devotion of men as no other.

The sleeping ages were full of vague, dreamy enthusiasms. And one of the most characteristic of these was its thought about the tomb of Christ. That tomb was in the hands of the Mohammedans. Infidel powers controlled the Holy Sepulcher. It was an intolerable thought. And the stories of suffering and ill treatment told by returning pious pilgrims cut Christendom to the heart. There was soon a movement on foot with brilliant and enthusiastic leadership. The rescue of the Holy Sepulcher became the dominant thought of men. The saddest part of it all was that in the heart of many a Crusader there was a tomb for a dead Christ rather than an altar for a living Lord.

Second Week, Seventh Day

Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit; speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ.—Eph. 5: 17-21.

“You cannot understand Christianity without putting it into control of your life.” A university preacher was coming to the climax of a sermon which had entered deeply into the minds of his hearers, when he uttered these words. The advice of Paul to the Ephesians, which we have just read,

brings the whole matter of religion to the place where it demands control of human life. It is to become the great commanding experience of the soul. It is to control all activities.

Men are not to live by the exaltation of wine; they are to live by the exaltation of God's presence—not intoxicating spirits, but God's Spirit in control. In the singing joy of the experience of God's presence, and in seeking to make all their relations to each other full of self-forgetful helpfulness, they are to live their lives.

The sleeping ages would have been very different if the mass of men in the Church had known and understood these things. And this reminds us that the history of the Church is a warning quite as truly as an inspiration. But back of the Church is the living Lord, who stands ready to give us the secret of a better day.

PERSONAL SUGGESTIONS

The sleeping ages suggest the sleeping man. And one begins to ask himself, Have I been heavy and dull in the presence of life's greatest meanings? Have I been asleep and so have I missed the important call? Then there is that strange paradox—that a man, like an age, may be asleep in one regard and awake in others. What part of me slumbers? What part of me is alert and quick in full response. Some men sleep in church. Some men are always asleep in the presence of religion! What is the reality which I have missed because, like the disciples in Gethsemane, I have heavy, sleep-held eyes?

CHAPTER III

Signs of Awakening

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

In that amazing and daring volume of verse, "Spoon River Anthology," Edgar Lee Masters presents song after song inspired by a graveyard. He goes to a cemetery in Illinois and puts his muse at the service of the dead lying there, in order that all these graves may become articulate. It is all done with immense skill and shrewd cynical understanding. You have a wonderful collection of voices from the tomb.

We have been very careful not to call the Middle Ages dead ages. We have called them sleeping ages. There was a great deal of life during the period, of a deeply significant sort. And at last there came signs of awakening to a new and fuller life than the world had known for many a century.

From the Roman Catholic point of view the thirteenth was the most brilliant and satisfying of the centuries. The popes won the battle with the Hohenstaufen emperors. The papal throne had far-flung and splendid power. Learning produced remarkable devotees. Thomas Aquinas gave forth the "Summa," the greatest theological masterpiece of the Roman Catholic Church. Orders of preaching monks were founded, with the definite idea of winning the world instead of fleeing from the world. The Franciscans and the Dominicans brought a great religious revival to Europe. That childlike singing apostle of Christian gladness, Saint Francis of Assisi, remains one of the most winsome and appealing figures of all the Christian ages. In many a fashion signs of a

vigorous and promising life were seen in the world. And most of this vigorous energy held itself in reverent loyalty to the Church.

The fourteenth century is one of the most unhappy of all the ages from the viewpoint of a Roman Catholic. The pope suddenly descended from his high position to be the puppet of the French king. The papal captivity at Avignon (1309-1377) revealed a bankrupt papacy. Then there came the great schism, with two rival popes hurling the thunders of heaven at each other, and at the worst three popes breathing threatening and slaughter and filling the world with the scandal of their contentions. Unity had become a byword and the body of Christ was torn asunder.

By this time the world became conscious of the dire tragedy of the situation, and drew back from the ecclesiastical corruption and falseness which assailed it, with an ethical repulsion which was deep and angry. Earnest men everywhere felt that something must be done. The Church could not be allowed to lie in the depths. The cry for reform went forth everywhere. The appeal was made from the Church to the general council. It was a question of reforming abuses. It was not a question of reconstructing the Church. The fifteenth century is the period when men try to purge the Church by means of general councils. Pisa, Constance, and Basel tell their story of far-gathered church leaders. But the great work is not done. The papal schism is healed. The outward unity is restored. But abuses continue and the open sores of ecclesiastical corruption continue to run. It is inevitable that some thoughtful men begin to realize the necessity of more drastic measures. If reform fails, men will be driven to revolution.

Some of the personalities of the period through which we have been hurriedly passing deserve our closer attention. In the fourteenth century John Wyclif did his work in England. This Oxford reformer cut more deeply than those who were

content to fight abuses, but hardly saw how much was the matter with the fundamental nature of the Church. He repudiated absolute papal authority, and at last turned from the magical theory of the sacrament which was a necessary element in the whole sacerdotal system. The seeds of revolution were in the teaching of Wyclif. His connection with the translation of the Bible into English and his leadership in sending forth those popular preachers, the Lollards, also pointed in the direction of a new sort of appeal to the people. If Wyclif's views and practices became general, Rome would have cause to tremble.

Early in the fifteenth century (1415) John Hus was burned to death after condemnation by the council of Constance. Hus was a follower of Wyclif. He made Wyclif's principles his own and gave them publicity in Bohemia. His contribution to the bringing in of a new day was a matter of personal loyalty rather than of original thinking.

It may seem strange that the council of Constance, a council of reform, should burn the most eminent reformer of the period. The answer to the query raised by a consideration of this anomaly lies in recognition of the differences between reform and revolution. The reformers from the University of Paris and the others who dominated the council of Constance wanted abuses abolished. They did not want the nature of the Church changed. They saw that, little as Hus might realize it, he was more than a reformer—he was a revolutionist. The papal supremacy and the absolute authority of the Church could not survive the universal acceptance of his views. So this fine and rare spirit was sent to his death by men who themselves professed to be reformers.

The ethical indignation of the times, ready to go forth and fight for reform, found expression in the latter part of the century in Florence in the work of that fearless and faithful prophet, Savonarola, who, after a period of spec-

tacular success, was sent to his death by powers too strong for him.

The world was seething with unrest. Reform from within the Church had failed. Let the right leader come and the day of revolution would arrive. That leader did appear. And nobody needs to be told that his name was Martin Luther.

When we think of signs of awakening before the beginning of the Reformation there are several movements which should come within our ken.

As we have seen, the ideal of the Middle Ages was solidarity. One world-church and one world-state haunted the imagination of men. But something different was going on right before their eyes. Step by step France became a nation with enlarging borders, and increasing power in the hands of the king. England, too, had a life of its own, which became a genuine nationality. Spain attained unity and after the expulsion of the Mohammedans presented a solid front to the world. By the dawn of the sixteenth century there were three genuine nations in the modern sense in Europe. France, England, and Spain each had a vigorous and self-conscious and politically solid national life. Now nationality was a movement away from solidarity. Even in the eleventh century so great a pope as Gregory VII found that he had to be very careful of his treatment of so powerful a monarch as William the Conqueror.

Every step toward nationality was a step away from that international conception which played into the hands of the pope. It was the English sense of national life and its fear of papal encroachment which protected Wyclif. A land with a proud sense of its own life resented the draining experience of papal exaction, and it resented the power of foreign ecclesiastics sent by the pope. The new nations contained in themselves the promise of a new day.

An invisible movement in the realm of the mind and

spirit deserves our attention. We have spoken of the fashion in which Greek culture and much of the finest of ancient life were forgotten. But the time came when they were remembered. Men went back to recover the lost treasures of this ancient life. Petrarch of the fourteenth century, who has been called the first modern man, was alive to the fingertips with this spirit. The new life which came to Europe through this movement has caused it to be called the Renaissance, the rebirth. While some men went back to Greece to find what beauty meant, some went back to original documents to learn a fresh approach to truth. And there was kindled that quality of mental life which came to be known as humanism.

Erasmus was the prince of humanists, a man of profound learning, amazing wit, and a resiliency and brilliance of mind which made him one of the supreme men of letters of all the world.

In Italy, where the Renaissance was not adequately restrained by ethical standards, it tended to go back to ancient vices as well as to ancient beauties. So it exercised a corrupting influence. In Germany, where it was controlled by a more lofty and serious type of mind, it exercised a more noble and wholesome influence and helped to prepare the way for the mighty religious movement which was to come.

We have said enough to indicate that at the close of the Middle Ages many things were happening and many more were about to happen. The sleeping ages had been much troubled in their sleep. There was a great rubbing of eyes and the waking time was now at hand.

DAILY READINGS

Third Week, First Day

O God, thou hast cast us off, thou hast broken us down;
Thou hast been angry; oh restore us again.

Thou hast made the land to tremble; thou hast rent it:
Heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh.

Thou hast showed thy people hard things:

Thou hast made us to drink the wine of staggering.

—Psalm 60: 1-3.

“Anyone can doubt; it takes a hero to believe.” So declared a man who had looked life’s tragic evils square in the eye. The struggle of the soul for standing room in the midst of the hard, cruel facts of the world is one of the wonderful things about life. The author of the sixtieth Psalm is pressed by evil upon every hand. But in the midst of it all the poet seeks Jehovah. He does not hesitate, or evade any ugly fact. He takes them all to the God whom he trusts.

In the darkness and confusion of the Middle Ages, many a simple, earnest mind with no other refuge took the whole tale of the terror of the time to the great God whom he dared to trust. And this little-noticed piety of common men was part of the preparation for the better day. It was a hint of awakening after the time of sleep.

Third Week, Second Day

And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths. . . . And he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.—Isa. 2: 1-4.

“I cannot give up religion because there are so many impossible things which have to be done.” A man who had seen many victories of faith was speaking. He had the dauntless idealism of those who trust in the resources of Almighty God.

The words we have quoted from the book of Isaiah also appear in another prophet. They became part of Israel's deepest and most joyous confidence in God's purpose of lifting the world out of evil. That marvel of singing faith has lived again in many a heart. But never has the joyous, hopeful tenderness of religion been more wonderfully embodied than in the life of that prophet of self-forgetful gaiety, St. Francis of Assisi. Birds and beasts, sun, moon, and stars he called his brothers and sisters, and he was the eager comrade of all mankind. In an age which was often inhuman and cruel lived one of the most loving and tender men who ever walked the earth. And the Franciscans, like their master, sang the world into loving and living a better life. If they were voices in the night, they were voices which promised the coming of the dawn.

Third Week, Third Day

Wisdom hath builded her house;
 She hath hewn out her seven pillars:
 She hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine;
 She hath also furnished her table:
 She hath sent forth her maidens;
 She crieth upon the highest places of the city:
 Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither:
 As for him that is void of understanding, she saith to him,
 Come, eat ye of my bread,
 And drink of the wine which I have mingled.
 Leave off, ye simple ones, and live;
 And walk in the way of understanding.

—Prov. 9: 1-6.

In front of the library of Columbia University is the fine statue of Alma Mater. The mother of learning sits in noble state. Her face of lofty beauty, her form of full-orbed strength, her whole figure with its satisfying quality, speaks deeply to the thoughtful observer. There is welcome. There is the offer of beauty and the offer of strength.

The book of Proverbs tells of the ancient call of wisdom, in words which still have a haunting and arresting quality.

As the Middle Ages moved toward an end, the call of ancient wisdom was deeply heard. Once again men studied Greek. Ancient manuscripts were brought forth. Scholars from the East gave the movement impetus. Enthusiasts in the West gave themselves with an abandon of devotion to the new learning. It was determined that the best and most beautiful that man had ever known should be his possession once again. Wisdom had called and men eagerly answered.

Third Week, Fourth Day

In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will he appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth faith may enter in.—Isa. 26: 1, 2.

“It is a good thing to love your nation, unless that love of your own land makes you hate the world.” The speaker was discussing the difference between noble and ignoble patriotism—the patriotism which would share the blessings of a favored land with other lands and the patriotism which would exalt its own land at the expense of others. The process by which the world has become conscious of such distinctions has been a long and slow one. The sense of nationality has played a great part in the life of men. It is sounded vigorously in the words we have quoted from the book of Isaiah. It is heard again and again in the Old Testament. It fairly resounds as the Middle Ages turn on their hinges and we meet the modern world. Nationality is the key to much of the history of the last four hundred years. Judging it all in long perspective, we must say that nationality must be measured by the contribution it makes to the life of the whole world. So judged, Israel issues resplendent. What can we say of modern nations? What can we say of our own land?

Third Week, Fifth Day

The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah.

Now it came to pass in the month Chislev, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the palace, that Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and certain men out of Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, that were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem. And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire. And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days; and I fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.—Neh. 1: 1-4.

Nehemiah was a shrewd and brilliant courtier who had become a favorite of the king of Persia. Although a Jew by race, he had the most intimate relations with the great king. But he had not forgotten his own people. He had not forgotten his own land. He had not forgotten the home city of his faith. And the tale of the suffering of his own people made him forget his own success in the thought of their affliction.

When you get powerful men to weep unselfishly over the burdens of others, there is the promise of a change for the better in the untoward conditions. As the Middle Ages wore on, more and more men felt the shame and the tragedy of the fallen walls of the Jerusalem which should have given care and protection to men. It was not simply a matter of one leader. It was a matter of many earnest men. They created a new mood and a new attitude in Europe. They were unconscious forerunners of the Reformation. The man who refuses to ignore evil conditions, but lets their weight rest upon his heart and longs and plans for a better day, is one element in bringing the day for which he longs.

Third Week, Sixth Day

This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Jehovah. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.

And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak with thee. And the Spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet.—Ezek. 1: 28-2: 2.

God does not accomplish his great purpose by crushing a man's personality. He works out his great achievements in human life by cultivating and developing a man's personality. Ezekiel fell on his face before God. But he heard the insistent command, "Stand upon thy feet and I will speak with thee." Not grovellers, but strong men, are needed for leadership in God's kingdom.

The great personalities who helped to prepare for the Reformation movement were sturdy, virile men. They stood on their feet. They had a tremendous courage and a titanic sort of strength.

John Wyclif could never be called a weakling. He could look out unflinchingly on a dark and lowering and hostile world. His life gave England a new definition of one man's ability to think fearlessly and to speak resolutely. John Hus was not Wyclif's peer in intellect, but he was any man's peer in courage. When he went to the stake at Constance something more than his body was burned. A fire was kindled which in due time was to burn up many a superstition and evil. In those old centuries and today the men who stand on their feet are men of God's choosing.

Third Week, Seventh Day

But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief: for ye are all sons of light, and sons of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep, as do the rest, but let us watch and be sober.—I Thess. 5: 4-6.

Paul exhorts the Thessalonians not to sleep in the daytime of the world. He and they realize that the world has reached a new epoch. Mighty forces are at work. God has come into life in an entirely new way, and men are living in a new

light. For this very reason they must not be careless and dull. They must be alert. They must be awake.

Probably the reader is inclined to feel a little superior and perhaps a trifle complacent as he follows the tale of the sleeping ages. Even the men who were like early voices of the dawn had so much less light than men have today. But to be alive in one of the great wide-awake ages is a responsible thing.

Samuel Crothers, the clever essayist, remarks somewhere, "Doubtless our ancestors lived up to their lights. But so many more lights have been turned on!" The new age asks much of us. We are sons of light. We are sons of the day. Are we sure that we are entirely awake?

PERSONAL SUGGESTIONS

In every age some men are holding back. Other men are pressing forward. To which group do we belong? In "Rugby Chapel" Matthew Arnold paints a never-to-be-forgotten picture of his father as a leader in the march on to the city of God. Our age needs such leaders. Our age needs loyal followers. Better things lie ahead. Better days are on the way. Are we opening our lives to God that we may be prophets of dawns yet to come? To do that means to welcome the first gleam of each new day's light. It means to be making a way for the light God would give through us to the world.

CHAPTER IV

A Living Man

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

Thomas Carlyle's "Heroes and Hero Worship" is an eloquent and persuasive setting forth of the far-reaching power of great personalities. Often we do not see the man for the men. Often the movement hides the leader: And frequently the thought of far-reaching and compelling forces obscures our sense of the meaning of personality. Carlyle helps us to feel the meaning of the one mighty man who emerges from the crowd and dominates the life about him.

Martin Luther must always rank among the few outstanding men of the world. He is an Atlas who lifts the world upon his shoulders and carries it over into another age.

The secrets of personal power, the methods of commanding leadership, the qualities which give a man the capacity for impact upon the life of his time must come to light in an adequate study of such a man as Luther.

When Columbus discovered America, in 1492, Luther was nine years old. When the year 1509 saw the coming of Henry VIII to the throne of England, and the same year witnessed the birth of John Calvin, Luther was twenty-six years of age. His active and far-reaching work belonged to the sixteenth century.

Luther himself was the source of the saying that his father was a peasant and his grandfather was a peasant. Like Abraham Lincoln, he came from the common life of the common people. And it is extremely significant that these

two dominant leaders of the modern world were the gift of the homely, simple life of the people of the old and the new worlds which they influenced so profoundly. Luther met life with no barrier between him and its testing experiences. The common lot, the common suffering and the common privation, he knew completely. The boy who sang and begged to win his way in school, and with open eye moved in and out among the people, came to know life, directly and without evasion. He knew it at first-hand.

The father of Luther was a shrewd and able peasant, who had done amazingly well, considering his opportunities. It was his desire that his son Martin should rise still higher. And his ambition took the particular form of wishing that son to become a lawyer. So Luther was kept in school and introduced to the world of knowledge.

Luther thus became a student, and in time a man of genuine learning. His professional life was really that of a theological professor. His school days at Eisenach and Erfurt were times of stiff, vigorous training, of real mental discipline, and of the intellectual growth which comes with such training. If his birth and early life gave him the vernacular and the passwords of the common people, his university training gave him the passwords of the world of scholarship. Now he learned an international language, for scholars of every land had a common speech in Latin, and he was able to speak and write in the tongue of the men of learning of every part of the world. If he ever came to have a message which the nations ought to hear, he had command of the language used by the thinkers and scholars of all lands. In the university life of the time two rival spirits met. One was the spirit of the old scholastic training. The other was the spirit of the new learning. Luther was trained according to the scholastic form and habit. He must have felt the humanistic currents which were moving all about him. But there is no evidence that he was ever profoundly

influenced by the mood and temper of the circle of humanism. Luther never became in any sense a Greek.

In spite of his father's desire that he should become a lawyer, Luther entered a monastery. Here there were more years of discipline and study. As he had learned to know the world of scholarship from within, so he learned to know the Church from within. It was a long apprenticeship. Every aspect of the Church's discipline, every method of its leadership, every emphasis of its view of life became the intimate possession of Luther. In many ages men have attacked the Church who did not know the Church. When their intentions were perfectly good, their judgment was misguided at times because they did not know all the facts, and they were entirely ignorant of a hundred relationships which would have thrown light upon the institution they were judging. You feel when you read some of these men that the institution they are condemning is a bad enough institution. But you are not sure that such an institution ever existed. You have a feeling that they may be attacking a foe which is the creation of their own brain. Now Luther knew the Church. He was its own son, the product of its own type of training. For years he implicitly followed its guiding hand. If such a man came to the place of attacking this venerable institution, the attack would at least be the work of a man who knew his foe, and could speak its own language. A foe would have risen up in its own household.

Then Luther became the correspondent, the friend, often the counsellor, of nobles and princes who represented the secular leadership in Germany. He understood their standards and their ideals. He knew their point of view and their hopes. More and more they became men whom he trusted and in alliance with whom he did his great work. All this came as his life as a reformer moved on, but it is of the utmost importance in understanding Luther. The peasant's son became the friend of princes, and in a genuine

measure he became an exponent of their point of view. This was not always a completely happy thing for Luther's own development. But it was a very essential part of his leadership and far-flung power.

Going back of these relationships, to Luther himself, we find a wonderfully likable, vigorous, and compelling personality. Luther was the jolliest of the great prophets of the world. Like Abraham Lincoln, he had a bubbling and irresistible sense of humor. His quips and puns and laughing turns of speech are appearing all the while in his correspondence. The saving sense of the laughter in things must have served Luther in many a trying hour. A man who can laugh wholesomely and heartily is not likely to become a fanatic. He is saved from becoming hectic. He is restored to a certain poise and perspective every time he smiles.

Luther had the raw, rude qualities of the life out of which he came. He is sometimes amazingly coarse. And he indulges in a quality of speech which is quite inconceivable to our more reticent and restrained age. In thinking of this we must remember that the sixteenth century was not characterized by a chaste and delicate refinement. Shakespeare's plays, when not expurgated, startle us in quite the same fashion as does Luther. In this regard Walt Whitman would have been quite at home with the Saxon reformer.

Luther was one of the most human of men. His affections were deep and strong. His love for children, his feeling for nature, all the tender poetry of a warm and responsive heart, bring us near to a man whom we can eagerly love. There is no pretense. There is no hollow, soulless mockery of a feeling which he does not possess. There is a simple, true heart, gladly and warmly and affectionately responding to all human experiences. Some leaders give you the sense of being dehumanized machines. You can hear only the buzzing of the wheels and the movements of the belts. With

Luther the machinery never takes the place of the man. Around every corner of his experience you run across some new evidence of his hearty humanity. You are glad to accept some men as leaders, but you would be sorry to spend a whole evening in their society. Luther makes you feel that you would like to be with him hour after hour. You would like to watch the flash in his eye. You would like to listen to all the play of responsive quality in his voice. You would like to sense at close quarters the tang of his vigorous, manly personality. He attracts you because of his essential humanity.

Then Luther was a man of the most powerful and sturdy independence. He had a titanic energy. Sometimes his speech was like the explosion of a volcano. He was rugged and sometimes he was brutally vigorous. But he was strong, with a strange invincible energy which filled men with surprise. He was a man who could forge his way through the untried wilderness. He was a man who could set himself flint-like against ancient abuses. He was one of those men of awful, stalwart power whose virile commanding energy fills us with astonishment. If you saw deeply into Luther's nature as you watched his development, you might not be sure what forces he would lead. But you would be sure that he would be a leader.

DAILY READINGS

Fourth Week, First Day

Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in justice. And a man shall be as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as streams of water in a dry place, as the shade of a great rock in a weary land. And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. And the heart of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly. The fool shall be no more called noble, nor the churl said to be bountiful.—Isa. 32: 1-5.

This fine outburst is a tribute to the leadership which will give protection, and knowledge, and ethical discrimination to the world. A man is to do this service for men. A leader is to achieve these things in human life. In that noble poem, "Rugby Chapel," Matthew Arnold pays a memorable tribute to the high human leaders:

"Then, in such hour of need
 Of your fainting, dispirited race,
 Ye, like angels, appear,
 Radiant with ardour divine!
 Beacons of hope, ye appear!
 Languour is not in your heart,
 Weakness is not in your word,
 Weariness not on your brow.
 Ye alight in our van! at your voice,
 Panic, despair, flee away.
 Ye move through the ranks, recall
 The stragglers, refresh the outworn,
 Praise, re-inspire the brave!
 Order, courage, return.
 Eyes rekindling, and prayers,
 Follow your steps as ye go.
 Ye fill up the gaps in our files,
 Strengthen the wavering line,
 Stablish, continue our march,
 On, to the bound of the waste,
 On, to the City of God."

Among these mighty human leaders Martin Luther stands forth brave as the bravest, strong as the strongest. He gives us a new sense of confidence in what the individual man can do for the world.

Fourth Week, Second Day

Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was a herds-

man, and a dresser of sycomore-trees: and Jehovah took me from following the flock, and Jehovah said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel.—Amos 7: 14, 15.

Amos was a man of the people. When his voice disturbed the complacency of the eighth century B. C. in Israel, it was a speech carved into form from the common life, rich with the flavor of everyday human talk, sharpened by hardship, and quickened by contact with the poignant experiences of the people's life.

Such a voice was the voice of Luther. He did have an ecclesiastical training which Amos never knew, but his voice never lost the rude and rugged ring of the common life. It had the bite and the penetration of unprotected contact with the hard realities of experience. Luther was never saved from life. And so his voice had the very thrill of life in it.

Up from the life of the common people a great and understanding leadership comes. Out of the loins of everyday men comes the hero. The man who has been protected from life is likely to be a man who misunderstands life. The day which brings us nearer the people is a day which increases our power of leadership. The day which removes us from the people is a day which makes us less able to be of service. The man of the common life has one element in the making of the man of the uncommon leadership.

Fourth Week, Third Day

The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto a beryl: and they four had one likeness; and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel within a wheel. . . . Whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went; thither was the spirit to go: and the wheels were lifted up beside them; for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.—Ezek. 1: 16-20.

Every part of the organism which Ezekiel saw in strange, symbolic vision was dominated by one mighty spirit. There

were wheels. But the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels. And the spirit was in command.

In our day too often the wheels command the spirit. The machinery commands the man. The great need of contemporary life is to have all its machinery commanded by the spirit, all its belts and wheels at the service of powerful personality.

In Luther's work the machinery of the epoch never obtains command. The spirit of Luther dominates the machinery. Dr. Shailer Mathews, in his significant volume of lectures, "The Spiritual Interpretation of History," cites Luther as a conspicuous example of the impersonal forces of history being dominated by personal power. Disraeli put an important possibility in fine phrase when he said, "Men are not creatures of circumstances. Circumstances are creatures of men." To be the master of environment, and not its slave, is to live a victorious life. The moral spirit of the living creature is to control the wheels of life.

Fourth Week, Fourth Day

Hear, my sons, the instruction of a father,
 And attend to know understanding:
 For I give you good doctrine;
 Forsake ye not my law.
 For I was a son unto my father,
 Tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother.
 And he taught me, and said unto me:
 Let thy heart retain my words;
 Keep my commandments, and live;
 Get wisdom, get understanding.

—Prov. 4: 1-5.

In these words the past is calling to the future. The continuity of life through the teaching of each new generation by the generation which goes before is the heart of the matter the author is declaring. Life is a growing, cumulative thing and each age must hand on its best to the ages which follow. The university is the bridge between the past and

the present. It is the means by which present knowledge will be handed on to the future. When a young man goes to college, he goes to add to his own resources the cumulative resources of the past. Luther was a man of very great personal ability. He added to that all which came from discipline and training by teachers who made the past the servant of the present. To be sure, ancient fallacies as well as ancient wisdom found continuity of life in this fashion. And Luther learned some nonsense with the wisdom he received. But his training made him the master of the essential resources which a fully trained man of his period could possess. In any age to have less than this is to be handicapped in the work and the service of life.

Fourth Week, Fifth Day

And they were bringing unto him little children, that he should touch them: and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, he was moved with indignation, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me; forbid them not: for to such belongeth the kingdom of God.—Mark 10: 13, 14.

A minister of cold and austere dignity was passing down the street. A couple of college students met him. After they had passed the rather icy presence, one of them, a coolly clever chap, remarked, "That man is too good to be human." His thoughtful-faced friend replied, "I'm afraid he's not good enough to be human."

The story of Jesus rebuking the disciples who felt that his work was so important that he had no time for children is a fine illustration of the fashion in which humanity was a central constituent in his goodness.

One of the most attractive aspects of the life of Luther is the tender and friendly humanity of the man. He wrote letters to his children which are classics in their simplicity and friendly understanding of a child's mind. With the weight of worldwide interests on his shoulders, he had time

to watch the birds and write to his home about them. Greatness did not remove him from all those happy arts of understanding which keep a man near to childhood.

Fourth Week, Sixth Day

And they were all filled with wrath in the synagogue, as they heard these things; and they rose up, and cast him forth out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might throw him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them went his way.—Luke 4: 28-30.

When a man is beset by an angry crowd of men ready to kill him, you have a sudden and terrible test of the stuff of which he is made. The words quoted above from Luke tell of a dramatic episode in the life of Jesus. A scene of quiet Sabbath worship suddenly changes into a scene dominated by a howling mob. They cast Jesus from the synagogue. They rush with him to the height above the town, with its abrupt descent, down which a man can be cast. Then, just as they are about to hurl him down headlong, something happens. The one man who is to be their victim stands straight before them. His eyes flash with a personal power, before which they shrink back amazed. With regal mien he walks through the crowd and passes away safely. And only then do they recover from the lightning of his glance.

Martin Luther was a man of immense reserves of personal power. He never stood forth more sturdily strong than when it seemed as if all the supreme powers of the world were against him. He did not waver. He stood straight and strong and dominant in his fearless personal power. One of the penetrating questions to ask about a man is this: Can he stand alone?

Fourth Week, Seventh Day

Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be made full. . . . These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye may

have peace. In the world ye have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.—John 16: 24, 33.

When we read about the sturdy strength of Luther it is a tale full of stimulus, and yet it has elements of discouragement. We are glad that a man has been so strong. We wish that we knew his secret of power. But we know that we are not built on that great, heroic mold. Then we read about the strength of Jesus. We hear him say, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." And his word is full of infinite encouragement. It is not only that he was strong. It is that he possessed the secret of sharing his strength. It is not only that he overcame the world. It is that he is able to make us overcomers. And when we come to analyze the matter closely, we shall see that Luther's strength was more than that of a powerfully endowed nature. It was the strength of a man made mighty by the reenforcing energy of Christ. And the resources at his disposal are not withheld from us. We, too, may share in the strength of Christ.

PERSONAL SUGGESTIONS

One of the remarkable things about the ministry of that wonderful spirit, Maltbie Babcock, was the fashion in which he made religion human. When he left Baltimore to go to New York City, newsboys on the street were seen shedding tears because their friend was going away. We have seen how constantly and vividly human was the religion of Luther. And as a man follows the great human Christians, a telling question comes to him: Am I living near the people? Do I have a quick, hearty responsiveness to all wholesome human things? Do I have the understanding touch? James Lane Allen says of Mrs. Falconer, in "The Choir Invisible," "As she grew older she drew the ties of life more closely about her." If we do that, our religion is sure to be kept warmly human.

CHAPTER V

The Man and the Book

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

In a bit of verse, with a charm all its own, Vachel Lindsay writes:

“I asked her, ‘Is Aladdin’s lamp
Hidden anywhere?’
‘Look into your heart,’ she said,
‘Aladdin’s lamp is there.’ ”

It is always true that the secret of life is within. Out of the heart come the issues of life. But it is particularly true that if we would understand the Reformation we must understand the inner life of Luther. If we have a sympathetic knowledge of the fashion in which he struggled and the way in which he found peace, we will have a key to many things far enough from his own personality. You cannot understand the outer life of Europe in the sixteenth century without understanding the inner life of the monk of Wittenberg.

Luther took the degree of bachelor of arts at the University of Erfurt in 1502. He received the master’s degree from the same university in 1505. Then, in the very year of his receiving the master’s degree, he suddenly turned from the world and entered the Augustinian monastery at Erfurt. What was the cause of this quick and dramatic change of plans?

The answer to this question lies deep in the story of Luther’s inner life. The young man of twenty-two who entered the Augustinian monastery was already driven by a mighty desire for spiritual peace and victory. Under the gay banter of

as merry and hearty a student as ever attended a German university there was a tale of unrest, of awed and anxious questioning, of fear of the future, and of desire to be at peace with God, which gives us the really defining thing about Luther at this time. In anxious fear, and in the hope of finding the way to God, Luther renounced his former life, his plans, his whole world of human relationships, and entered the monastery, where he believed his soul would be bent and fashioned into the form which would answer to the will of God.

No man ever tried the monastic way of salvation with a greater abandon of desire, with a more passionate intensity, than did Martin Luther. Nothing was too hard for him. No demand was too great. He risked his health. He went the full length of monastic asceticism. In the monastery he wore the reputation of a saint. He was a man his fellow monks looked upon with awe and reverence.

But the one thing he most desired he did not find. His inner unrest was unabated. His disquiet of soul was unchanged. He had risked everything for God. He did not feel that he had found God. He had made the most intense and continued efforts to do the things which would make him sure of the favor of God. But the assurance simply did not come. He read great scholastic authorities. He plunged into the form of teaching most highly regarded. He grew mentally. He became more of a well-disciplined man in the theological learning of his time. But the worm of unrest gnawed away at his heart.

He was in contact with one or two men who saw farther into the meaning of vital religion than he. They helped him. But they did not bring him the day of emancipation. The discovery which changed the world for Luther did not come through any of the men about him. It came through a book. It came through the book which we have called the living book. It came through the Bible.

Even the Bible did not have a fair chance at him at once. The men in his monastery were recommended to study it, and Luther did this right eagerly. But for a man trained as a monk to read the Bible meant not a simple and direct contact, but the reading which saw every sentence through the teaching of the Church. The Church gave you the eyes through which you read the Bible, and often this practically precluded your reaching the intimate, real meaning of the Bible itself.

Luther was driven on by his hungry heart. He was spurred by his restless spirit. And at last, one day in Wittenberg he was reading Paul's epistle to the Romans. His eye fell upon the words, "The just shall live by faith." It was as if the sentence had leaped from the page. Suddenly he knew that the great matter is not what you do for God. It is what God does for you. You are not to depend upon your good deeds. You are to depend upon God's goodness. The faith which accepts God's forgiveness through Christ's loving contact, and not the dreary drudgery which tries to placate an angry deity, finds the way of peace. Your life is not to be built about a great dependence upon yourself. It is to be built about a great trust in God. With characteristic intensity of decision, Luther flung his soul out in a commitment of dependence upon the God who looked upon him through the loving eyes of Jesus Christ. All the slavery of his days of grinding doing of endless deeds, and wearily counting them to see if he had done enough to satisfy God, vanished from his experience. He was a free man. He was a man who had found peace. He held with a joyous faith what God had done for him. He tried no more to rely on his own incessant activity. And the rich creative gladness of God's presence filled his soul. So the new life came to Martin Luther.

The important matter about all this is that it was more than an individual experience. It was a typical experience.

In the first century Saul of Tarsus fought the same battle. And in the way of trust he found the same victory. Later, in the eighteenth century, John Wesley, that precise little Oxford scholar, torn with the tempest of his own struggle, waged the same conflict. And it took Paul and Luther together that night at Aldersgate to bring Wesley to the place where his heart was strangely warmed, and he found the way of trust, entering upon the experience which was to release the mightiest religious energies which moved upon the world in his time.

Luther had been trying to solve life's problem by a sort of splendid ecclesiastical morality. The difference between morality and religion is this: When you try to do the thing yourself, that is morality. When you trust in God, that is religion. When your central thought is your own achievement, that is morality. When your central thought is depending on God's achievement, that is religion.

Now, moral heroism is a noble thing. It is a superb thing. But it can never bring full satisfaction. It can never bring peace. The reason is that structurally we are so made that we can come to fulness of life only as we trust in God. We cannot successfully organize all the forces of our lives about our own strength. We can only organize them about the great trust in the mighty God who is our Saviour. A man is like a musical instrument. He cannot successfully play himself. The God who made the organ must play it. Then glad music pours out upon the world. Every man is inclined to try to meet life alone. He tries to climb the mountain path in his own eager, restless strength. But the way becomes too steep and terrible. And the great hour of life comes when a man learns that near him all the while is One on whose strength he can lean, One who will give him just the help which will enable him to reach the top of the mountain. We know the words of St. Augustine and how deeply he knew this same experience: "Oh, God, thou hast made

us for thyself and our souls are restless until they find rest in thee."

The Church had given Luther rites and duties. The Bible gave Luther a living Saviour. The Church had given Luther a summons to the way of work, the Bible opened the door of the way of trust. The leaping act of faith which bound him to Christ was the central matter in Luther's experience. It is perpetually the central matter in Christianity.

This new relation pledged him to the sort of life God would approve. Faith did not mean license. Trust did not mean indulgence. To be bound to Christ by loving faith meant in the most eager way to do His will. But from this time on Luther depended upon the Saviour whom he trusted, and all his zestful life was an expression of his devotion and not an attempt to earn rest. Love had cast out fear. Faith had admitted him to the sanctuary of peace.

DAILY READINGS

Fifth Week, First Day

Now this is the commandment, the statutes, and the ordinances, which Jehovah your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it; that thou mightest fear Jehovah thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged. Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as Jehovah, the God of thy fathers, hath promised unto thee, in a land flowing with milk and honey.—Deut. 6: 1-3.

Here we have a typical Old Testament passage emphasizing the significance of the law and obedience to it. All this was a tremendously important part of the development of the Hebrew people. But the son of the law has much farther to go. He is not yet a son of the Gospel. Luther's early experience

was in this legal stage of life. If it had satisfied him he would never have pushed forward to something larger. But he found that the very way of loyalty, splendid as it is, leaves a hungry heart. He could not build his life happily and joyously about the sense of full obedience to the law. He could not be sure that he had satisfied the law's demands. So he fought on, and struggled until the great light came, and law itself was transfigured in a personal devotion. It is a noble experience to meet God as a lawgiver. It is the climax of religion to meet God as a friend.

Fifth Week, Second Day

Create in me a clean heart, O God;
 And renew a right spirit within me.
 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my
 salvation;
 And my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.
 O Lord, open thou my lips;
 And my mouth shall show forth thy praise.
 For thou delightest not in sacrifice; else would I give it:
 Thou hast no pleasure in burnt-offering.
 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit:
 A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not
 despise. Psalm 51: 10, 14-17.

The book of Psalms is the collection of poetry which tells the tale of the inner life of Israel. It is the song of the Hebrew soul. It is the history of the Hebrew spirit. We would expect that here there would come flashes of intuition into a meaning in religion far deeper than that involved in sacrificial and legal observances. Such an outburst we find in the part of the fifty-first Psalm which we have quoted. The externals of religion fall away, as inadequate, and the deep inner meanings of religion emerge. You have a quick sense of the spirit of a man in humble and transforming contact with the Spirit of God. You have the joy of it poured forth in lyric speech.

Fifth Week, Third Day

Wherewith shall I come before Jehovah, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves a year old? will Jehovah be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?—Micah 6: 6-8.

Here we have the reflection of the prophetic struggle between legal and vital piety. The weight of sin is upon the conscience of the prophet. He wonders how a man can ever satisfy the clean and mighty God. Will any sacrifice be great enough? Rams by the multitudes, oil enough to fill rivers, seem insignificant in dealing with this problem. Will even the sacrifice of a man's own son satisfy God? That awful sense of an obstacle between man and the deity which has put terror into many a religion is hard upon him. Then comes his great moment of illumination. He sees a vision of the character of God. He sees the meaning of that divine grace which asks no terrible sacrifice, but accepts the humble man of human sympathy, who looks up to God in reverence as he goes about seeking to do justly. It is one of the greatest passages of the Old Testament. It is a singing prophecy of the day when religion will be built about the thought of the downreach of the goodness of God. Luther knew both sides of the struggle. He knew the dreadful unrest of trying to propitiate a terrible angry deity. He knew the radiant joy of resting content as he accepted God's gift of peace.

Fifth Week, Fourth Day

For that which I do I know not: for not what I would, that do I practise; but what I hate, that I do. But if what I would not, that I do, I consent unto the law that it is good. . . . For the good which I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I practise. . . . For

I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members. Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death? —Rom. 7: 15, 16, 19, 22-24.

Centuries before the time of Luther Paul fought Luther's battle and won the same victory. The words above tell the tale of his bitter memory of that fight. Robert Louis Stevenson has put in memorable form the tragic drama of the two men in each of us, in "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." Paul knew the full horror of that inner antagonism. He could not organize the forces of his own life into unity and harmony. There was mutiny in the ship. The sailors would not obey the captain. And the harder he struggled, the more the wild disorder asserted itself. Augustine knew the same heartbreaking struggle. All earnest men have felt it. Luther faced its full meaning and, like Paul, he knew its power to torture. The harder he fought, the more the canker-worm of inner unrest ate away in his soul.

Fifth Week, Fifth Day

Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; through whom also we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand; and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. —Rom. 5: 1, 2.

Across the ages Paul was the guide of Luther. The words we have quoted here from Romans have the heart of Luther's Christian life and the heart of the Reformation in them. Can we fathom their power to lead Luther into a new world? Can we apprehend their power to show him the path which led away from the night into the full light of day?

If we look deep into our own hearts, and face the meaning of our own deepest struggles, we shall find it easier to understand both Paul and Luther, for these words are spoken out of profound human struggle with a great ethical ideal and by

such a struggle in the life of the reader they must be interpreted. As long as Paul tried to do the great things himself he failed. When he made one great leap of trust in the living Christ who had died for him, all the world was made new. Luther failed when he tried to do the great thing himself. In the hour when he trusted Christ to take care of past and present and future, the clouds lifted. The way of earnest, noble self-dependence is the way of depression and unrest. The way of living trust in Jesus Christ is the way of a new exultant gladness, the way of peace and power. A man who drops from a burning building into the arms of a fireman on a ladder just below him must decide to trust himself to the strong fireman's arms. But he cannot do the jumping and also catch himself. Trying to be both the saved and the saviour makes half the spiritual unrest of the world.

Fifth Week, Sixth Day

There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.—Rom. 8: 1-4.

Some interesting questions arise about the man who has passed from a legal religion into the freedom of a vital trust in Christ. It is easy to see that the chains are broken. He is a slave no more. Charles Lamb spoke once of the "dreary drudgery of the desk's dead wood," feeling that he was a serf, held to his desk as serfs of old days were held to land. All the feeling of serfdom passes when a man enters the freedom of friendship with God through the way of trust in Christ. But does freedom mean lawlessness? Can he do as he pleases without restraint? At once Paul makes it clear that freedom from the law does not mean freedom to sin.

Freedom from legal chains does not mean license for wrongdoing. The new life delivers a man from drudgery, but its very spirit protects him from evil. The very vitality of his trust in Christ makes him love what his Master loves and hate what his Master hates. He still keeps the Ten Commandments, but he does it now because he loves to do it, and not because he is driven by the lash of his sense of duty. Obedience itself is glorified by the enthusiasm of his devotion. So the Gospel conserves all that is valuable in the law and transfigures it. The law itself is transformed by a man's relation to Christ. It is no more a taskmaster. It becomes a friend.

Fifth Week, Seventh Day

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things? . . . Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.—Rom. 8: 31, 32, 35, 37-39.

Paul has given up forever the way of trust in himself. He has accepted for all time the way of trust in God. All the dreary, tragic sense of his own incapacity is lost in the solid, joyous strength of his confidence in the power of God to keep him. His voice is lifted in one of those outbursts of rapture, which are all the more impressive in a man whose mind had such disciplined, quiet strength, and such acute critical power. His religious life is as solid as the character of God. It is as deep as the power of Christ's suffering love to penetrate his spirit. It is the one thing which is sure, though life itself should fall apart. All that Paul felt in

these regards Luther felt as well. And the Epistle to the Romans is in a very significant sense a source book for the religious life of Luther and for the victorious spirit of the Reformation. Paul helps to account for Luther.

PERSONAL SUGGESTIONS

At last the significance of Paul's struggle and Augustine's and Luther's and Wesley's lies at one point. These men met typical human problems. Their fight and their victory are typical. We are all tempted to try the way of self-dependence. We all need to learn the way of trust. The question which emerges is a definitely personal one. Have I learned the secret which transformed Luther's life? Have I learned the secret which through Wesley changed eighteenth century England? Robert William Dale put it all very simply in telling of his own struggle: "At last, how I hardly know, I ceased thinking of myself and began thinking of Christ. Then I wondered that I should have been perplexed for a single hour."

CHAPTER VI

The Man, the Book, and the Rulers of the Church

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

That gifted American writer, Margaret Deland, has created more than one memorable character. It may be safely said, however, that none of them will be remembered longer, or with a deeper sense of gratitude, than that pastor of infinite sympathy and strong and patient discernment, Dr. Laven-
dar. As you read the tale of his activities you come to know much about a pastor's heart. Luther was a teacher and a pastor. He had responsibilities for others as well as for himself. And it is through the study of Luther as a pastor that we must approach the movement which is called the Reformation.

In the very nature of things Luther must have desired to share with others the new life which had transformed the world for him. His position as teacher and religious guide gave him ample opportunities. Soon he was busily engaged in sharing the deepest things which had enriched his own spirit.

Then in the year 1517 Tetzel began to peddle indulgences in Germany. The pope had great plans for St. Peter's. Money was badly needed, and the traffic in indulgences was the result. The theory of indulgences may be briefly stated. The Church had a method of imposing penances. The old Teutonic method of dealing on a basis of money value led to a suggestion of the substitution of money payment for the

carrying out of the penance. So the church treasury could be enriched, and so the individual would feel that he had met the demands of the situation. Strictly speaking, only ecclesiastical sentences could be remitted by means of indulgence money. But the everyday man did not make this distinction. Tetzel, the popular advocate of the plan, did not take pains to prevent loose thinking. He himself declared that the soul of your friend would leave purgatory as your coin dropped into the box. And the untutored found it easy to believe that indulgences secured the forgiveness of sins.

When Tetzel came near to Wittenberg there was a good deal of excitement among Luther's people. There were naturally those who wanted to profit by the tremendous spiritual opportunity which they believed to be within their reach. Luther's mind quickly went to the root of the matter. If a man was depending upon indulgences, he would not be depending upon God. His whole religious life would be cheapened and made unethical by the very experience of trafficking in indulgences. The new life which was being encouraged by Luther would be swept aside and in its place would come a blighting superstition. Full of the joy and ethical vigor of his own powerful experience, Luther could not see his people turn from golden coin to counterfeit without a struggle. He began to oppose the indulgence selling. The climax came when he nailed the famous theses to the door of the church in Wittenberg. The theses were in Latin and in form were statements made to serve as a basis for academic disputation. No one was more surprised at the result of the posting of the theses than Luther himself. They were soon translated, and like wildfire they ran over Germany. The people were ready for Luther's statements. What he said clearly they had been dimly thinking. His name was on every one's lips. He became the hero of the hour.

As the controversy raged one question emerged: What

would be the attitude of the pope? Luther claimed that once correctly informed, the pope would repudiate the excesses involved in the indulgence selling. The upholders of the practice insisted that they had the entire support of the pope.

Luther had no thought of being disloyal to the constituted ecclesiastical authority. He was a loyal son of the Church and believed that he would be vindicated by the supreme power. As time went on, however, it became increasingly clear that powerful forces were arrayed against him. He had to face the question as to what he would do if the pope refused to support him. Once clearly put, the question was not hard for Luther to answer. He must be loyal to the new life which energized his spirit, whatever the pope said. So papal representatives found Luther infinitely respectful, but quite unbending concerning the central matter. And when he tried to fit into a compromise, it was not of such a character as to lead him to feel that he invalidated his central position. How far he had gone in the name of his loyalty to his mighty and transforming experience became clear in the famous disputations with Eck. Here it was pointed out to Luther that John Hus had held some of the very opinions which Luther promulgated and that for these very opinions Hus had been condemned by the general council at Constance. Confronted by the dilemma of relinquishing what had become his most cherished convictions, or of challenging the judgment of a general council, Luther did not waver. Boldly he declared for Hus and against the general council. Boldly he declared that a general council might err. This declaration took him out of the group of conservative reformers and put him into the group of revolutionists. From the standpoint of medieval orthodoxy there was now only one thing to do with Luther. That was to crush him.

To understand Luther at this period of his life we must understand his profound loyalty to much in the past, as well

as the radical and transforming character of his Christian experience. There was a vein of very deep conservatism running through all the character of Luther. He cared for old things. He cared for old ways. Nothing would have pleased him more deeply than the suggestion of a way by which he could have remained a simple and humble child of the Church, and yet have kept all the wonder of his new life. But when he saw that he could not have both, he did not flinch or attempt to avoid the issue. When the papal bull announcing his excommunication arrived, he was ready. At a public gathering he burned the papal bull and repudiated the authority of the supreme religious sovereign of the world.

Three things stand out with striking clearness as we study this period of Luther's life. The first is that a tremendous thing had happened within him. The more we study Luther's dauntless courage, the more we know that only something soul-shaking and soul-transforming can account for it. The hesitating monk, moving with infinite self-distrust through a thousand petty and scrupulous observances, has disappeared forever. In his place there stands a man of resource and strength and poise. His clear eyes pierce to the central meanings of things. Some bright light burning in his soul illuminates all that he looks upon. In the presence of his mind things resolve themselves into their defining and essential qualities. He touches issues and suddenly they appear in their real meaning. What is the secret of this sure-footed mind and this far-penetrating insight? We can see it shining in Luther's eyes. We can feel it in the rich vibrancy of his speech. He has found a source of inner gladness and repose. He is organizing his life about a principle which gives him infinite peace.

The second thing which strikes us as we study Luther in these testing days is this: the new Luther is the creation of the Bible. A fresh contact with the deepest religious experience of the New Testament has made Luther what he is.

In the first days of gladness in his new relationship it did not occur to Luther that there was planted in his life a seed of antagonism to the existing Church. He had not seen that a churchly Christian in the medieval sense was one thing, and a Christian in Paul's sense of vital trust was another. He followed Paul into the light and he was contented to go where the light would lead him. The living book made a new and powerful kind of man of him, and he quite simply accepted the responsibility of putting the new manhood in command of all his relationships. He had not learned that the Church could be jealous of the book. When he did learn it, his soul was completely anchored to the vital message of the book. Luther was never happier than when expounding the Bible as the way to that life of trust which is the secret of personal peace and personal victory. If he must give up either the pope or the book, he saw quite clearly which one he could do without.

The third thing which is forced upon us with striking power is this: Luther not only felt the things of which we have written, he also lived them. There are a good many men whose hearts go farther than their hands ever follow, and at last their hearts lose the beating joy which called in vain for loyal hands to express. You can never keep the joy to which you are disloyal. There are a good many men whose heads go farther than their feet ever follow. And by and by they lose the clear consciousness which called for marching feet and obedient lives. You cannot keep the noble thought which you refuse to put into action. With Luther thought and feeling and burning deeds went together. In him the inner life and the outer were wedded. The inspiration dominated the activity.

All these things have a certain element of timelessness. You cannot say that they belong distinctively to one age. They belong to every age. To read the Bible with eyes which penetrate beyond the incidental to the essential; to

receive the message of the living book into responsive lives; to fasten our very personality to the strength of the living Christ by a momentous act of trust, and then to go out and live in the light of this far-reaching experience: this is to receive Luther's secret into our own lives. More deeply it is to receive God's secret, for in response to such trust the Master of life himself enters our lives in a way undreamed of before. We too have new sight. We too have new insight. We too can go forth to serve with fresh and creative activity the age in which we live.

It is one of the paradoxes of religious history that in the hour when Luther lost the pope he found God in a completer fashion than he had ever known him before. The Church had become an obstacle between man and God in the days of Luther. The Bible taught Luther how to brush aside every obstacle, papal and churchly, and to find the God who had been lost to view.

DAILY READINGS

Sixth Week, First Day

The people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we know not what is become of him. And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden rings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me. . . . And he received it at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, and made it a molten calf. . . . And when Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To-morrow shall be a feast to Jehovah.—Exodus 32: 1, 2, 4, 5.

Moses was the representative of an ethical religion. In his absence the people fell away into a religion of idolatry. They did not cease to worship Jehovah, but they worshiped him by means of a calf of gold. They kept the same God, but they corrupted his worship.

Very much this sort of thing had happened to Christianity in the time of Luther. The old names had been kept, but the religion had been corrupted. The pope had been put in the place which belonged to God. Superstitious rites turned men's minds from the true and ethical worship. And if there was no visible golden calf, there was an invisible idol of avarice which was corrupting the worship. Aaron is said to have called the feast of the golden calf a feast to Jehovah. All too often has it happened that God has been worshiped in ways which expressly contradicted his nature and character. The man who is clear-sighted enough to realize what it means when he is tempted to worship an invisible calf of gold will be saved from much tragic failure.

Sixth Week, Second Day

Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel: the land is not able to bear all his words. For thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of his land. Also Amaziah said unto Amos, O thou seer, go, flee thou away.—Amos 7: 10-12.

Amaziah was the priest in charge at Bethel when Amos burst forth in his powerful and penetrating prophecy. Amaziah was the official priest of Jehovah. Amos was the prophet of Jehovah. You might expect the two to work in splendid harmony. As a matter of fact, Amaziah listened in amazement, then in anxious wrath, to the words of Amos. He decided that the rough and uncouth prophet must be crushed. He took measures to arouse the royal hostility to the dauntless prophet. He himself ordered him to leave Bethel.

The experience of Amos in the eighth century before Christ was paralleled in the experience of Martin Luther in the sixteenth century after our Lord's coming. Luther was the prophet of God. But the highest official priests of the great churchly organization listened to him with amazed wrath and

decided that he must be crushed. They sought to entangle him in a web of secular hostility. They ordered him to be silent. But the prophet of God spoke on. He did his great work in spite of the priests.

Sixth Week, Third Day

Woe unto you, ye blind guides, that say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor. Ye fools and blind: for which is greater, the gold, or the temple that hath sanctified the gold? And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gift that is upon it, he is a debtor. Ye blind: for which is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?—Matt. 23: 16-19.

In these words Jesus appears as the critic of contemporary religion. The churchly leaders had the solemn responsibility of making clear and commanding the great matters of life and religion. But they themselves did not think clearly. They themselves lacked moral and spiritual perspective. And so their teaching was confused. Those who should have been eyes for others were themselves blind. Those who should have been wise for others were themselves fools.

The tragedy of a leadership which did not lead was the terrible thing which confronted Luther. In his day, too, sightless men proclaimed the way, and foolish men uttered words of assumed wisdom. To deliver men from false and inadequate leadership was the great matter in his day. It is a matter of genuine significance in ours.

Sixth Week, Fourth Day

And every day he was teaching in the temple; and every night he went out, and lodged in the mount that is called Olivet. And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, to hear him.

Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover. And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might put him to death; for they feared the people.—Luke 21: 37-22: 2.

We have seen that the official representatives of religion came forth to crush Amos. Now we see the official representatives of religion planning to crush Jesus. They desire to do more than to silence him. They are plotting to kill him. The great Master of religion was met by the utter hostility of the accredited representatives of religion in his day. We are not surprised then that a church whose garments were trailed in the mire of a thousand vices planned to destroy the great prophet of the sixteenth century. There is a sort of malignant sacerdotal succession in the unethical priesthood of the world. And so it happens that the very organization created to be the support of vital religion may be its relentless foe. And you do not have to be dealing with some particular form of church to meet this problem. In any kind of ecclesiastical organization you can find men who begin by making some other interest more important than the Kingdom of God, and end by being hostile to the essential interests of that righteous Kingdom.

Sixth Week, Fifth Day

The chief priests therefore and the Pharisees gathered a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many signs. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation. But a certain one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor do ye take account that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.—John 11: 47-50.

Caiaphas was a man of magnetic personality and of forceful leadership. His position as high priest gave him authority. His own energetic, skilful methods caused his words to be heard with attention. When the men of his group were most disturbed about the growing significance of Jesus, he made an astute and telling suggestion. It was evident that Jesus was a most dangerous man. Surely the common good must be considered before this one enthusiast. If killing him

could take a desperate, dangerous element out of society, ought he not to be killed? The poison in the words of Caiaphas did its work. The hour of Jesus's treacherous death was brought one step nearer. The priest of priests was the arch foe of the Master of Religion.

Luther, like his Master, felt the impact of the deadly hostility of the priest of priests. The pope wanted to secure the death of Luther. He worked to secure it. He felt that his own throne was threatened while Luther was alive.

Sixth Week, Sixth Day

But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou art the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Henceforth ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his garments, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy: what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? They answered and said, He is worthy of death.—Matt. 26: 63-66.

Here we see the high priest at the trial of Jesus. False witnesses have evidently been futile. Caiaphas gathers himself for a supreme effort. Looking Jesus straight in the eye, his own cool, malignant eyes flashing with cruel energy, he speaks in the name of God, asking Jesus if he is the Christ. An ugly, deadly insight prompted the question. It was a question with which Jesus would not play, and which he would answer, though that answer brought about his death. With unhesitating power he declared himself and Caiaphas used the words to seal his doom. Here again the priest of priests is the leader in the plot—now successful—to slay the one man whose presence made religion supremely vital in the world. Little did Caiaphas know that the death would do what the life alone would never have been able to do, as the religion of Jesus swept out to conquer the world.

Luther followed his Master loyally. It was not asked of him that he give his life by dying. This Wyclif had done; this Hus had done; to this fate Rome would have brought Luther. But the providence which rules men's lives had other plans for him. It is perfectly clear that he possessed the spirit of last great sacrifice. He did not expect to survive his final hostility to the pope.

Sixth Week, Seventh Day

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!—Matt. 23: 37.

The city of God failed to recognize the Son of God. The Church of God has often failed to recognize the messengers of God. So it was when Luther came and so it was in a real measure when Wesley came. The power to recognize God's prophets when they come is a gift for which we may all well pray. There is a picture in Revelation of the Church as a bride adorned for her husband. The figure is complete in its suggestion of readiness and welcome. Each age receives its messages. Each age receives its messengers. What kind of a reception does our Jerusalem give to those who speak for God?

PERSONAL SUGGESTIONS

This week's study makes one thing very definitely clear—that is, the possibility of being a churchman without being a Christian. And the question arises, How may I be sure that I am a member of the Kingdom of God as well as a member of the Church? We must find the answer to that question where Luther found it, in a personal appropriation of that which the Master of Religion offers to us. As we trust him and obey him we shall find our citizenship in the Kingdom of God.

CHAPTER VII

The Man, the Book, and the Emperor

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

We are all familiar with the statement credited to Louis XIV, "I am the State." Charles V, who sat on the throne of the Holy Roman Empire in those testing days of Luther, could claim no such absolute authority as did that gilded and brilliant monarch, Louis XIV of France, but he ruled over vaster domains than any man in Europe since Charlemagne, and he held the proudest secular title in the world. Charles was master of Spain, lord of the Netherlands, and at the age of about twenty-one he was crowned Emperor. In theory the pope was the chief spiritual lord in the world, the Emperor was its chief temporal lord. What the imperial office lacked in definite authority, it made up in tremendous dignity. And it did have far-flung and genuine authority, as well as a most imperial place in the imagination of all peoples.

When, in 1521, the young Charles came to Germany to receive the imperial crown, the land was torn by the great religious controversy which we have seen inaugurated by the protest of Luther. The pacification of Germany, torn by this dissension, was one of the first and one of the most important tasks of the young Emperor. Charles V never wore his heart on his sleeve. He was a cold, reserved, astute man who controlled others without any very full revelation of his own motives.

If he had one enthusiasm it was probably for the Church.

He saw the need of reform. He wanted reform. But he hated revolution. He wanted no attack on the papacy. He wanted no attack on the authority of the Church. He wanted no attack on the sacraments. As quickly as he understood the nature of Luther's protest, he was sure to be its foe. But Charles V was a consummate politician, and his political motives were very deep in his life. He was a man who would hold to a purpose, but he would be guided in carrying it out by all sorts of political motives. In the very nature of the case the Emperor watched the power of the pope with a jealous eye, and, loyal son of the Church as he was, Charles had no desire to see the pope too powerful. He felt at one time that that audacious German monk Luther might be of use in his political game of curbing the pope. But if it came to a final choice of allegiance, Charles was always with the pope rather than against him.

It was decided to call a great assembly of the German princes. And here, among other matters, Luther and his movement were to be considered. This assembly was the famous Diet of Worms. And to it Luther was at length summoned with a safeguard from the Emperor. Luther could not forget John Hus and the imperial promise of protection which had not prevented that noble Bohemian from being burned at Constance more than a hundred years before. But Luther felt that he must answer the imperial summons. If it had been an assembly of devils instead of an assembly of German princes he would have had no choice, judging from his own violent and picturesque utterance.

We now come to the most dramatic and momentous moment in Luther's active life. He was a peasant trained to bend before high authority. All his instincts were those of pliant obedience when the august voices of his rulers spoke. He was summoned into the glittering presence of such a brilliant assembly of wide-reaching political and ecclesiastical power as would have dazzled and awed any man.

He had begun to realize what it meant to be alone. The pope was against him. The organized Church was against him. Would the Emperor be against him, too? And would the organized forces of the empire be turned to crush him?

History has few moments of more thrilling quality than that when at last Luther stood at bay. He realized that he had been called to recant, and not to be given a sympathetic hearing. The weight of Church and State bent upon him with crushing power. Could he resist the pressure? Could one man defy the world? He squared his shoulders. He stood steady under the awful weight. He rested his case upon the Bible. He refused to retract his essential positions unless convinced from the Scriptures that he was wrong. The power of the world flashed around him. There he stood in solitary marvelous strength. He could do no other. The life within was stronger than all external pressure. And when he went forth he staggered under the weight of the world he was carrying into a new day.

On his return journey to Wittenberg friends of Luther snatched him away out of danger. Under the ban of the empire and the ban of the pope, it must have seemed as if all was lost.

Charles V, however, found that Luther had an amazing popular hold on Germany. Great princes were friendly to him. Vast numbers of people idolized him. The land was seething with his doctrine and the sense of a new life which he was spreading abroad.

If Charles V had had no other interest, he might have centered his attention upon the crushing of Luther, and had he done this in the earlier years of the Reformation it is difficult to see how he could have been prevented from achieving his end. But Charles had many plans. He had his great rivalry with Francis I of France to consider. Later he had wars with the Turks to engross his mind. It seemed as if there was always something to divert his atten-

tion from Luther and his movement, until at last that movement became too strong for the imperial crushing.

When at last, in 1541, Charles abdicated his throne, he was a disillusioned and disappointed man. He had never succeeded in unifying Germany. The Reformation had swept in triumph past any opposition he had summoned. Looking back, he wished that he had secured the death of Luther at that long distant day when Luther was in his power. He had been shrewd and skilful. He had been the center of all eyes in his brilliant imperial life. But he had never understood his age. He had never understood Luther. He had never understood Germany. And his face was not set forward toward the future. It was turned backward toward the past. When he retired into a monastery the event was symbolical. The ideals and ideas for which he stood were never to have unchallenged sway in the world again.

It is not the victory of Luther which stands out in the whole story, however. It is the daring of Luther. It is that high adventure when he moved out with a world against him. It is the figure of that lone man at Worms, carrying his loyalty to his inner life to the utmost limit of personal risk. The living book had indeed poured its vital message into the heart of a man who received its full power. The evangelical message of the Bible lived in Luther. And that made him stronger than all the crushing power at the disposal of Charles V. The whole story of Luther's strength in resisting almost overwhelming pressure from without, rings with a certain deep note of human experience which appeals to us all. How we have felt life pressing in upon us! How we have felt it dashing against our aspirations, our purposes, and our best desires! It has not been so dreadfully hard a pressure as Luther felt. There is something almost unique about that. But it is the same sort of experience, and somehow we feel very near to the monk of Wittenberg as we read the story.

Then it comes home to us that Luther's secret may be ours. And this tale of the sixteenth century suddenly becomes a matter of vital meaning for this torn and struggling and magnificently heroic age in which we live. The thing that held Luther steady against pope and Emperor is a good thing for a man in the trenches. It is a good thing for the man who must go "over the top." It is a good thing for the man who is withstanding the hard siege of every day. The courage to withstand does not belong to any one age. It is the need of every period. And the living contact with the living Christ through the gripping power of a great trust still makes a man stronger in inner strength than all the forces which press upon him from without.

DAILY READINGS

Seventh Week, First Day

And Moses went out from Pharaoh, and entreated Jehovah. And Jehovah did according to the word of Moses; and he removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people; there remained not one. And Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and he did not let the people go.—Exodus 8: 30-32.

Here we have a fragment of the account of the struggle of an ancient religious leader with a powerful prince. The king of Egypt is on one side. The servant of Jehovah is on the other. God's own resources are enlisted in the fight and although again and again Pharaoh hardens his heart, and steels his purpose to resist, at last he is forced to the great surrender.

We are likely to see in Moses, as we read the story, a titanic figure wielding almost irresistible power. But we must remember that every step of his leadership was a great venture of faith in the unseen. The towering size of Moses is really the size of his faith. And we may be his peers in faith in the strong invisible God, who is mightier than all his foes.

Seventh Week, Second Day

And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee, because thou hast sold thyself to do that which is evil in the sight of Jehovah.—I Kings 20: 21.

Moses in the thirteenth century B. C. contended with the Pharaoh of Egypt. Elijah in the ninth century B. C. contended with Ahab, king of Israel. Very often the prophet has met the king as a foe. When the king becomes an evil-doer, God is against him and God's prophet must be against him, too. The prophet represents something higher than the authority of an earthly king.

You get this very quality of prophetic leadership expressed once and again in Martin Luther's life. He does not measure his message by the standard of kings. He measures kings by the standards of his message. And when they are found wanting he speaks out for God.

The Diet of Worms represents no mere isolated event in Luther's life. His brave action in the presence of the Emperor is profoundly typical. Like Elijah, he had a message which made him stronger than any king.

Seventh Week, Third Day

And Jehovah spake again unto Ahaz, saying, Ask thee a sign of Jehovah thy^o God. . . . But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt Jehovah. And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David: Is it a small thing for you to weary men, that ye will weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. . . . Before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land whose two kings thou abhorrest shall be forsaken.—Isa. 7: 10-14, 16.

Now we are in the eighth century B. C. Isaiah is dealing with the weak king, Ahaz. The king tries to disguise his weakness by making it appear as reverence. He tries to depreciate courage by making it appear to be over-boldness,

which has turned into irreverent audacity. Isaiah cuts through his defences. He speaks brief, tense, strong words. You feel at once that Isaiah is the strong man and Ahaz the weakling. And Isaiah makes you feel that it is God who makes him strong. He makes no claim that his words are his own words. They are the words of Jehovah.

Luther's relation to the secular power in critical periods of his life gives you this same impression of a man strong in a strength which is not his own. He has access to an Emperor so much more powerful than Charles that the man on the throne of the Holy Roman Empire does not have power to make him afraid.

Seventh Week, Fourth Day

Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was of a long time desirous to see him, because he had heard concerning him; and he hoped to see some miracle done by him. And he questioned him in many words; but he answered him nothing. And the chief priests and the scribes stood, vehemently accusing him. And Herod with his soldiers set him at nought, and mocked him, and arraying him in gorgeous apparel sent him back to Pilate.—Luke 23: 8-11.

“It is intolerable to be scoffed at and disdained and made light of, when you are right and the man who scorns you is wrong,” burst out an ardent young reformer after an unhappy, bitter experience. “Yes, it is intolerable,” was the reply of his wise adviser, “and yet the best man who ever lived endured it.”

Herod was the ruler. Jesus was at the bar of justice. And with mocking mirth the scornful, jesting king cast insult upon the Galilean. Yet Jesus was the judge that day, and Herod was the judged. The secular ruler was judged from an invisible throne of the spirit where Jesus reigned.

In many ages, when Christian heroes have stood before the relentless cruelty of secular kings, their way has been

easier because they have remembered their Master's experience so long ago.

The conflict of Luther in the sixteenth century is part of an age-long struggle with the secular power which has not submitted itself to the leadership which truly represents the will of God.

Seventh Week, Fifth Day

And Pilate spake unto them again, desiring to release Jesus; but they shouted, saying, Crucify, crucify him. And he said unto them a third time, Why, what evil hath this man done? . . . But they were urgent with loud voices. . . . And Pilate gave sentence that what they asked for should be done.—Luke 23: 20-24.

Again we see Jesus on trial before a secular power, and we see the master of the Roman tribunal condemning Jesus to death. It might seem the very seal of failure on the work of Jesus—he is unable to withstand the onslaughts of his foes; he goes away to death. The first important thing is to see that he was completely loyal. Herod could not mock him out of his loyalty; Pilate's power did not frighten him; he made no concession. His preliminary victory was that he held faithfulness dearer than life.

Luther faced the same testing experience again and again. If he never became a physical martyr he was a martyr in spirit through years. For he put his cause before his life and took every risk. Like his Master he could not be turned from his task by any secular power.

Seventh Week, Sixth Day

And Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth his hand, and made his defence. . . . And Paul said, I would to God, that whether with little or with much, not thou only, but also all that hear me this day, might become such as I am, except these bonds.—Acts 26: 1, 29.

Another Christian leader stands in the presence of a secular

authority. Paul is before Agrippa. On the one hand is the representative of imperial Rome; on the other the outstanding preacher of a despised and persecuted sect. It would take a wise eye to see that Paul represented the future and that Agrippa would be remembered only because he heard Paul speak. Paul was steady, well-poised, infinitely earnest, and full of friendly solicitude for the good of those who heard him. He was easily the master of the scene in his inherent, dominant, noble manhood.

Paul was very near to Luther, and the Pauline teacher of the sixteenth century must have received great comfort from the story of the strong, steady faithfulness of his fore-runner in Christian prophecy so long ago. Both Paul and Luther knew that they had more to give to kings than kings would ever give to them.

Seventh Week, Seventh Day

Before governors and kings shall ye stand for my sake, for a testimony unto them.—Mark 13: 9.

The eye of Jesus is flashing out over the future. He sees his disciples in the presence of the powerful of the earth. He sees times of testing and times of hardship. And he sees times of victory.

It is simply true that history glistens with the brightness of the courage of Christians as they have faced stern and strong secular power unafraid. The early centuries of persecution set an amazing standard of courageous faithfulness. And age after age has made its contribution to the number of those who were unmoved when powerful potentates set themselves against the triumph of the Kingdom of God. Every century since Jesus came to the world has had its own heroes of invincible purpose in the presence of royal hostility.

So the story of Luther and Charles fits into a great series of stories of royal opposition and Christian strength.

PERSONAL SUGGESTIONS

We live in a republic. What has all this tale of Luther and an Emperor to do with us? A great deal if we stop to think. Public opinion is often the emperor before whom we crouch and cower. The things the crowd will say may make us tremble more than Luther trembled in the presence of Charles. Whatever the thing is in this world about us the fear of which makes us hesitate to be true to God and our deepest lives—that thing must be conquered. And the way of conquest we may find where Luther found the way of power.

CHAPTER VIII

The Man, the Book, and the People

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

James Russell Lowell once suggested that there was social dynamite in the New Testament, if the people ever came to realize its implications.

The story of the emerging of the people and of their forward movement to a place of dominance is one of the most fascinating and significant stories in all the world. And the study of the Reformation comes to a point of intense interest when we ask, What was its relation to the emancipation of the people? Did Luther see the meaning of the social dynamite in the New Testament? Did he give sympathy and aid to the people in their aspirations? Does he have a place among those who have helped the people to come to their own?

Martin Luther himself was a peasant and the son of a peasant. By birth and early life he was a man of the people. He spoke their speech, he knew their life, he understood their privations and their ways, he was aware of their hopes and fears. His own speech always smacked of the soil and a part of his power lay in his ability to speak in direct and compelling fashion to the popular mind.

More than this, the central act of his life had the heart of democracy in it. His tremendous protest against the organized Church and the organized State in the name of the individual and his direct relation to God was an expression of the very genius of religious democracy, and its imme-

diate corollary was political democracy. When you put the solemn sacredness of the integrity of the individual life over against the great social solidarities, you can come to live in a new world. Luther was undoubtedly one of the most significant of the men who created that modern type of life where the people have been coming to their own in such wonderful fashion. His example was like a beacon light, showing the individual man everywhere that he had a right to be true to himself and to assert his power.

The common people of Germany were not slow to see all this. They felt that he was one of them. They felt that under his leadership ancient wrongs could be righted and a better day could be produced. He became their great hero. They were ready to rally around him with the completest loyalty.

Then came the peasants' uprising of 1523. It was not the first of the uprisings of the peasants. Held down under a heavy yoke, the victims of harsh and cruel wrong, once and again the peasants broke forth in the endeavor to better their condition. But the activity of Luther put new hope into them. They set about a movement which would really secure some of those rights for which they had striven in vain. Their preliminary declaration was one to command the respect of fair-minded men. The wrongs from which they wished to be delivered were real wrongs. The rights they claimed were true rights of men who were to have any real future. Luther felt a genuine measure of sympathy with them at this stage of the movement.

But Luther was never a political reformer. He had an instinct, whose wisdom we cannot seriously question, that he was in the world to do one thing. If he tried to do everything, his whole movement would collapse and he would do nothing. If he tried to do one thing, he had genuine hope of success. He was first and last and always a man of religion. To make a place in the world for the true evangeli-

cal type of religious experience and life he considered his one absolute mission. As the peasants' uprising moved on, there were murmurings everywhere. The foes of the Reformation were not slow to declare that it meant anarchy, that it meant the overthrow of all the stable and solid and ancient sanctions of life. Men who had believed in Luther began to eye him with suspicion. Then there came the time when excesses appeared in the peasants' uprising. Luther's whole movement seemed endangered by red-eyed, passionate men who were ready to shake the foundations of things to secure their desire. Luther felt that the only way to save the Reformation was to sever it absolutely from the political movement of the peasants. He looked with utter horror upon the wilder excesses of the movement. Then he prepared to act.

He acted unhesitatingly. With unmistakably stern and rugged language he advised that the peasants be relentlessly crushed. His voice became hard and brutal as he burst out against those who were endangering the movement which was more precious to him than his life. The German princes were not slow in taking Luther's advice. The movement of the peasants was drowned in blood. If the peasants had committed excesses, they were met in turn by the cruel excesses of the men who came against them. They were beaten to the ground. Multitudes of them perished. The spirit was crushed out of those who remained. Their condition was worse than it was before the uprising. Hope perished out of their hearts and generation after generation of the peasant class lived on unrelieved.

The possibility that Germany would realize the political corollaries of the Reformation never became an actuality. Indeed, reaction rather than reformation held the people.

From this time on Luther was no more the hero of the peasant class. They had been disillusioned. Their idol had fallen. A man of their own group had spoken the word

in obedience to which they had been crushed. They did not forget, and they did not forgive.

One of the most important things about the whole experience was its effect on Luther himself. He, too, was disillusioned. He, too, had suffered a change deep in his heart. From this time forth he distrusted the common people. From this time forth he believed with increasing intensity that the great and good things of life must be handed down to the common people by wise and able princes and leaders. He became a paternalist in his thinking. He did not see that the common people will respond to a great trust, and out of their own lives produce the greatest and safest leadership and in the use of power become the basis of a true and permanent stability. He gave expression to his reactionary views with his customary violence and he helped to fasten upon Germany the paternal theory of life.

We must judge a man by the standards and the possibilities of his own age. We must not utter harsh words of condemnation because of standards which had not yet become a part of the world's life. So quite candidly we will ask the question, Could Luther, living in his age and with his experience and interests, have taken another course?

When we put the matter in this way, it is difficult to deny that if Luther had tried to be both a political reformer and a religious leader he would have failed in both. It is true that he succeeded in doing one thing, simply because he did not try to do everything. He had to be true to the fundamental meaning and genius of his life. And that centered in his work as the prophet of a vital religion freed from ecclesiastical tyranny.

But when we have admitted this, a wave of poignant regret comes over us whenever we think of the crushing of the peasants with Luther's approval and at Luther's word. If he did not help them, could he not have avoided becoming one of their oppressors? The reply seems to be that his

temper and quality being what they were, he could not be neutral. The very violent and powerful energy which made him a successful reformer led to his remorseless language in this crisis. Then it is probably true that only unmistakable and emphatic action cut his movement free from the suspicion that it was a movement of lawlessness which endangered the whole social fabric. The more one studies the situation, the harder it is to see how he could have taken another path.

But it yet remains that Luther's relation to the peasants is the darkest, saddest, most tragic thing in his career. Hope was blighted in eager human hearts. The sunrise was changed to midnight for men who thought that they saw the coming of the new day. If Luther could have found a way to steady and help the peasants, the whole history of Germany might have been different.

We must frankly say that the book Luther loved had much for the peasants which he never saw or understood.

The living book is not a book whose message heads up in benevolent princes giving guidance to a people incapable of functioning in their own right. New light was indeed to break from God's Word regarding the relation of religion to the unfolding life of the people. Though he knew it not, in this regard Luther's face was turned toward the past and not toward the future.

We cannot fail to see, however, that in the larger life of the world his action at Worms was more significant than his attitude in the peasants' war. At Worms he stood forth a typical spiritual democrat before the days of democracy. At Worms he represented the rights of the individual against every encroaching power of Church and State. At Worms his face was toward the future, full of the light of the great days to come. And the world will remember Worms when the peasants' war with its sad and cruel tragedy has sunk into oblivion. But as we say this the sad and bitter faces

of the disappointed peasants come before us. And we are glad that we live in a day when we are not asked to make Luther's choice. The implications of the Gospel for the common man are now moving forth to take possession of the world.

It is a relief to turn from the peasants' war to consider the fashion in which Luther remained a man of the people to the end of his career. The fundamental, sincere, human stuff of him was never affected by his relation to princes. He remained the virile, rugged, sincere man out of the soil of his people's life, with a sense for the tang of reality and a hearty responsiveness to all the fundamental human experiences.

He was always ready to take risks and he never compromised out of personal fear. Men high in authority felt the lash of his rebuke. He was eager for the good of all the people in his land. The voice with which he spoke was always a voice which any German could understand. Because the genius of his people was alive in him, he came to a leadership which has been awarded to few men. He was an example of the power of the common life to produce a great man.

DAILY READINGS

Eighth Week, First Day

And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.—Isa. 1: 15-17.

In the eighth century B. C. Isaiah the prophet told the men of Jerusalem in unmistakable language that social wrong can shut man off from God. Jehovah turns with loathing from the prayers of unjust men. The oppressor, the man who exploits the orphans and the widow, all the strong who take

advantage of the weak, are hateful in the eyes of God. A man cannot keep true religion and ignore its social expression. The petitions of the oppressor do not reach the throne of God.

If the men who oppressed the peasants in the sixteenth century had realized the implications of such words as these, a speedy hearing would have been given to the lowly people who came to them with a list of grievances. The living book is never on the side of the oppressor. It is always on the side of the oppressed.

Eighth Week, Second Day

And I said, Hear, I pray you, ye heads of Jacob, and rulers of the house of Israel: is it not for you to know justice? ye who hate the good, and love the evil; who pluck off their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones; who also eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them, and break their bones, and chop them in pieces, as for the pot, and as flesh within the caldron. Then shall they cry unto Jehovah, but he will not answer them; yea, he will hide his face from them at that time, according as they have wrought evil in their doings.—Micah 3: 1-4.

Here is another voice lifted in the eighth century B. C. and crying out with passionate intensity against the oppressing princes who grind the poor into the dust. Micah is a prophet whose voice fairly breaks with his passionate condemnation of social injustice. He, too, declares with solemn, stern seriousness that God will not hear the prayers of the perpetrator of social wrong. Here the poor have a defender. Here the weak find a voice lifted in their behalf. Here the defenseless have a powerful advocate whose words cut like swords. And he speaks in the name of Jehovah. He speaks for the God who cares for the poor and the men and women and children who are in extreme need. The heart of this message is that God himself is a God of social passion, who hates injustice and oppression with an undying hatred.

Eighth Week, Third Day

The word of Jehovah came unto me again, saying, What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.—Ezek. 18: 1-4.

Here we come upon a passage of prophecy which opens vistas that fairly dazzle us. In Israel the sense of individuality was lost in the mass. Men felt that they were simply part of a vast entanglement in which the individual suffered for sins which he had never committed. The fathers had eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth were set on edge. Over against this the prophet puts another conception which he brings alive with God's own sanction. He speaks for God as he says, "All souls are mine. The soul that sinneth *it* shall die." A man must meet the consequences of his own sin. He does not have to meet the penalty of the sins of others. Every separate soul belongs to God, and stands on its own rights. Here is a charter of nobility for all humanity. Peasant and prince stand side by side in the light of this tremendous pronouncement. "All souls are mine"—the peasant in any land and in any age has a new light in his eye when he perceives the significance of this great word.

Eighth Week, Fourth Day

All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets.—Matt. 7: 12.

Here we have one of those sentences in whose tense power Jesus sums up a world of meaning. It has implications so far-reaching that we have not begun to fathom them. And the important thing about this golden rule of life is that it is all-inclusive. It leaves nobody out. It leaves out no per-

sonality in the universe. God himself keeps the golden rule and that is the reason why Jesus Christ came into the world to live and die and break into life again for men. And the poorest, weakest, most despised man is included in the golden rule. It opens new doors of hope for him. It calls new light of sunrise over eastern hills.

No wonder that in the age of the rediscovery of the Bible German peasants felt that rusty doors were creaking on their hinges, and preparing to open wide. When the words of Jesus are fully obeyed, there will be no oppressed and down-trodden class.

Eighth Week, Fifth Day

In that hour came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And he called to him a little child, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.—Matt. 18: 1-3.

The disciples wanted a standard of greatness in God's Kingdom. Jesus flashed back a condition of entrance into the Kingdom. The simple, childlike mind alone can be received, he declared, into the eternal Kingdom. Artificial distinctions and oppressive ambitions do not belong in that great Kingdom, and the man who causes a poor humble and defenceless one to stumble, would be better at the bottom of the sea with a millstone fastened about his neck. Like the sudden gleam of a sword sharp to do deadly execution, came the words of Jesus in condemnation of the oppressors of the little ones who have no strength to defend themselves. He would not forget them, he made their case his own.

Eighth Week, Sixth Day

Neither be ye called masters: for one is your master, even the Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall

be humbled; and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted.—Matt. 23: 10-12.

The kingliness of service as expressed by Jesus gives a man a completely new standard in respect of toil. And quite a new perspective is created about life as a man comes to realize that the great of the world are the servants of the world. "What can I get men to do for me?" was the greatest question of the old exploiting ages. "What can I do for men?" is the question where Christianity has really mastered the conscience and taken possession of the motives.

Such a message had enough energy in it to change most of the relations of princes and peasants in Germany if its meaning had been fully realized. But the eyes of many were holden, for, by a curious transposition of meaning, to a good many men the Church's use of the word servant had made it mean a man who was served. But the spirit of service throbbed and palpitated in the New Testament. Some day that spirit would make itself understood by men. Then there would be a new day for the peasants of the world.

Eighth Week, Seventh Day

But when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all the nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, and fed thee? or athirst, and gave thee drink? And when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? And when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the

King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me.—Matt. 25: 31-40.

This powerful picture in the words of Jesus of the judgment of the nations gives a great and far-reaching standard. That standard is the treatment of the poor and oppressed and needy and downcast. Their case is the case of Christ. What is done for them is done for him. Eternal issues are determined by the fashion in which you treat those who cannot help themselves.

That fine story of the converted gladiator whose only service was to carry men across a steep ford comes to our minds. One dark night he carried a child over the river. The winds and the waters raged about him. The child was strangely heavy. At last after desperate efforts he staggered up the opposite bank. Then suddenly in a burst of glory he knew that he had carried the Christ-child over the river, and after that they called him Saint Christopher (the Christ bearer).

The poor, the needy, the oppressed, those bent down by injustice, those held in hard places and in miserable conditions are upon the heart of Christ. And he puts their care upon the conscience of the world.

PERSONAL SUGGESTIONS

We have considered Luther's attitude toward the rights of the common people. We have seen something of the spirit of the Bible, especially of the spirit of Jesus, toward those who have had least opportunity. Now we come to a telling, pressing matter. What is our attitude? Is there a wall between our lives and those of common men? Do we understand everyday people, and sense their tremendous qualities? Do we know how much we can receive from them as well as how much we can be worth to them? Are we ready to stand up for them when they need our help?

CHAPTER IX

The Man, the Book, and the German Language

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

A man who was a student and a thinker, and was not without his claim to technical scholarship, sat beside his cheerful library fire, with a close friend in the chair opposite him. The electric lights had been turned off. The blaze in the open fireplace burned up brightly, sending a warm glow out over the room. The man looked out at the shelves on shelves of volumes of all sizes, lining the walls of the room on every side. A light of affection came into his eyes and he turned to his friend, "How books do talk to you," he said, "and what wonderful things they tell you!" "Yes," replied the friend, "they do talk to you if you understand their language."

It was one of the great achievements of Martin Luther that he made the Bible talk German. His was not the first translation of the Bible by means of German words. But his was the first translation which caught the living spirit of German speech, its human vigor, its honest, rugged energy, its very genius and power.

Martin Luther never forgot what he owed to the Bible. The most vital and commanding voices to which he ever listened spoke to him out of the Old Testament and the New. He wanted the living book to become the possession of living men. He wanted the living book to become the possession of German men. He knew that there was one effective and

far-reaching way. If the Bible could capture the very tang and individual quality of German speech, if it could speak through the vernacular which the German recognized as his own, with all its intimate and gripping associations, then the Bible would become indeed the possession of the German people. A wooden translation would be worse than no translation. A mere substitution of German words for the words of the text would mean little enough. The Bible must be thought in German. The Bible must be felt in German. The Bible must so deeply live in a German life that it could pour itself forth in German speech.

And the German who did the work must have a sense of all the subtle associations of words, he must have a sense of the atmosphere a word and a phrase carry with them, he must have a sense of the music of words, of their grip, their stinging energy, and their haunting power. He must be a master of words, who knew how to bend them to his purpose. He must not be a slave of words, who was the victim of the phrase which happened to come into his mind. With a great general's power he must mobilize the resources of German speech for the full and mastering expression of that rich and glowing message which lives in the Bible. The man who could do this was Martin Luther. The man who did this was Martin Luther. And the achievement had wide implications which he himself did not then know.

After the Diet of Worms, when Luther was caught away into the enforced safety of his pseudo-captivity at the Wartburg, he had hours and days and weeks which he could employ as he would. After all the terrible strain of the fight, he found himself suddenly in a place of quiet and leisure. The very emptiness of his days might have made them a dreadful experience. In the complete reaction of that time he might have sunk into depths of misanthropy and gloom. Luther was a temperamental man. No doubt he did have his times of struggle with invading moods of despondency.

But the time at the Wartburg was not a time of wasting and decaying misanthropy. It was the time when he got quite into the heart of a great achievement. He set about translating the Bible into German. He was very eager that his translation should be correct. His work had the ideals of painstaking scholarship, such as a man of his period could know, back of it and expressed in it. But he was not satisfied to be correct. He wanted more than accuracy. He wanted life. He wanted his translation to be a living organism with luminous eyes, and strong arms, and swift feet, and a voice whose penetrating, seizing, holding cadences could never be forgotten. He would seek out German people and listen to their everyday speech, until at last there leaped up fresh from the soil a phrase whose cut and strength made it a phrase of power. Not the words and phrases which people used as a substitute for thought satisfied Luther, but those words forced forth from the depth of the people's life, rich with the quality of their struggles, their hopes and their fears, and all the rugged energy of their actual life.

Luther knew Latin very well indeed when he translated the Bible. He had felt the sonorous and stately dignity of the Roman speech. He responded to the quality and type of Latin idiom and expression. He might have made a Latin Bible using German words. He might have expressed the Roman spirit using a German vocabulary. The result might have been accurate and finely wrought. It might have been a genuine achievement in which a scholar made German speech the instrument of the genius of that speech with which Rome addressed the world which it had conquered. This Latin-German Bible would never have gone to the heart of the German people. Those who read it would have respected it, but they never would have loved it.

Luther knew some Greek when he set about translating the Bible. He had a spirit sympathetic and responsive enough to sense something of the quality of that highly

wrought language made for subtle effects and delicate distinctions, that language of infinitely fine discriminations and infinitely noble artistry. Luther might have attempted a Greek Bible using German words. He might have been caught by a humanistic passion to make the Bible the Germans read a noble monument to the Greek spirit. If he had done that, a few enthusiastic men, in whom the fires of the Renaissance still burned, would have praised and prized the book. But the masses would have ignored it. He would have lost his Germans in attempting to make the Germans Greeks.

As a matter of fact Luther did neither of these things. He kept close to the German heart. He kept close to the German life. He expressed the very quality of the German spirit. He discovered resources in the German tongue unknown before. He used it as it had never been used. He conserved what was strong in it. He repudiated what was weak in it. He gathered together those elements of power in his native tongue which were capable of permanent use in resilient, forceful, dynamic speech and writing. He was one of the founders of German literature. He did more than record what he found. He infused into his work a quality which affected the nature of the tongue with which he dealt. He was one of the founders of the German language. He welded people and spirit in a speech whose direct human grip and lofty noble power no one can deny.

And this supreme literary achievement was part of his religious achievement. He did it all to get God's message to his people. No mere technical scholar could have done this work. No mere man of letters with dilettante weighing of phrases would have been capable of his achievement. Because he was a German of the Germans, because he was a Christian tingling with the vitality of his experience, because he was one of those men whom words instinctively obey, he was able to put the living book into German speech.

The spirit of Luther in this work must be the spirit of every Christian speaker and writer. It is the perpetual task of every Christian leader of every generation to make Christianity speak in the very gripping language of the men whom he would win. When the Bible does not speak in a man's vernacular it loses its power to grip him. Perpetually the old message must be told in new words, words hot with the fire of men's passion and cold with the ice of their despair, words leaping from the caldron of men's strange and wonderful and mysterious experiences, words first and last and all the time which drip with life.

There is a lesson for America in Luther's achievement. He did not try to superimpose upon Germany the forms of a foreign culture, however noble. He was contented to let the Bible speak German. He listened to the life of his people and spoke the language of their own deepest experience.

The American Christian who is true both to America and to Christianity must have a profound belief in American life. He must have a profound belief in the American spirit. And he must see that up from our deep and wonderful experiences new and living words are coming all the while. He must not let them escape and be forgotten. He must capture them and use them for the purposes of the Kingdom of God. So the life of our people and the religion of our people will develop in noble and productive harmony. So the vocabulary of our Christianity shall be kept the vocabulary of triumphant life. Men will listen to our words because the words themselves are electric with power.

DAILY READINGS

Ninth Week, First Day

Let thy lovingkindnesses also come unto me, O Jehovah,
Even thy salvation, according to thy word.
So shall I have an answer for him that reproacheth me;
For I trust in thy word.

And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth;
For I have hoped in thine ordinances.
So shall I observe thy law continually
For ever and ever.
And I shall walk at liberty;
For I have sought thy precepts.
I will also speak of thy testimonies before kings,
And shall not be put to shame.
And I will delight myself in thy commandments,
Which I have loved.

—Psalm 119: 41-47.

“The Night has a thousand eyes,
And the Day but one;
Yet the light of the bright world dies
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one;
Yet the light of a whole life dies,
When love is done.”

So sang a poet who understood that the secret of life comes with the awakening of love. This secret was known to the author of the words which we have quoted from the 119th Psalm. He speaks of law and precept and commandment. But he is not a legalist. His heart is full of love. And love has transfigured the law. He sees all God's commandments through his experience of God's love. It was so with Martin Luther after his great adventure of trust. The Bible was the book which gleamed and glowed with the message which filled his heart with joy and his life with energy. He brought more than linguistic knowledge to his work of translating. He brought the power of love.

Ninth Week, Second Day

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.
Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem; and cry unto her, that
her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned,

that she hath received of Jehovah's hand double for all her sins.

The voice of one that crieth, Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of Jehovah; make level in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the uneven shall be made level, and the rough places a plain; and the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it.—
Isa. 40: 1-5.

The great unknown prophet of the exile was himself thrilled through and through by a consciousness of the wonderful things which Jehovah was about to do. A new day was dawning. God's will was to be realized. God's glory was to be revealed. Sin was to be forgiven and good days were to come. The words of the prophet ring with the music of his joy and exalting.

Luther knew the rapture of the same experience. Something so wonderful had happened to him that he believed that it could transform the world. And the mood of joyous expectation was in his heart as he worked at translating the Bible into his own tongue. It was to be more than a book. It was to be a door through which his people would pass to glad, enfranchised life.

Ninth Week, Third Day

Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will

forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more.—Jer. 31: 31-34.

Jeremiah was the prophet of the new covenant. It was not outward; it was inward. It did not master the hand and move in toward the heart; it mastered the heart and moved outward to the hand. It was the covenant of an inner transformation which affects all the life.

Luther was the modern prophet of the new covenant. Religion had become external. In him it renewed its power of transforming the heart. And with his experience of the new covenant he became a preacher of the new covenant. To him the Bible was the book which led people into the new covenant of trust and love, and so he was eager to make it their personal possession, speaking to them in the familiar accents of their own tongue.

Ninth Week, Fourth Day

By the rivers of Babylon,
 There we sat down, yea, we wept,
 When we remembered Zion.
 Upon the willows in the midst thereof
 We hanged up our harps.
 For there they that led us captive required of us songs,
 And they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying,
 Sing us one of the songs of Zion.
 How shall we sing Jehovah's song
 In a foreign land?
 If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,
 Let my right hand forget her skill.
 Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth,
 If I remember thee not;
 If I prefer not Jerusalem
 Above my chief joy.

—Psalm 137: 1-6.

In all literature there are few more fragrant and passionate expressions of deep and loyal patriotism than these words torn from the heart of a Babylonian exile. The loyalty to one's own land and people is one of those forces which have cut deeply into the movements of history. When it is hard

and cruel and entirely selfish it is sordid and ugly enough. When it is nobly unselfish, with a passion to serve the great world and to have the nation become the most in order to serve the best, it is one of the noblest of the motives which sway mankind.

Luther was genuinely a man of his own people. He loved the land, he loved the language, his heart was full of a rich and generous loyalty. He was as deeply and thoroughly a German as any man who ever walked German soil, and he made the songs of Zion sing in German because he was a citizen of Zion as well as of his own land.

Ninth Week, Fifth Day

And when he had given him leave, Paul, standing on the stairs, beckoned with the hand unto the people; and when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them in the Hebrew language, saying,

Brethren and fathers, hear ye the defence which I now make unto you.

And when they heard that he spake unto them in the Hebrew language, they were the more quiet.—Acts 21: 40-22: 2.

Paul's own people were trying with hot hostility to hound him to his death. At a time when to most men a speech would have seemed clearly impossible Paul secured permission to address the wild and howling mob. He had a secret of magnetic address and with a telling gesture or two secured silence. Then he spoke to the people, falling into their own tongue and using the vernacular, full of a thousand common associations and memories. By every appeal which he could make through common race and language and experience, he sought to win a hearing not only for himself but for his Lord and Master.

Ninth Week, Sixth Day

I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience bearing witness with me in the Holy Spirit, that I have great

sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh: who are Israelites; whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.—Rom. 9: 1-5.

We have already quoted a great Old Testament outburst of patriotism, from the book of Psalms. Here is a great New Testament outburst of patriotism from the apostle Paul. He could not use stronger language. In his love for the people of his own race and his own nation he could fairly be glad to become an outcast from God if by that means they could be saved. In a few strong broad phrases he runs over some of the great things in the religious history of his people. What a great past they have had! And how it all lives in Paul's heart! He wants the best for his people today. He wants them to be indeed the people of God.

Luther had a temperament not unlike Paul's. Both were intense, with great gushes of noble feeling sweeping over them. And Luther loved his people as did Paul. He wanted his people to have everything God could do for them, and in giving them the Bible in German he gave them the very best gift within his reach.

Ninth Week, Seventh Day

And I heard the number of them that were sealed, a hundred and forty and four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the children of Israel. . . . After these things I saw, and behold, a great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands; and they cry with a great voice, saying,

Salvation unto our God who sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb.—Rev. 7: 4, 9, 10.

In wonderful flashlight effects the book of Revelation gives us many a suggestive picture. Here the seer sees a

great company of the redeemed. He begins with those of his own land. Every tribe is represented. A multitude of his own nation rejoices in the attainment of the riches God has in store. But a picture of this character cannot be merely a national picture. The scene extends; the horizon widens; people of every nation appear; people of every tongue arise. No man could number them; they are beyond computation, and they come from all places and all conditions. They are joined now in the unity of a common salvation, a common participation in the riches of God's great love, and they join in a great song to the God who rules, and the Saviour who gave his life for them. Here patriotism is included, but it is gathered up and transfigured in the glory of the international anthem of salvation.

PERSONAL SUGGESTIONS

For Luther everything at last found a place as a part of his religious life. His patriotism made him want the German people to have the very best which religion could do for them. Have we seen the religious significance of our patriotism? Have we seen the relation of the Bible to the deepest life of our people? Have we seen the relation of the Bible to citizenship? Are we having a share in that wonderful translation of the Bible into the vernacular which is made when we so truly live according to the principles of the Bible that the men who read our lives are unconsciously reading the Scriptures? Have we the Bible's secret so deeply in our hearts that it is sure to get upon our tongues?

CHAPTER X

The Man, the Book, and Ideals of Life

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

“That man’s religion seems to make him contract. He is getting smaller all the time.” This was the terse description of a man who had taken religion as a sort of moral bitters rather than as a food. Men do all sorts of curious things with religion. They ignore it. They have periodic attacks of interest in it. They play with it. They distort it. One of the most striking proofs of the genuine structural place of religion in the life of a man is that it succeeds in surviving in spite of the fashion in which men treat it.

A man like Phillips Brooks not only made religion commanding. He made it fascinatingly human. He made it splendidly vital. And he did this because he gave the new life in Christ a normal, sane, and wholesome chance at him. He found in religion fulness of life, and so he was able nobly to interpret it to the world.

Martin Luther found in religion a sharp weapon. It gave him a sword with which to smite superstition. It gave him a sharp blade to use against evil in Church and State. And the cutting power of that weapon was felt in all parts of Europe. But religion was vastly more than a weapon to Luther. It was a life—rich, full, and abundant. The living book had shared with him a secret of vitalizing power. His ideals were enlarged and developed. His ways of thinking about life and feeling about life, and the whole atmos-

phere of his personality, felt the transforming touch of his new experience. The rich energies of his life were released. All the varied potencies of his personality felt the push which moved them toward expression and action. The taste of life was given back its freshness. The colors of the world were given a new brightness. His youth was renewed and a sort of glow and fragrance of spring came to possess his spirit.

Luther the monk built his life about the ideal of repression. Luther the evangelical Christian built his life about an eager and spontaneous expression of his powers. Luther the monk was held to a hard and dreary round of unilluminated activity. Luther the evangelical Christian did even dull things with a resiliency of spirit, with a sense of their far-reaching significance which touched even the commonplace with a gleam of gold. Life had been a prosaic round of duties. It became a fascinating adventure, and the duties themselves shone with surprising meanings and glowed with creative enthusiasms. When Luther did the old things he did them with a new spirit, and he was all the while passing on to new things with a freshness of sight, a glowing depth of insight and a full vigor of action which gave life a tang and zest unknown before.

This does not mean that Luther had no struggles. It does not mean that he was without dull and heavy days. But it does mean that a new glad spirit was at work in his life. He was not always flying, but he had been given wings, and his spirit had many a wonderful experience of high and long and sustained flight. He knew the meaning of physical reactions. He felt the quality of heavy and weighted dullness which comes to a man after he has given himself forth with too great abandon. But the real current of his life flowed along deep and steady and strong and full. His powers were brought to rich and varied expression. There was a rhythm of vital activity about his days.

Very definitely Luther came to see that the man who trusts in the Son of God and finds the gates of life swinging open before him, is the heir of the best life has to give. The ideal Christian is not a man who does without a home. He is a man who has a great home. The echo of children's voices, all the melody of a loving and happy home life, belong to the very nature of the Christian ideal. A monastery is a place of fragmentary living, and fragmentary living is never completely Christian.

Long after Martin Luther's time Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote:

"I am owner of the sphere,
Of the seven stars and the solar year,
Of Caesar's hand, and Plato's brain,
Of Lord Christ's heart, and Shakespeare's strain."

The sense of possession, the proud consciousness of ownership was in Luther as well as in Emerson. To Luther it was the ownership of a man to whom the living Christ had given the keys of all wholesome experiences. Life was a gift of God. It was not at bottom a temptation of the devil.

So a new wave of gladness swept abroad in the wake of Luther's teaching. Pale and emaciated asceticism lost its charm and began to appear as merely bony and ugly. You could look at a flower without scenting moral poison in its fragrance. You could laugh in rich human heartiness without feeling the icy hand of a ghostly conscience reached forth to stifle your mirth.

All this does not mean that Luther underestimated life's moral problem. It does not mean that he failed to sense its ethical tragedy. Life was always a fight to him, and the foes were very real. But he believed that you could fight better with a song in your heart. He believed that you could fight better with a light in your eye. He believed that you should avoid poison. But he believed that your whole

organism—physical, mental, moral, and spiritual—should be kept in robust and vigorous health.

Luther felt himself free in the Kingdom of God and that freedom was not merely a freedom from dark and terrible pangs of conscience and devastating evils, it was a freedom to enjoy all good and noble and wholesomely human things, To him religion was not sour. It was sweet with an enticing fragrance. It was beautiful like a blooming flower.

This inner attitude never descended for Luther into a sort of cloying sweetness, as has been the case with some advocates of a rapturous religion. There was always a stern strength in his ideal of the Christian life. If, like Paul, he rejoiced in his freedom, like Paul he rejoiced, too, in being able to wear the whole armor of God. His piety was full of joy. But it was the joy of a soldier, the gladness of a brave fighting man who never turned his back upon the foe. His sunny spirit bent under heavier burdens than weighed upon any other man of the sixteenth century. He passed through conflict after conflict. He was never free from some plotting hostility. He could always find a cloud somewhere in the horizon. Sometimes the whole sky was overcast. But the sun was shining in Luther's heart. And that inner gladness made him strong to bear what would have crushed completely another man.

This was not fundamentally a matter of temperament. It was a matter of experiencing to the full the meaning of that experience of trust in Christ of which the New Testament so eloquently speaks. Luther was free from the burden which the hands of Christ had lifted. He did not have to solve the problem which had been met and mastered in the heart of Christ, when there rose a spiritual Calvary before he was lifted in the cruel pain of love upon the cross. He did not try to do again what the Son of God had done for him. And in his living trust in the Christ of the living book, he found an energy entering his soul, luminous with light, surg-

ing with vitality, rich in power. The secret of Luther is the secret of the Book of Life.

When you follow this sturdy German through the winding ways of his career, you see many an ideal emerge. Sometimes he is being loyal to some tradition stately and old; sometimes he is making his way into paths untried and new; and back of his conservatism and back of his radical activities there is his one creative experience of the joyous energizing love of God. He meets life with a mastering consciousness of the nearness of the living Christ. He does not meet it with a hard and rigid set of rules. That living spirit of the Master makes him able to meet the hour of sacrifice with unhesitating strength. It enables him to enjoy God's gifts with unalloyed pleasure; it refines his gladness; it ennobles his pain. And so his own commanding Christian vitality becomes one of his best gifts to the world.

DAILY READINGS

Tenth Week, First Day

When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt. The more the prophets called them, the more they went from them: they sacrificed unto the Baalim, and burned incense to graven images. Yet I taught Ephraim to walk; I took them on my arms; but they knew not that I healed them. I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love; and I was to them as they that lift up the yoke on their jaws; and I laid food before them.—Hos. 11: 1-4.

It is a wonderfully human God whom Hosea portrays in these words. He comes close to men, with a loving tenderness which makes him infinitely winsome. You see him caring for Israel as a mother cares for her children.

When Luther advanced beyond that legal religion which had chained him, to the peace of a great trust, he discovered the human God. And he saw life and its relations in a new and more genial perspective. He had worshipped a grim

and austere celestial tyrant. Now he looked up to a God of amazingly tender friendliness who took the burden of humanity upon his own heart. Luther's legal deity had never possessed such power of working moral transformations as the God to whom he gave his heart in an abandon of devotion. Now he knew what it was to experience the love of God and it made a new man of him.

Tenth Week, Second Day

Jehovah is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures;
He leadeth me beside still waters.
He restoreth my soul:
He guideth me in the paths of righteousness for his
name's sake.

—Psalm 23: 1-3.

Some things we know so well that we do not know them at all. We are so familiar with them that we have forgotten what they are like. Gilbert Chesterton once observed in his clever way that if you look at a thing nine hundred and ninety-nine times you are perfectly safe. But if you look at it the thousandth time there is danger that you may see it. We need to take the thousandth look at the twenty-third Psalm. Then we will discover that the God it tells about is not the deity of a stately solemn ritual. He is not the God of austere mental manipulations which show the deity in an icy cloud of formulas about his attributes. He is the God of the tender touch. You do not know many things about the shepherd God of the twenty-third Psalm, as the poem sings about him. But you do know that he will take care of you; you do know that he loves to make you glad.

Luther learned to know the God of the twenty-third Psalm. He knew a great deal about God which that Psalm does not tell. But he never forgot that tender compassion which makes God a friend, to whom we can go for shelter in the midst of life. If you have a shepherd God, you have to be a shep-

herd, too, and so what God is determines what your life shall be.

Tenth Week, Third Day

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them: and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it.—Gen. 1: 26-28.

This is a memorable picture of the friendly God creating and blessing man. You see the deepest order of nature as the order of God's will, and you fairly sense the smile of God as he looks upon his creatures.

Luther never underestimated the tragedy of sin. He knew what a black and blighting thing it is. But he knew that there is a greater power in the world than sin. He knew that the redeeming love of God had made a way for man back to the smile of the Creator and he knew that man's best work is done in the consciousness of the divine favor. Not as a cowering slave in an unfriendly universe, but as a son and heir in his father's house, does man come to his real stature and reach his true qualities of life.

Tenth Week, Fourth Day

And there were shepherds in the same country abiding in the field, and keeping watch by night over their flock. And an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people: for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.—Luke 2: 8-11.

If a dark and lowering cloud of gloom is heavy upon you, you cannot understand the Christmas joy. If a hard and

rigid sense of guilt lays its chains upon your spirit, you cannot sing the Christmas songs. And your dull misanthropy goes out all over your life. There is blackness and gloom everywhere. Life cannot be radiant for you if you have an alien soul. Luther knew the tragedy of all this. And he knew the glory of coming out of it. The Saviour became in a definitely personal sense his Saviour. Then loads vanished. His head was lifted. The Christmas joy was put in his heart to remain through all seasons.

And his whole view of life caught the quality of triumph. His ideals shone with the gold of his own experiences. The religion of the angel's friendly announcement became his own, and through him it became the possession of a multitude. Old words shone with a great luster, because at last he knew their meaning.

Tenth Week, Fifth Day

A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho; and he fell among robbers, who both stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. . . . A certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he was moved with compassion, and came to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring on them oil and wine; and he set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. —Luke 10: 30, 33, 34.

The journey from sacerdotal into vital religion involved many things. One was a new sense of all the human values. The priest in the parable of the good Samaritan passed by as far away as possible. He had ecclesiastical authority. He had command of a great ritual. But he did not have a human heart. The new life which came to Luther made him every day more like the good Samaritan and less like the priest. The fountains of compassion in his life were set flowing. A fresh contact with reality meant a freshening and a humanizing of his ideals of life all the way through.

Tenth Week, Sixth Day

And they were bringing unto him also their babes, that he should touch them: but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, saying, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for to such belongeth the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein.—Luke 18: 15-17.

In a unique sense Christianity is the religion of happy childhood. It considers childhood and makes a place for it. Christianity, like its founder, always has open arms for the little children.

Luther's attitude toward childhood, his tender and whimsical understanding of his own children, his gay and bright conceits as he wrote them letters, and all his fashion of summoning the child in himself back, that he might be a child with them, constitute one of the happiest and most attractive aspects of his life. The contrast between the lonely monk plodding his slavish legal way and the hearty, eager father telling a child's story to make heaven real, is one of the most revealing contrasts in Luther's career. And we must not forget that it was the new life which enabled him to be a happy father.

Tenth Week, Seventh Day

What man of you, having a hundred sheep, and having lost one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and his neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that even so there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine righteous persons, who need no repentance.—Luke 15: 4-7.

If you have a God who angrily turns away when in the far mountains he hears the cry of the lost, this is a dark and

hopeless world. If you have a God who at cost of pain and suffering seeks the lost, a new sure hope rises above the horizon to shine forever. The possession of a friendly, seeking God is the greatest asset of religion. And this was the God whom Luther found. After that great discovery, religion was no more a ritual. It was no more an active attempt to work passage to the great haven. It was a personal relation of trust in a personally loving God, who was seen perpetually through the loving, suffering face of Christ. And life was the application of the spirit of this new relation to every aspect of human experience. To suffuse life with the meaning of the new life, that was the only satisfying ideal.

PERSONAL SUGGESTIONS

Luther entered into the human aspects of religion. It had a new bright winsomeness as he interpreted it to the world. Is our religion attractive? Do we illustrate the compelling, winning qualities of our faith? Has our ideal of the Christian life caught the glow of such a relationship of loving trust in God, that we see all men with a new loving heartiness? Have little children the place in our thought which they possessed in the thought of the Master? Do men feel nearer to a God of human friendliness because of the fashion in which our lives interpret God to them?

CHAPTER XI

The Living Age

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

In a wonderful stanza of "The Scholar Gypsy" Matthew Arnold wrote:

"Oh, born in days when wits were fresh and clear,
And life ran gayly as the sparkling Thames;
Before the strange disease of modern life,
With its sick hurry, its divided aims,
Its heads o'ertaxed, its palsied hearts, was rife,—
Fly hence, our contact fear!
Still fly, plunge deeper in the bowering wood!
Averse, as Dido did with gesture stern
From her false friend's approach in Hades turn,
Wave us away, and keep thy solitude!"

One need not share Matthew Arnold's pessimism about the nineteenth century in order to believe that there are differences in ages. Some ages are dull and drowsy, without initiative and quite without creative energy. Some are red with a heart-broken tragedy which the world can never forget. Some are gladly and magnetically and vividly alive. The sixteenth century ranks among the most vital ages of all the world.

The century came in the wake of the voyages of Columbus, and the new geography with its enlarging horizons was typical of the quality of the age's life. The body of man moved over long ocean trails and made its pathways in new lands.

The mind of man pressed out on its own adventure, back to rediscover the past, and on to make an intellectual future large and full for mankind. The soul of man moved out on lofty wing, and nobly flying sang from the spiritual heights. The age was full of interest and full of vital events.

No serious historian could credit to Martin Luther a monopoly in dealing with life-giving influences in the sixteenth century. And no historian with an adequate appraisal of the deepest things in the life of the age would deny to Luther a place of commanding significance. When Gladstone died Sir William Robertson Nicoll wrote in the *British Weekly* that the great statesman had so lived and worked as to help to keep the soul alive in England. Luther did that for Germany. In some genuine measure he did it for Europe.

The great discoveries might easily have become a tragic source of decadence. Spain, drunk with her magnificent imported treasures, did strut with vast pretense upon the stage of Europe for awhile, only to stagger away to be a second-rate power in all the days which followed. Material possessions do not necessarily mean enlargement of life. Wealth unassimilated by the conscience, treasures unmastered by moral power, leave men and nations like a richly decorated vessel with no contents. Or, even worse, the vessel contains that which has become a mass of decay.

Rudolph Eucken once wrote, in wiser and more far-sighted days, of the inner bankruptcy of a great material civilization. In truth every added material resource of the world must be mastered and controlled by moral and spiritual forces in order to secure the safety of the world. If mankind is to be more than a well-fed beast, the soul must be kept upon the throne.

Here Luther was of the most tremendous service. While ships were sailing uncharted seas, while the world was moving out into a new commerce, while nations like England

were rising to a new and far-flung strength, Luther was keeping the soul upon the throne. The new life of which he was a prophet was such a powerful thing that it held its own while mankind was rubbing its eyes as the world expanded in its very presence to a size undreamed of before. It was a remarkable service of Luther that, in an age when the world was growing by leaps and bounds, he kept the soul in advance of the growing world. In this way Luther's discovery of God is more significant than Columbus's discovery of America. In fact the only safe way to discover a new continent is to rediscover God at the same time. Luther was of the same powerful build of personality as Magellan and the great seafarers of the age. He, too, sailed unknown seas and he, too, made strange ports. And his spiritual explorations are the supreme legacy from the sixteenth century.

The vital quality of the period of Luther is also seen in the realm of the intellect. The fires of the Renaissance were still burning. That prince of humanists, Erasmus, was still alive. The apostles of the brilliant and resourceful mind themselves believed that they had a gospel for the world. Here, too, there was need of supplement. The glorious freedom of the uncharted mind does not serve the prolonged well-being of the world. The Renaissance in Italy, which had been curiously without ethical passion, had illustrated the fashion in which good taste can be united with bad morals and a mental awakening may leave the conscience heavily slumbering. The fact is that a brilliant mind is more a liability than an asset, unless that mind is mastered and controlled by moral and spiritual purpose. Mephistopheles may be more attractive than Satan, but after all society is not advanced by making the devil attractive. And a man with a mind alive and alert as the mind of a young god and a will poisoned by all sorts of selfishness and evil is more dangerous than a dull and sodden sort of a man whose brutality is unrelieved by fascinating mental brilliancy. Some force was

needed in the sixteenth century to lift the very mental life of the age to its highest moral and spiritual potency. Even humanists like Erasmus who had a profoundly serious purpose could not do the great thing which needed to be done. They lacked in depth and richness of inner life. Erasmus thought he would laugh the evils of the age out of court. He did yeoman's service, but the situation needed something more than the graceful thrust of a satirist's pen. Humanism was as beautiful as shimmering moonlight. But only burning sunlight can dry up miasmatic swamps. And what humanism could not do Luther did. He came with the awful rush and roar of an avalanche and many refined spirits were so bewildered by the noise and confusion that they could not see the service. But only a moral and spiritual avalanche could do the destructive work which needed to be done before the great constructive work could be achieved. The confused and nervous helplessness of Melancthon after Luther's death illustrates the futility of humanism to deal alone with the great crisis. For it was where he was a humanist that Melancthon was weakest and where he was a part of Luther's titanic movement that he was most strong.

Luther changed an age of intellectual keenness and awakening taste into an age of moral and spiritual power. The mind came to fuller vigor and deeper insight under the influence of that new experience of contact with the living God of which Luther was the prophet. Humanism meant new ideas; the Reformation meant new life.

The misunderstanding between Luther and Erasmus was natural enough. Erasmus was an apostle of clearness and light (not exactly "sweetness and light," for his words were often swords and his light could burn), who had never felt his soul torn by despair or lifted to heights of victory by the present power of God. Luther had a mind—and a wonderful mind it was. But, first and most important of all, Luther had an experience. The new life in Christ dominated him.

His mind was the servant and the instrument of this overwhelming vitality. It was inevitable that Erasmus would seem pale and anemic and calculating to Luther. It was inevitable that Luther would seem hectic and overwrought and brutal to Erasmus. Each man served his generation. But without the titanic impact of Luther and his dynamic religious experience, there would have been no such new day of moral and spiritual power as came to the world.

We may say, then, that if the sixteenth century was a living age, its profoundest direction and its noblest inspiration came from the movement which we associate with the name of Martin Luther. And we must remember that the leader was not the only man who had an evangelical Christian experience. What had happened to Luther happened in multitudes. The fire blazed from heart to heart. Men everywhere found firsthand a trusting and renewing contact with the living God. He came to dwell in their hearts. The divine presence in human life was the secret of the greatest things in this living age.

DAILY READINGS

Eleventh Week, First Day

Now Jehovah said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.—Gen. 12: 1-3.

Dr. George Matheson once penned a luminous study of Abraham. He made you feel the pulse of new desire and generous purpose which sent the patriarch away on his long wanderings. You came close to the living energy which pushed the young man of long ago out into a far world into which he might build his life in effective serving power.

There is always a vital man back of a vital movement and there are always vital men back of a living age. The new pulse-beat of aspiration in the individual man, the urge of a purpose and a motive unknown before, the summons of beckoning ideals, bring the age of energy and achievement into being. Multitudes of young man have had the heart of the experience which the book of Genesis ascribes to the far-off patriarch. They have felt drawn to new fields where they were to achieve for God and men. And as they obeyed the inner summons they were the heralds of new life for the world.

Eleventh Week, Second Day

So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom. And all the earth sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart. And they brought every man his tribute, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and raiment, and armor, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year.—I Kings 10: 23-25.

Alfred Noyes, in one of his wonderfully melodious poems, "Crimson Sails," sings:

"But Salomon sacked the sunset
Wherever his black ships rolled,
He rolled it up like a crimson cloth,
And crammed it into his hold. . . .
His masts were Lebanon cedars,
His sheets were singing blue,
But that was never the reason why,
He stuffed his hold with the sunset sky!
The kings could cut their cedars,
And sail from Ophir, too;
But Salomon packed his heart with dreams,
And all the dreams were true."

The brilliant court and the mental power of Solomon fascinated all the East. His reign became one of the vivid, memor-

able traditions of the world. You have a sense of amazing energy, of wonderful buildings wrought by men's hands, of wonderful achievements of the mind, as you read about Solomon's reign. His age was alive with intense, active vigor. But the secret of permanency was not in the vitality of that age. It contained seeds of decay and death. Oppression and the heavy hand of power crushing the strength out of the weak, lay invisible behind the splendor. So Solomon's reign was a sunset and not a sunrise.

The glory of Spain in the sixteenth century, like the glory of Solomon, was not a glory which promised good things for the future. Spain's energy was not the power of a great beginning. It was the flash of glory marking a climax of power.

Eleventh Week, Third Day

O give thanks unto Jehovah; for he is good;
 For his lovingkindness endureth for ever.
 Let the redeemed of Jehovah say so,
 Whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the adversary,
 And gathered out of the lands,
 From the east and from the west,
 From the north and from the south. —Psalm 107: 1-3.

A certain singing joyousness is one of the characteristics of an age of complete vitality. And vital movements have a way of breaking into song. Luther's great hymn "A mighty fortress is our God" represents an essential aspect of the strength of the whole movement. Something so wonderful had happened that men could not be content with talking about it. They had to sing about it. And that mood of rapturous singing sent them forth to win more victories.

So it was in the eighteenth century, when Charles Wesley sang the most vital movement of the age into hearts it would have reached in no other way. The lyric praise of the 107th Psalm has the secret of propulsion and power in it.

Eleventh Week, Fourth Day

My soul doth magnify the Lord,
 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
 For he hath looked upon the low estate of his handmaid:
 For behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me
 blessed.

For he that is mighty hath done to me great things;
 And holy is his name.

And his mercy is unto generations and generations
 On them that fear him.

—Luke 1: 46-50.

The song of joy sung by Mary rings with the rapture of the better days to come. The past may be dark—the future is full of light. Old days may be full of evil—new days are to be full of good. And she is to have a wonderful share in the great things which God will do for the world.

Thomas Carlyle cried out in a darkly pessimistic mood, "God does nothing. He does nothing." While a man is in that mood he can be a great destructive critic, but he cannot be a great constructive force. But when he believes with Mary that God is just about to do the most amazing and wonderful things, his very attitude puts promise of power into his own life.

The Reformation filled the world with new expectations. It taught men to look forward. It helped them to believe in the days to come. It built joyous expectation into the very lives of men.

Eleventh Week, Fifth Day

And Levi made him a great feast in his house: and there was a great multitude of publicans and of others that were sitting at meat with them. And the Pharisees and their scribes murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with the publicans and sinners? And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are in health have no need of a physician; but they that are sick. I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.—Luke 5: 29-32.

A movement of the largest and most potent effect must be

able to make weak men strong and to make bad men good. As we watch Jesus moving about in the world we see him doing this very thing. And the ages when Christianity has functioned according to its true nature have been ages when moral and spiritual transformations were wrought on every hand. The one who could make men over again brought to the world the promise of vitality almost beyond belief.

You see the gripping, transforming energy of Christianity at work in the sixteenth century. Luther is the prophet of a dynamic religion. It has changed him. It changes other men. It goes to a feast with the wicked and leaves the good. It solves the problems of sinners by making them righteous. And thus it makes a great contribution to the actual life of the age.

Eleventh Week, Sixth Day

And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus, who hath been crucified. He is not here; for he is risen, even as he said. . . . And they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring his disciples word. And behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail.—Matt. 28: 5, 6, 8, 9.

“I cannot believe in life, I can only believe in death.” So cried a mother in anguish as she mourned the loss of an only son. Her pastor read over to her some of the great passages in the gospels telling of the Resurrection. Then he said: “After that I cannot believe in death, I can only believe in life.”

The new life in Christ has a basis of facts. It wings to far heights, but it takes its flight from the solid ground. The Reformation was not an experience which was a substitute for facts. It was an experience based upon facts and producing other facts. The living Christ produced life in the world. And the hearty faith in the Resurrection released energies which could have been set free in no other way.

Only a God who can speak through facts can vitalize the world. The Christ who is stronger than death can awaken new life in men. In the long run the religion of the unconquered tomb becomes the religion of the uninspired life. Matthew Arnold could keep his noble purpose while he sang of the lone Syrian grave where the body of Christ still lay. But the very firmness of his own ethical fiber was the gift to him of those who believed what he found it impossible to accept. The race's vital interests are perpetually bound up with the empty tomb.

Eleventh Week, Seventh Day

Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.—John 14: 1, 2.

Elizabeth Stuart Phelps in her "Chapters from a Life" tells how, when the Civil War had harvested death in all the fields of the nation, she longed to say an interpreting word to those who had seen fair youth snuffed out and who sat in a terrible silence. She wrote "The Gates Ajar" to make the life to come more real and human to sad hearts.

The same problem is being lifted anew by the terrible sacrifices of the present war. The word immortality is a word men and women must pronounce if they are to be saved from despair. And Jesus Christ alone pronounces that word with complete authenticity.

Christians of the sixteenth century faced every evil with eyes which were glad because they saw towers of safety beyond the valley of death. Their activity had a high and commanding vitality because they believed in immortality.

PERSONAL SUGGESTIONS

"I thought I was alive, but I am only making motions." So said an eager girl at a student conference, where a power-

ful address had just been given on "Life Triumphant." The study of life in any age brings home to us the question of the life in our own hearts. Are we alive? Do we want to be alive? Are we willing to face the responsibilities of actually living?

CHAPTER XII

The Living Book and Our Age

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

“Beat down that beetling mountain,
And raise yon jutting cape.
A world is on the anvil:
Now smite it into shape.
Whence comes that iron music
Whose sound is heard afar?
The hammers of the world smiths
Are beating out a star.”

These words have the bite and power of an energetic age in them. They express the very quality of our time. Tremendous things are happening all the while. It is an age of destroying. It is an age of building. Sometimes it is hard to tell whether the destructive or the constructive forces are the more powerful. Nature is being enlarged. Men are being organized for stupendous tasks. And in the midst of all this heaving motion of a vastly enlarging material civilization, the trumpets blow and all men's mighty resources are brought to bear upon the business of war. Conflicting ideals of life are fighting to the death and are using every material resource to aid them. Far-flung battle lines, amazing heroism, awful atrocities, and the long roar of the terrible guns fill the mind of the world.

Does the living book have a message to this strange, brilliant, terrible age? Are the voices which speak from that book mighty enough to be heard above the noise of the buzz-

ing wheels of our industry and the bursting shells of battle? Does that book which was the most vital influence in the sixteenth century have the secret which is needed by ours?

When we try to appraise the relation of the Bible to men who are now living and thinking and working and fighting, we at once confront the intellectual revolution and the changes it has wrought in respect of Bible study as of many other things. Under the microscope of scientific scholarship the documents which make up the Old Testament and the New have been subjected to such scrutiny in the last fifty years as they never met in previous days. As a result we know more about the Bible than we ever knew before. We have had to change our views about some things. In matters of date and authorship there have been revolutionary changes in men's views regarding much of the material which we find in the biblical books. How does this affect the power of the Bible to speak the great word to men? How does it affect the moral and spiritual authority of the Bible?

The reply is that if we have come to have a vital conception of the Bible, its power remains, in spite of all the changes brought about by a brilliant critical scholarship whose legitimate limits we recognize. In fact, the Bible has become vastly more human and in many a spot vastly more gripping, since we see in a new way the fashion in which particular passages came leaping right out of the life and experience of their time.

Sir William Robertson Nicoll wrote a fine book called "The Church's One Foundation," in which he declared in his memorable and powerful way that the central strength of the Bible, its power to grip the conscience and life of men as it speaks through the person and work of Christ, remains firm and true. The fundamental principles involved were put as clearly as anywhere, in a little book by Dr. Robert William Dale, entitled "The Living Christ and the Four Gospels." Dr. Dale developed three positions. First: the

portrait of Christ in the gospels has an inherent power to grip and master men. However that portrait was made, whoever and whatever the men and methods employed, in the presence of that portrait, the response of our own mind and heart tells us that we have come upon the supreme moral and spiritual asset of the race. Coleridge put the same principle in the phrase, "The Bible finds me."

Second: Dr. Dale declares that the man who takes the gospels seriously and surrenders his life in trusting obedience to the One who walks in triumph through their pages, comes to have a telling and out-reaching experience. As he accepts Jesus Christ, the great Master comes into his own life. He walks right out of the gospels into the heart of the man who accepts him. He ceases to be merely the Christ of history; he becomes also the Christ of experience. Now the man has an inner source of certainty which criticism cannot touch. Like the blind man whom Jesus healed he can say, "Whereas I was blind, now I see." He has immediate contact in experience with the ultimate certainty of the world.

Third: This individual experience of life made over by the inner action of the living Christ has been happening to men for ages. Every individual experience is confirmed by the multitudes of men who, in all these succeeding generations, have had the same contact with the reality of Christ's work in the soul, and the same securing of certainty through a life renewed by his power. The social reenforcement of individual experience builds it into immovable strength.

Harold Begbie's books, "Twice Born Men," "Souls in Action," and "The Ordinary Man and the Extraordinary Thing," put what is essentially the same argument in the form of a succession of gripping tales of men and women whose lives have been transformed by the power of Christ.

It all comes at last to this: Human life is a lock, Jesus Christ is the key. The key fits the lock and opens the door to new life. This is the final and unanswerable argument for

the validity of the message which issues from the living book.

It is unaffected by waves of critical investigation. It is the solid basis for certainty amidst changing views.

Now what can be said of the relation of this living book to a busy industrial age? When belts and wheels and machinery of amazing intricacy and efficient organization of physical and personal forces are the outstanding matters, can that ancient vital book which cries from deep in the conscience and the heart of humanity get a hearing?

Years ago in one of his few pessimistic moods, Ralph Waldo Emerson, sensing the onrushing forces of a great material age, cried out, "Things are in the saddle and ride mankind." And often it does seem as if the machines are making men in their own image, rather than the men using the machines for personal ends. Dr. Jowett, of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, in an after-dinner speech once characterized New York City in his deft and effective way by quoting a passage of Scripture. These were the words of the quotation: "The spirit of the living creature is in the wheels." He had seen how omnipresent the wheels are in the life of the big town. He felt the tragedy of a world where things are attempting to rule the spirit.

Is the voice of the Bible quite drowned out in an age like this? Are the big strident voices so powerful that they leave no place for the still small voice?

The first answer is a matter of great importance. Human nature is structurally so constituted that a man cannot be a mere machine and be contented. He cannot be a mere luxurious, brainy animal and be contented. He cannot rest in the bed of luxury he makes for himself. A voice cries out in his soul which only a voice from the vaulted heaven can answer. The nature of man cries for something which our virile efficient age cannot give. And that something lies waiting in the message of the Bible.

The second answer is that the type of life built about material efficiency and power alone has seeds of decay in it. You cannot organize the human stuff about inhuman ideals. And mere machine ideals are inhuman. So unless higher forces come in, the disintegrating elements tear the life apart. To be efficient you must be more than efficient. And this organizing motive which can enable man to use a machine without becoming a machine is found in that life of religion of which the Bible is the instrument. Because it has the vital secret our age must have, the Bible is still the living book.

But what about the war? All the influence of the living book has not prevented a vast and terrible reign of death in the world. Is not the Bible discredited by the sight of Christian nations leaping at each other's throats? Here the truth must be spoken quite simply and candidly. No one can claim for a moment that the obeying of the Bible caused this war. No one can claim for a moment that the enthronement of the spirit of the Bible in men's hearts caused the holocaust. On the contrary, this war would have been impossible had the deepest message of the Bible been the dominant force in the life of that nation which broke the peace with an astounded and unprepared world. The whole dream of Titanic world-mastery was based upon a repudiation of every essential feature of the message of the New Testament. And that dream caused war.

Then this thing must be said: The force to resist malignant evil, the force to fight for the freedom of the world, the force to pay the last price of sacrifice to save men from brutal autocracy, the spiritual capital of the fighters for the future of the safety of the world, is in no small measure the gift of the Bible to the world. The spiritual vision which hovers over the eyes of nations ready to meet the stern and terrible demand of the hour, is essentially a vision which has come to them from that civilization in which the Bible is an element of unique and far-reaching power.

Another word must be added. After the war you cannot rebuild the world in safety or wisdom without the Bible. Only on the basis of the New Testament principles is there possibility of permanent peace. Only men with the vital energy of the New Testament type of idealism pushing them on can be trusted to remake the fabric of national and international relationships. And only men with the new life lifting them to their fullest power can be trusted to maintain the level of the world's civilization.

DAILY READINGS

Twelfth Week, First Day

Upon this many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Jesus said therefore unto the twelve, Would ye also go away? Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.—John 6: 66-68.

The members of a class which was studying the life of Christ were attending a session near the close of the course. The teacher asked each member of the class to write his answer to the question, Why do you believe in Christ? Here are some of the answers: "I believe in Christ because he gives me such an interpretation of life as I find nowhere else." "I believe in Christ because his life appeals to me as does no other." "I believe in Christ because he helps me to be stronger than my own desires." "I believe in Christ because he reenforces all my virtues and fights all my vices." "I believe in Christ because his friendship has given me citizenship in a new world." "I believe in Christ because he has delivered me from my besetting sin." Every man appealed to his experience in thinking and living and to the contribution which Jesus Christ had made. It was an amplification of Peter's declaration, warm with his own experience: "Thou hast the

words of eternal life." So Luther found it in the sixteenth century. So we may find it today.

Twelfth Week, Second Day

And he came forth and saw a great multitude, and he had compassion on them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things. And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, The place is desert, and the day is now far spent; send them away, that they may go into the country and villages round about, and buy themselves somewhat to eat. But he answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred shillings' worth of bread, and give them to eat? And he saith unto them, How many loaves have ye?—Mark 6: 34-38.

A young man greatly troubled by doubts once went to see Phillips Brooks. The great Boston preacher listened with friendly sympathy to his story and then asked him to attend Trinity Church the next Sunday morning. On that day Dr. Brooks preached on the text, "How many loaves have ye?" He told the story of the feeding of the five thousand. When the disciples used what they had, it was made equal to the entire need of the occasion. Then he declared that the principle involved had a wide application. When we build upon what we are sure of, it grows into more. A man does not live by his doubts. He lives by his beliefs. Let him discover what things he can depend upon and live by them. Then they will grow into more and more. And he will have the positive rich foundation of belief which he needs.

Frederick W. Robertson, who had a great fight for his faith, felt at one time as if everything were disappearing. But at the worst he was sure that it is better to love than to hate, better to be noble than ignoble, and as he lived in the light of these undisputable truths, at last the great continent of his faith, which had been sinking beneath the sea, emerged

again. He received back more than all which he thought he was about to lose. "How many loaves have ye?" is a notable question for the doubter in this transitional age.

Twelfth Week, Third Day

And he goeth up into the mountain, and calleth unto him whom he himself would; and they went unto him. And he appointed twelve, that they might be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach.—Mark 3: 13, 14.

The twelve disciples reached certainty and assurance not by talking about Jesus or arguing concerning his person, but by living with him. Companionship with Jesus answered their questions. To live with him in ethical and spiritual sympathy was to have all doubts laid low.

The Bible gave its message to Luther because he was ready to open his life to its meaning. The living book is always ready to speak convincingly to those who will receive it into a sympathetic companionship. A man may know a great deal about the Bible and be a man who is unmoved by its claims. But if it ever enters the place of inner sympathy, if it is given the wide-open door of friendly welcome, it will master the man and reduce his hesitations and doubts to impotency. Dr. Henry van Dyke has called our time an age of doubt. It is the sort of doubt which is dissolved if, like the disciples, we become companions of the Master, and then see clearly the meaning of what has been revealed to us in that companionship.

Twelfth Week, Fourth Day

And Jesus uttered a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. And the veil of the temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom. And when the centurion, who stood by over against him, saw that he so gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.—Mark 15: 37-39.

The centurion saw Jesus die. And deep from his heart came the great tribute—only God could die like that. Not

the centurion alone has been mastered by that death which is like no other death in all the world. The hours on the cross have cut their way into the very conscience and heart of humanity. You feel that incidental things are being hurled aside and that you stand in the presence of that reality which speaks with entire authenticity and mastery, as you come to the hour of sympathetic apprehension of the experience on the cross. The men who really see Calvary are never the same men afterward. Many of the difficulties of the age seem incidental when you have had that hour of understanding.

Twelfth Week, Fifth Day

If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself.—John 7: 17.

Our age is very eager to find a test for truth. Here is a test given by Jesus himself. It emerges from the very heart of that account of Jesus which is given in the living book. The way to know, says Jesus in a wonderful epigram, is to do. It is the pragmatic test put in simple and graphic words. You can think and doubt. You can argue and doubt. But the hour of illuminated activity is the hour of knowledge. If you put Jesus Christ in command of your life, you will discover for a certainty whether he has the right to be the commander. The experience of his leadership will answer all questions you can ask as to his right to lead.

You can argue long and without decision about the merits of the captain of a team. But when you see him conducting his team through a hard-fought game, some questions are answered. And if you are one of the team and again and again you experience the power of his effective leadership, criticism becomes futile. Not the men on the

bleachers but the men in the game must answer the great questions about Jesus Christ.

Twelfth Week, Sixth Day

Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself.—John 12: 31, 32.

We know how amazingly the uplifted Christ has spoken to the world century after century. We have seen in particular how he spoke to Luther and through him to his age. To explain Christ you must explain the influences which have gone out from him. And that means a recognition that the form on Calvary has become the supreme moral and spiritual renewer of the world.

An age which has a cross always has new eyes to see the cross. And for that reason our age is turning with new understanding to behold Golgotha. Upon the battlefields of the world men have met realities which have taken the glamor and fascination from many experiences, and have lifted the cross in an amazing isolation of lofty power. With the authority of agony speaking across the ages to agony, and heartbreak making its pang known to other broken hearts, the Christ of Golgotha is drawing men to him today.

Twelfth Week, Seventh Day

Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work.—II Tim. 3: 16, 17.

This is Paul's putting of the pragmatic test. You are to measure inspiration by profitableness. That which comes from God profits man. The full revelation of God makes the complete man.

The case for the Bible really rests here. The message which comes from the living book saves men from disin-

tegrating forces and leads them toward the complete life. And their completeness will be measured exactly by the fulness with which they appropriate that which the Bible brings. "It takes the whole message of the whole Bible to make a whole Christian."

Other ideals of life are fragmentary. Other energies lack final dynamic. Confronted by the test of life, the Bible emerges triumphant.

Our age has learned to turn from incidental tests to the great test. It has given a new sympathetic study to many a religion. It has followed with a new friendliness the long tale of human struggles along the way of life. And out of it all has come the knowledge that the Bible brings to men that which can be found nowhere else. The Bible, like the Sabbath, was made for man. In its word the whole outreach of his struggling life is met and satisfied. The One Complete Man speaks through the Bible to the world. And the contagion of completeness goes out from Him perpetually.

PERSONAL SUGGESTIONS

No one else can put the great test for me. Am I willing to enter the laboratory and try the experiment for myself? Am I willing to begin obeying the behests of Christ, that in the hour of illumined obedience I may discover the extent of his right to command? Our age has many confusions, but in spite of them all the man who is willing to do is the man who will know.

CHAPTER XIII

The Living Book and Democracy

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK

Two men were having a vigorous argument about the Reformation and its influence. "Martin Luther was one of the founders of democracy," declared the first. The second replied hotly, "Luther depended upon princes, distrusted the common people, and was one of the fathers of the Prussian conception of autocracy." A friend with a wide and diversified range of knowledge, and a habit of careful thought, had been listening to the rather tempestuous discussion. Now he spoke in a quiet, judicial tone which somehow carried a sense of weight and dependableness: "Luther's action at Worms put one individual over against the organized political and ecclesiastical life of the period. That insistence on the right of the individual to be true to his deepest life against all organized power had the very genius of democracy in it. In that sense we may say that Luther was a democrat, before the day of democrats. Life was not a political matter to Luther, however. And he was not a man of political leadership. When the peasants' war forced his hand, his word helped to crush the peasants. As years wore on he did distrust the common people more and more. He did believe more and more in a benevolent paternalism. In this sense his influence came to be registered against those currents moving toward democracy, when they began to be felt in the world."

If this sums up Luther's attitude toward what grew to

be democracy, we want to ask a deeper question. What about the book which was Luther's great inspiration? What about that literature where he found the fire which came to glow so powerfully in his own heart? What is the relation of the living book to democracy?

Few questions could be more vital than these to the people who are alive in the world today. The world is being made into a democratic world. To what degree has the Bible a share in the process, and what interpretation and guidance can it offer as the endeavor goes forward?

By democracy we mean the movement to give to every individual in the world the fullest and freest life which is consistent with the common good. It sees life from the standpoint of the individual. But it does not forget that there is more than one individual to be considered. Anarchy asks so much liberty for every man that society is disintegrated, and in his wild self-assertion the individual loses infinitely more than he gains. Tyranny makes the state so powerful and all-inclusive that the individual is crushed. Democracy, seeking the valuable element in each extreme, seeks to keep both the individual and the common good in mind. So life increases in orderly and organized quality at the very time when the individual emerges into fuller and freer and more creative life.

Now what is the relation to such ideals as these of the experience and of the principles seen in the deepest life reflected in the Bible?

In the first place, the Bible is a great literature of individuals. The big things happen in particular lives. Then they become the possession of the city, the tribe, and the nation. Abraham and Moses are illustrations of the biblical conception that the great movements go out from an individual center. Even when the prophetic message has to do almost entirely with the people as a group, as in the case of Amos, the prophet himself, uttering his daring

word to the careless hostile nation, is an unconscious example of individualism.

By the time of the exile the sense of the individual comes to the front in clear and definite consciousness. The nation is in its grave. But in the teaching of Jeremiah and Ezekiel the individual emerges. Every separate soul, we are told, belongs to God. Men are not judged in lumps. Each life alone meets God. The problem is sharply individual. A man is lifted right out of his entanglement with his parents and family. Each spirit has its own standing-room in the presence of God. Here we have the very spirit of democracy before the days of democracy.

If every single person has a place of his own and his social entanglements cannot destroy him in God's sight, then you have the principle for a new philosophy of humanity.

Many of the Psalms refer to the group. But again and again there is a poignant note of an individual experience of fear or hope, of despair or triumph. Indeed, it would not be too much to say that the deepest reason for the power of the whole collection is found in an expression in song of the inmost experience of the individual human life.

The New Testament is in a sharper sense a book of emphasis on individual values. The common man is lifted to a new place. The Babe in the manger is an expression of the potentialities of the common life in its hard and dreary and suffering ways. The choosing of the Twelve is based upon a sense of the tremendous significance of simple everyday human beings. Jesus always seeks the individual. And while he does not despise the great, he obviously is deeply impressed by the potencies of common men. Whether rich or poor, learned or ignorant, he sees men as human beings and not as members of a particular social group. While he does not become one of any group to the exclusion of others, he is always ready to be the voice of any under the burden of life. He is always nearest to

the man in need. Deeper than this, however, he believes in the common man. He trusts him. The great passage after Peter's confession implies the belief that men fresh from the round of the humblest life can grasp the realities which are central in the Kingdom of God. To Jesus the things which unite men in common humanity were always greater than the things which separate them.

When you come to the unfolding of Christianity under the leadership of Paul, you find a conception of Christian experience which is based on the relation of every individual soul to God in faith through Jesus Christ. Every human spirit is capable of a relation of living faith. And that faith is the heart of religion.

Here again you have a position whose corollaries inevitably lift up our thought of all men. Citizenship in the Kingdom is on a plane on which men meet as equals. The New Testament Church is a democracy in spirit before the days of democracy as a political power. In other words, the very spirit of the New Testament has the heart of democracy in it. Centuries may pass before the corollaries are drawn out. But there they lie.

We have seen that the problem of keeping the individual life and the good of the group in adequate perspective is not an easy one. Indeed it is the hardest social and industrial and political problem of our time. Does the New Testament throw any light upon it? Did Jesus ever speak a word which will help us here?

We are almost astonished to find that he spoke the final and interpreting word on this great theme. Let us listen with fresh interest as he says, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." The trouble with a hundred world organizations lies in the fact that they have been mechanical. You secured combination at the expense of life. And the individual was crushed in the wheels. Now Jesus solves the problem by suggesting an organism instead of a machine

It is one thing to be wheels in a vast mechanism; it is quite another to be branches in a vine. In the organism blood is pumped out to the farthest leaf from the parent vine. The relation is growing and living. It is not hard and rigid and lifeless. The only final solution of the relation between the individual and the group is an organism of love, where the connection is that of the flowing blood of life and not of belts and wheels, and all are united in the mighty spontaneous allegiance of soul to the living Christ. The profoundest social wisdom, the ultimate word of spiritual democracy, is found in the saying of Jesus, "I am the vine, ye are the branches."

In an organism of love the individual is not lost. He comes to the largest and fullest and most creative life of which he is capable. In an organism of love the life of the group, the common good, is kept perpetually in mind. The group is never exploited by the individual. And in the Christian organism of love all move forward summoned by the radiant ideal of life in and through the energy of Christ.

In fact, the very genius of a Christian experience is one with the very genius of democracy. The new life creates sons of God and it makes them out of every kind of human material. And all political and social and industrial relations must at last be worked out in the light of this sonship. So the living book as a functioning power in the world inevitably leads toward democracy.

Autocracy always has reason to fear the people who take the Bible seriously.

Luther did not realize all the implications of the message of the book which changed the world for him. But he received its life into his own and fought to make it potent in his age. If we appropriate in the same spirit its message as we have learned to know it, we shall do more than find a place in democracy for the Christian religion. Christianity will become the interpreter of democracy to the world.

We may go farther. We may say, with a sense of the solemn responsibility of using such words, that democracy itself can only survive and function in full and effective fashion in the atmosphere created by the living book. Take out of the world the sanctions and vitalities which make themselves felt in the Bible, and democracy will fall to the ground, the baseless fabric of an exquisite dream. The new life in Christ, when conscious of its meaning and implications, is the creator and sustainer of democracy among men.

DAILY READINGS

Thirteenth Week, First Day

And Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.—Gen. 2: 16, 17.

This Genesis story has no end of significance when we get beneath the surface of it. We see God's connection with man as a personal relationship calling for individual decision and faithfulness. The man hears the command. He can disobey if he will. A willing choice of the way of obedience is the thing God asks. The individual stands sharply face to face with the will of God and must determine for or against it. This is the heart of the Bible's message as to man's responsibility. And this sense of the individual not as a part of a great mass, but in clear and distinct personality, is an attitude which involves that high valuation of each person which is essential in democracy.

A great crowd of people congested Twenty-third Street near Madison Square, New York, one election night. One young student, working his way through the throng with a friend, turned suddenly and said, "All these people make me feel that I amount to nothing. What is one fellow in the great mass?" The friend, a brilliant theological stu-

dent, replied, "Yes, I suppose one would feel that way if he didn't remember that when a man meets God he always meets Him alone. We are never lost in the crowd with Him." That is the attitude of the Bible. It gives every man the dignity of a personal relation with the Almighty.

Thirteenth Week, Second Day

And the angel of Jehovah came, and sat under the oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites. And the angel of Jehovah appeared unto him, and said unto him, Jehovah is with thee, thou mighty man of valor.—Judges 6: 11, 12.

These words are from the fine tale of how a furtive farmer was made into a brave warrior. The thing we must not miss in the whole story is this: God saw something in the man which he had never seen in himself. Right in the common round of life God found this everyday man, and nobody was so astonished as Gideon himself. Why should he be called a man of valor? What had he done? The answer was that God judged him by his latent power and not by his actual achievement.

God is always seeing things in people which they have never seen in themselves. He is always judging them by what they can do and not by what they have done. He is always bringing to light unsuspected powers in everyday men. This spirit of God's faith in people, of which the Bible is so full, is another thing which has deep kinship with democracy. Belief in people is the deep inspiration which is essential to the success of the democratic movement.

Thirteenth Week, Third Day

And the child Samuel ministered unto Jehovah before Eli. And the word of Jehovah was precious in those days; there was no frequent vision. And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place (now

his eyes had begun to wax dim, so that he could not see), and the lamp of God was not yet gone out, and Samuel was laid down to sleep, in the temple of Jehovah, where the ark of God was; that Jehovah called Samuel. . . . And Jehovah came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel said, Speak; for thy servant heareth.—I Sam. 3: 1-4, 10.

The God of the Bible is always doing surprising things. And a great many of these surprising things consist in trusting people you would not suppose he would have trusted, and using people you would not suppose he would have used. Here we have the tale of a time when God had a very important message to give. And we find him using a little boy for this august purpose. At once you see that God's thought of childhood gives childhood new meaning. As a matter of fact, whenever you find what God thinks of anything that thing means more. And whenever you find what he thinks of any people they mean more. And when you know his thought about any person old or young that person means more. He is always adding to our sense of human values. Here once more we have an attitude which has the promise of some of the deepest things of democracy in it. Unless you can develop a high sense of human values, democracy is impossible.

Thirteenth Week, Fourth Day

In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.—Jer. 31: 29, 30.

We have already quoted from Ezekiel a passage similar to the above. We go back to the idea again because it is of essential meaning for the relation of the Bible to democracy. It has been said that the sense of the individual emerges in Jeremiah and Ezekiel. There is the clearest statement here that a man must face the issues of his own

life, but not the issues of the lives of his ancestors. A man is not to suffer for other people's sins. He is to be judged clearly and definitely on the basis of his personal life. What he has done, not what somebody else has done, is the decisive matter. Here you have the principle which, fully expressed, involves men's equality before the law. It involves a treatment of every life on its own merits, apart from the life of the group of which it forms a part. Apply this principle to the science of government and it can be worked out only in a democracy well advanced both politically and industrially.

Thirteenth Week, Fifth Day

But while he was yet afar off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. But the father said to his servants . . . this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.—Luke 15: 20, 22, 24.

One of the most difficult problems of democracy is the social wastrel. All the while he is endangering the whole social fabric. If democracy is to reach its fullest expression, some method must be found for changing the social wastrel into a productive man. Now the story of the lost son is a dramatic illustration of Jesus' consciousness of the value of the wastrel. It is a story of transformation through love. It is a story of restoration to noble and productive relationships. And the love of Christ is all the while changing wastrels into men. It is all the while making men who are capable of functioning in a democracy. It is not too much to say that the force of that Christian love which, with perpetual faith, goes forth to transform waste lives is one of the supreme assets of democracy.

Thirteenth Week, Sixth Day

Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be

one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me. And the glory which thou hast given me I have given unto them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me.—John 17: 20-23.

The seventeenth chapter of John contains the great intercessory prayer of Jesus. It is one of the most memorable and priceless things in the New Testament. We have quoted words which exalt believers into a great organism of love, like that which characterizes the inner life of God himself. The picture is so exquisitely lofty and gloriously beautiful that it fairly dazzles the eye of the mind. And the important thing to remember is this: any human being is welcomed to the great living brotherhood for which Jesus prays. It is not an autocracy of the spirit. It is a loving family to which every human being is invited.

All who hear the message and heed it are welcomed. Here we have a new estimate upon humanity which offers the title of nobility to every human being. God asks all men to become sons of God. And that lifts life to a level which includes and transcends everything which we mean by democracy.

Thirteenth Week, Seventh Day

And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth, let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come: he that will, let him take the water of life freely.—Rev. 22: 17.

As we come to the close of the New Testament, the doors are flung wide open. Words of invitation are sent forth by every messenger. With rich iteration we hear the great welcoming summons, "Come—Come—Come." All that God has to give is offered to all who are willing to receive.

The resources of the universe are put at the disposal of the common man. Here again we have democracy transcended and glorified.

The problems of our modern movement are not problems which were ever understood by Martin Luther. In respect of these things the Book which he loved has a message which he never realized. He changed the sixteenth century by making compelling the biblical message of personal religion. We shall change the twentieth century when we bring to it the Bible's message of Spiritual Democracy.

PERSONAL SUGGESTIONS

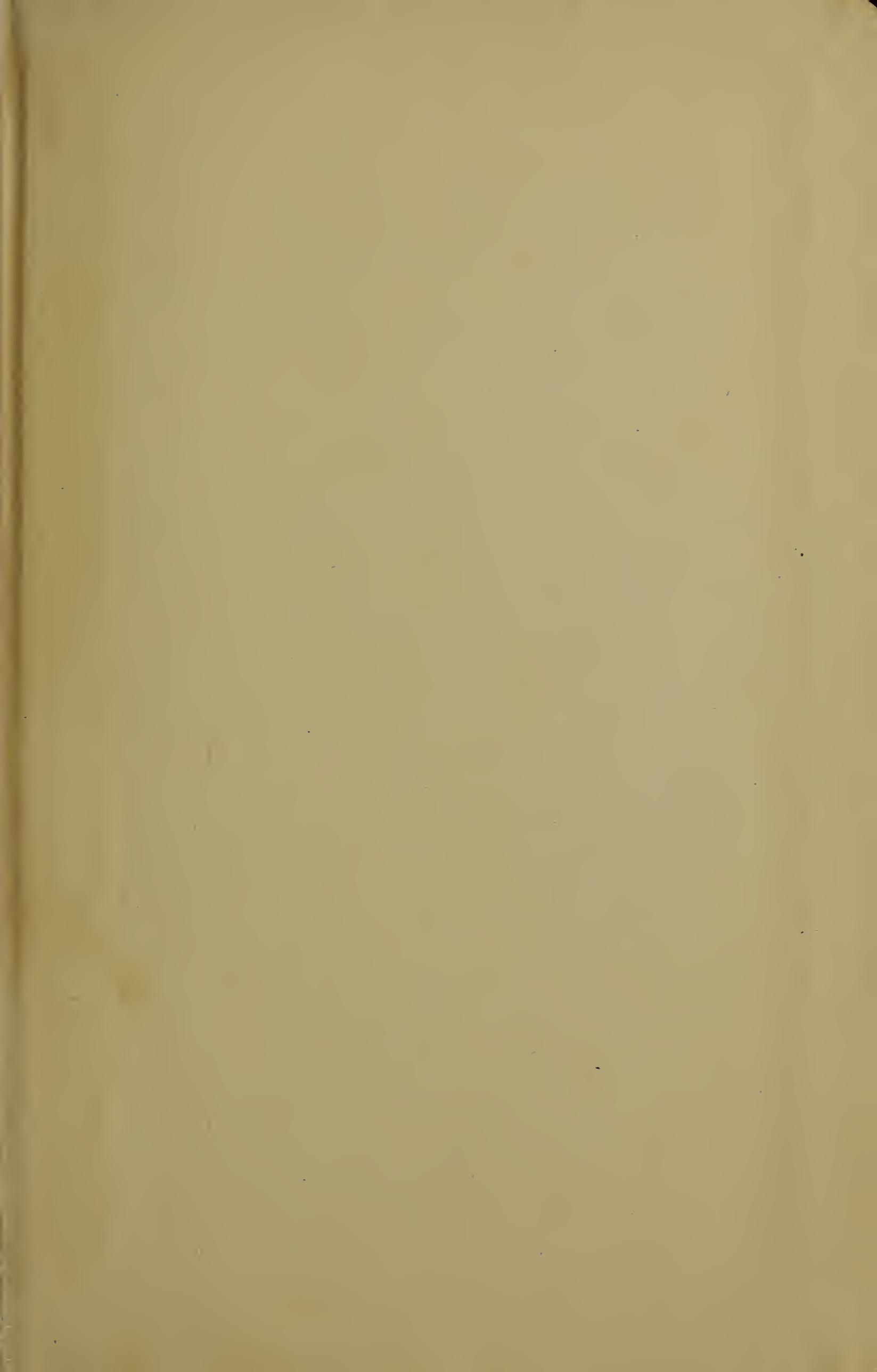
We are considering principles which have a wide significance. They also have a near and personal meaning. Have I learned to value everyday men? Have I learned to see in people more than they see in themselves? Do I judge people by what they may be and not what they have been? Do I approach the wasted life as a life which can be made an asset to the world? Do I see all men in the light of the sonship God offers to them? These questions suggest the fashion in which the theory of democracy may become the practice of democracy in the individual life.

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