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GOD AS ARTIST.

We are familiar with the idea of God as Creator—we do not so often think of God as Artist. The New Testament gives us that liberty. St. Paul in his letter to the Ephesians writes "we are His workmanship." The Apostle is using the terms of Greek culture; translated literally the sentence is, "we are God's poem." The meaning of "poem" is not restricted to what we know as "poetry"; a poem may be any work of art, a picture, a statue, or a temple. The "poet" is the "maker," and the fact that the word came to be used exclusively for an artist, whose medium of expression was words reveals in how great honor the Greeks held their poets. The poet was the true maker, moulder, fashioner.

We fear that in our day the standard of value in this particular has greatly altered—the true maker in the eyes of the world, is not the poet, but the merchant—the man who can make money. St. Paul, with his cultured spirit, cannot have been insensitive to the charm of Greek art, and there are evidences in his writings that the creations of beauty that have ever been the glory of that nation made an appeal to his wealthy nature. His appreciation of the matchless grandeur of the works of art at Athens and Corinth was, however, marred by the fact that all around he saw moral chaos, moral ugliness, moral corruption.

The Supreme Work of Art.

For St. Paul the supreme work of art was not perfectly fashioned stone, but a perfectly fashioned character. God Himself in the eyes of the Apostle was the supreme artist, and His chief work that of moulding sinful men, so that they express something of the beauty and glory of Jesus Christ.

With the conception of God as Artist, St. Paul couples that of God as Creator. "We are His poem, created in Christ Jesus for good works." In the Scripture record of the beginning of things we read that God made man in His own image. That was not a work of God completed at a point of time once for all. It is a work on which He is constantly engaged, an age-long process. In our own day, and with us God is continuously at work, making man in His spiritual image. The work of Creation is not yet finished; there is so much even now in the moral sphere that is without form and void; and, wonder of wonders, God is seeking man's cooperation in bringing the work of creation to its glorious fulfillment.

The conception of God as Artist is a richer one than that of God as Creator; it includes the ideas of beauty and joy. A true artist delights in expressing himself, whether in picture or poem or statue. He pours his soul into his work, and strives to make it as noble, as beautiful, as perfect, as his mastery over his materials allows.

God's Delight in Creation.

On every hand there are evidences that God delights in His creation. In the Book of Job the poet tells how when God had finished His work of creation, sharing the pleasure of the Creator, "The morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy."

If the soul of Christopher Wren was thrilled with a deep emotion when he saw his dream expressed in stately pillar, vaulted aisle, and massive dome, imagine the joy in the heart of God at the wonder and beauty of this fair creation! Turner tasted an exquisite pleasure when he recaptured on canvas some of the glory of the evening sky, does not God Himself rejoice when He paints the heavens with the richest colours?

God's mastery over His materials in the realm of inanimate nature is complete. "He measures the waters in the hollow of His hand, metes out heaven with a span, bringeth out the hosts of the stars, and calleth them all by name." There is nothing intractable here, but when we

to man, God's chief work of art, we are compelled to face an entirely different situation. There is a great deal of truth in the familiar lines:—"Though every prospect pleases And only man is vile."

Contrast the squalor, filth, and ugliness of a city slum with the beauty and purity of a windswept Dartmoor crag. The outward filth and disorder of so many of the dwellings of men is symptomatic of the chaos and corruption of the soul. The great and appalling tragedy of our world is that so many men have marred the Divine image in which they were created, and defiled the temples meant to be a habitation of the Holy Spirit. While the stars and the sea obey the will of the Creator and declare His glory, man thwarts the purposes of God and refuses to be shaped and fashioned by the Divine Artist.

"A Vale of Soul-Making."

The crown of creation is man, with wondrous powers of thought, of emotion, of will: from whom God desires an intelligent, a loving and a spontaneous obedience. The whole meaning of the universe is found here: it is, in the words of Keats, a "Vale of Soulmaking."

Does it fill us with wonder, love and praise when we think of God at work on the souls of men? He labors with infinite patience, with infinite tenderness, and infinite love in order to fashion souls who may give Him back the love they owe, and may commune with him as friend with friend. God has such a profound respect for human personality, for human liberty, that He never compels obedience.

Not by rough handling can this supreme work of art be achieved, but by a touch more gentle than a mother's, by the wooing constraint of love. That man may respond more readily and more fully to the Divine ideal, God sent His Son Jesus Christ to dwell among us. He was God's perfect workmanship, without spot or blemish, revealing in his character the Divine ideal for humanity. Our Lord was more than God's perfect work of art; He Himself was a supreme artist. It is a joy to watch

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J. J. INGALLS ON THE GENESIS OF AMERICA.

The genesis of other nations has been legendary and obscure. They have had an unrecorded infancy and childhood of fable and mythology. Their dawn has emerged from a dim twilight peopled with vague shadows and phantoms, gods and giants and heroes whose loves and wars are written in the Iliad and odes of race. But there is no Romulus and Remus business about the United States of America; none of its founders were suckled by wolves on the banks of the James or the inhospitable shores of Massachusetts bay.

The 40,000 Englishmen who migrated to Virginia and New England in the first half of the 17th century are no strangers. We know their names, where they were born, why they came, the day and hour they landed, and what they did when they set foot on shore. We know, for they told us, that Massachusetts was discovered by accident and settled by mistake.

The Pilgrims did not intend to land at Plymouth and they would not have remained there could they have gotten away. They sailed for the Hudson, and after a tempestuous voyage of more than two months, the Mayflower anchored off Cape Cod.

From November 9 till December 22 they explored the sunless sea, and then, landing on Plymouth Rock, founded the famous colony without the knowledge of the corporation that claimed the territory, and without the sanction of the government by which it was chartered. They were neither much better nor much worse than the average American citizen today. No doubt they wanted the right to worship God according to the dictates of their own

EXTRACTS FROM REPORT OF BUREAU OF EDUCATION.

DIVISION OF ISABELA, MANILA, P. I.

By John H. Manning Butler.

Sir:

I have the honor to submit the annual report of the Division Superintendent of Schools for Isabela for the year 1923-24, as required by General Circular No. 33, of 1923.

I. The Work of the Year in Brief. The schools were touched by locusts, floods and famine last year to such extent that they might well be pleaded as extenuating circumstances were one chided for any shortcoming in general progress or a diminution of school spirit.

During the first semester and sometime afterwards every day there was a school somewhere out in the division fighting locusts. The con-



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duct of the schools in the locust campaign was but a matter of routine in accordance with plans of the division office to save growing crops. However, the most of the nets used in the province for catching flyers were made by school children during their industrial periods at the suggestion of the locust board. Harvests in both the southern and northern parts of the province owe much to the activity of the school people which has meant not a little in the food situation.

It was a November-December flood which brought the schools into bold relief for initiative and service. When others stood palsied our teachers and those under them went out to render aid, thinking less of personal danger than the need of the sufferers, saving both life and property.

The physical manifestation of interest, hardly symbolized the qualities of courage and sympathy which actuated pupils to attend school on one meal a day and prompted a sharing of their food with companions. Teachers divided food gladly with their children during a time when none cried out in this world of suffering.

"Far from the maddening crowd's ignoble strife," joined itself to the task of rebuilding and replanting. One day at the high school a teacher wept when recounting to me how he had been unable to respond to a request for rice to students, he having divided his last with others who had preceded them. The provincial and district supervisors, by and large, acted well their parts in the somewhat tragic drama but for their Spartanlike spirit and Christian conduct to which I gladly bear tribute. Not only did they go to the relief of the destitute and suffering but obtained and assembled data which were used to secure Red Cross assistance, aiding in the distribution of foods and medicine and directing in the schools the making of garments for the distressed.

The results of the year's work in general school lines, in view of the

gratifying. This is due largely to the spirit of cooperation on the part of several government agencies and the hunger of the Isabelans for education sated as much as possible, by alert and willing teachers.

The province of Isabela is bound to lead her sisters in the Cagayan Valley educationally. Not a school was closed last year but new classes were opened, some financed by money which patrons almost forced upon us. The province has soil and climate which combine in producing the best tobacco and other crops indigenous to this part of Luzon. Her vast tracts of uncultivated territory are being occupied by aggressive peoples from the plains of the Agno, its tributaries and the Ilocos coast. The incomers, as is manifest among settlers along the reaches of the Cagayan river in Jones and the friar lands and other cultivable and richly producing places on the Magat, are thrifty, resourceful, progressive and ambitious. Like the Pilgrims and Huguenots they are imbued with the spirit and cherish for their children the best ideals of the communities whence they came. Hence we have here an original population, virile and forward-facing, blended with new comers of undaunted will all bent upon schools as the means of uplifting their children to match the levels of and even overtop the hills and mountains which surround them.

While teachers, taken as a whole, do good work, failures are largely caused by lack of efficient supervision. It may seem strange, but it is true, that the supervising teachers, with one or two exceptions, who are least literate, made a better showing than those from whom because of academic attainments, much was expected.

It may be that those who failed to measure up to requirements have a lack of vision or feel that their present positions and advanced salaries are so secure that it is unnecessary for them to be really solicitous concerning the progress of every child and every class. If the service permitted the reduction of salary for cause or when a supervisor's work is so poor as to require a change of status, I believe that more effort would be put forward not only by supervisors but teachers.

The need of new schools will be felt mostly in the southern section of the province now being settled by immigrants. Experience shows it well to adhere to the fruitful policy of my predecessor, which is to insist upon adequate sites on which are erected good buildings with necessary equipment before sending teachers to communities where new schools are desired.

Academic Instruction.

Special effort to improve the quality of spoken English took form at the division normal institute and continued during the remainder of the year in all grades and classes. English pronunciation in the division has been mainly dependent on the recollection of how certain American teachers pronounced words, no allowance being made for the lapses of memory and the general mergence of the English pronunciation into the pronunciation of languages other than English or dialects spoken by people in the division.

Two regional institutes were held in January—one on Echague and the other in Cabagan. The instructors in the institutes were members of the division office force, the General Office industrial teacher, the Red Cross Nurse, and three model teachers whom the District Auditor permitted to be used, holding that they observed the work of other teachers in other places thereby improving duty!

Industrial Institute. As will be seen from the division industrial supervisor's report all lines of industrial work went on smoothly. However, the attitude of pupils was not as encouraging as desirable. To work with a view of setting grades, of finishing a job for

FROM MY ANGLE.

By R. E. Clement.

There are no two persons alike. There never was, nor will there ever be. Different we are in our heredity, different in our environment, different in our training and consequently different in our reactions. The degree of difference in our reactions is in direct proportion to the degree of difference in our heredity, environment, and training. Our eyes may see the same thing, our ears may hear alike, our hands may touch, and yet because of individual differences, though we may have seen and heard and touched the one thing, we come to unlike conclusions.

I am beginning today a column, or a series of articles, or occasional contributions (I am not so sure yet what this will turn out to be) under the caption, "FROM MY ANGLE." It will always be one man's opinion. I do not profess to see things as other men see them—I may, I may not. My only excuse for burdening you with these writings is that in matters concerning race, nation and Church you may get the advantage, however slight it may be, of seeing things from another's viewpoint—a young man's viewpoint, if you please. If my excuse is allowed by the editor I shall proceed. Thank you.

The Connectional Council at Buffalo, New York, has convened and adjourned. By the waters of Lake Erie in that beautiful and sturdy church, erected through the labors and prayers of Rev. Durham and his followers, we met. And it was a good meeting! Oh, I do not mean to say that there were no arguments, no differences in opinion, no heated debates for I thank God there were; wherever thinking, earnest, progressive, zealous men get together if they speak of anything at all there will be conflicts, there will be differences. But the differences, the conflicts, will be tempered by brotherly love and Christian fellowship, illuminated with reason, and concluded in peace and harmony. And this we had!

All the bishops and all the general officers except a few of the women were present. Shaw was there fresh from a great educational drive in Alabama; there came Jones, gifted son of an illustrious sire, shaking the soil of the southernmost part of Carolina from his feet; Walls, "Little Giant," came trekking in from the plains of Arkansas; Martin, from the golden slopes of the golden west, brought tidings of a work well begun and visions of a greater work to be; Alleyne was there: have you read his articles on Africa in The Star of Zion? Go back and read them again, put yourself in his place—can't you feel the zeal, the enthusiasm, the fire for the work consuming your soul? Alleyne was there!

Davenport made his initial bow, Younge, Dudley and Carrington came on and we were all pleased with the work of Indianapolis.

Four years stretch out before us 'till our next goal line is crossed. The Quadrennium beckons, today the goal is far ahead, tomorrow we shall be looking back. Will the end of these four years find us sighing over lost opportunities, or shall we have won the day. There is great work ahead for Zion. There are great victories that may be won for God. We have the men, we have the system. May our Father grant unto us the zeal and the soul. Let's bend to the oars, let's pull together and make this the greatest Quadrennium in the history of Zion Methodism. It is our privilege, it is our task, it is our duty!

We launch a great "Drive" for missions, Africa in particular. Our work in the foreign field must succeed. Ours is the task to build schools and churches and Christian homes and Christian men in Africa. We must do this as we have never done it before. Cartwright and Small and Walters and men of other days have