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Methodism.

Extract from a Sermon delivered by
Rev. B. Craven, D. D.

3. The Holy Spirit is given in proportion to prayer and faith. All the Protestant churches taught at and before Wesley's day, that the Spirit accompanies the Word, and that by Him are wrought all spiritual changes in the heart, but that He would be manifested without limit, in answer to prayer and faith, to convert, to convict, and to bless, was not only a new Biblical interpretation, but was so repugnant to the lifeless formalism of the age, as to be scorned as a mad enthusiasm, and most bitterly hated as a dangerous innovation. No specialty of Methodism has been so generally opposed, or so sneeringly contemned, and yet it is as clearly taught in the Bible as that Jesus Christ died for sinners. This is the divine power and fire, working with and through the two preceding functions, and making them able to pull down the strongholds of the devil. It is not our theology, or zeal, or organization, or itinerancy, that has been the effective force to keep us up with the success of nations, and to give us the mastery over all the activities of modern life; but mighty men of God, asking and receiving the Holy Ghost in large measure, have preached the word in power, and have produced effects that were a stumbling-block to formalists and foolishness to worldly wisdom. This heavenly unction, this anointing of the Holy Ghost, this clothing of words, gestures and tones with the eternal spirit, was first developed in the modern pulpit by Mr. Wesley, and is infinitely more convincing than all argument, and higher and nobler than all oratory. It is this which has made our uneducated, inexperienced preachers, such invincible sons of thunder; it is this that has made our exhortation, now sadly neglected, such a blessing to the church and to the world.

Whoever has been in a great Methodist congregation upon a day, when the Holy Ghost gave great power and efficiency to all the service, and richly dwelt in the hearts of the people, will never forget it; even down to old age, he will remember that he has stood upon Mt. Pisgah, and felt breezes from the better land. There is nothing sublimer this side of heaven, than the effects of prayer and faith upon a congregation; it was astonishing to England at first, and is a marvel yet even to some evangelical Churches. These great displays of divine power were perhaps more sought, and more common, but not more needed in other days than at present; we are most unwisely relying more upon talent and culture, plans and visiting, and less upon the Holy Ghost. However beautiful and useful these agencies may be as auxiliaries, none of them can substitute the living Spirit of God in the Methodist Church. We have sometimes seen these works of the Spirit as clearly as objects of sense. Sometimes, when the sermon and the exhortation have failed to bring weeping penitents to the altar, the congregation has risen in the silent grandeur of faith, and soon the hardest hearts by scores were melted before the Lord; or when praying penitents have failed to be converted, and fathers and mothers were weeping over their children, the Church in deep humiliation has prayed as one man, and not long afterwards, shouts and hosannas were heard as the sounds of many waters; or when the spiritual heavens have long been as brass, and every soul was famishing, then in answer to fervent prayer, the Lord has suddenly come to his temple, and all have been filled with glory and with God.

Then all could feel and sing.—
The men of grace have found
Glory begun below;
Celestial fruit on earthly ground
From faith and hope may grow.

Whatever may be the experience of individuals and of Churches, this manifestation of the Spirit in answer to prayer is thoroughly Methodist, and without it we are as sounding brass and as tinkling cymbals.

This same Gospel function has been

dism, in another particular closely allied to the above, viz: that when we are converted we may know our acceptance with God. The old interpretation was, that the Bible describes a Christian, we by consciousness and observation know that we accord with the description; therefore and thus, we know we are Christians. But Methodism takes a standpoint higher, clearer and vastly more satisfactory, viz: that the Holy Ghost bears witness or gives evidence directly to our souls that we are the children of God; that our spirit by consciousness testifies to the reality of this witness of the spirit and to our new condition; and that by observation we verify these inward testimonies by the fruits of the spirit; and furthermore, that in this condition in answer to prayer and faith, the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, and that thus we not only have promise and hope, but present personal joy, indescribable and full of glory. This, in Mr. Wesley's day, was believed by none but the Moravians, and by all others was most furiously and scoffingly opposed. The Moravians had neither comprehended nor enjoyed religion in such fullness and power as did the Methodists; this laughing, crying, shouting and praising God was a new bloom upon the Gospel tree, and with all its heavenly hues and divine fragrance, is the jest and sarcasm of nearly all who oppose us. This is peculiarly Methodist, and our earnest prayer is, that it may rapidly grow in extent and power; that those among us who never praised God, may soon begin; that in winter and summer, in youth and in age,—

"We may tell to all around
What a dear Saviour we have found."
This is the strength of the Church in extending the kingdom of God, and nurturing souls for heaven.

O, that God would powerfully revive religion in all the Churches; that mere morality, formality and lukewarmness, may be quickened and kindled into a blaze of holy fire, and that Methodism in her fullness of spiritual life may everywhere be heard singing and shouting on her journey home.

Selections.

Is our Christianity Lapsing?

There are plenty of people to be found, and there have always been those who constantly aver that the "good old times" were better than the present; that the people were more virtuous, their habits less extravagant, and that religion and morals were better conserved; as well were all material interests of life on a more sound and prosperous footing. But we are not of these. We believe that in most respects this age in all its appliances for human happiness is much in advance of any former one. We have but to compare our state at the present time with those times of feudal bondage that cursed Europe for so many centuries, to become convinced of this. Imagine our present developed civilization, its knowledge, toleration and humanity transformed into the condition of Europe in medieval ages. Where now we have the broad beam of science shining upon our pathway, the most unrestricted liberality of thought and conscience; where we now see the ancient walls of restriction and intolerance broken down and millions of earth shaking hands over their ruins; where now is fraternity and co-operation in great humanitarian enterprises, we should see millions trodden down under the meanest and most cruel military despotism that ever cursed the earth.

We have developed in a large application of Christian philanthropy.— If we only now know how to use what we possess, rightfully, temperately, how to make the advantages that are thickly strewn about us redound to our highest good, the world would soon be very much better than it now is. But we have gone to an extreme, just as we human beings are wont to do. We have learned grand lessons during the last fifty years; we have become infatuated with knowing merely, while we have not paused to review and apply what we have learned.— Learning new facts, be they ever so wondrous in their manifestations, is no benefit to the individual unless they be for his character into a high

type. But while we have been dazzled by this whirl of rapidly developing things and thoughts, we have forgotten this important fact, and character culture is being very much neglected. Sensation is the felt want of the people now—something that can please for a passing hour, that shall titillate the nerves, and give excitement to the senses. Things of yesterday are dashed away in disgust, and the hungry cry is, "Give us some unheard novelty or wonder." Commonplaces, which are really the best things this life can afford, are endured, not enjoyed.— The common modes of life are never thought of by our young people when they start out in life. Some extraordinary courses are marked out, full of the exquisite and sensuous for a life occupation and for enjoyment. Thousands of men and women are yearly coming to maturity filled with this disgust of common life, and are seeking some grand, famous sphere of activity, or, if actuated by spherer motives, are seeking enjoyment in scenes of sensuous excitement, in "gay and festive" circles. Of course most of them are disappointed, and, becoming disgusted with life, they go off into hypochondria, vice, and often suicide.— We are each week shocked with the announcement of cases of suicide occurring in all the walks of life. The rich as well as the poor are victims of this anomalous manifestation of human frailty.

These are characteristics of the present, which, if fully developed, shall vitiate our civilization and cause us to retrograde towards barbarism despite our science, railroads, telegraphs, and all our discoveries in the arts. The faculties of men must be mobilized into strong characters. And the best agency to this end is Christian, moral culture. We may possess faculties of invention, discovery, wonder and progress, but if we have not that steadfastness that comes of fixity of moral principle, our genius shall only conduce to the supply of curious trappings to pamper the vitiated tastes of an effete civilization, instead of aiding in the harmonious development of human character, which can only make life happy or even endurable.

We, as a whole, are not lapsing, yet are forced to admit that there are tendencies in our social circles that must be counteracted by the efforts of all Christians. Let us not sigh over "the good old days," but honor God and work for Christ by striking at the root of every existing vice. Let us raise the standard of Christianity by being more devoted, more consecrated, more in sympathy with the crying and fallen. Let us tenderly, kindly manifest our anxiety for lost souls by inviting them to a purer, a holier life. Then will all these direful sins vanish before the brightness of heaven's own glory, the dark and barren wilderness bloom as the rose of Sharon, the sons of men shout for joy, and the Church move on to victory!—*Golden Censer.*

Contentment.

Rothschild with all his wealth must be satisfied with the same sky that is over the poor man. He cannot order a private sunset, that he may enjoy it with a circle of friends, nor can he add one single ray to the clear, bright beams of the queen of night, as she sails magnificently through the heavens. The richest banker cannot have more than his share of the air to breathe, and the poorest of all men can have the same. Wealth may buy a brilliant bracelet, dazzling with diamonds and rubies, but wealth cannot buy a graceful and well-turned arm on which to display its splendor. God only can give that, and to many of the poor he has given it.

"I wish I had the health of that rosy peasant girl," sighs the aristocratic invalid, propped up with pillows in her costly carriage. "Ah, me!" sighs the girl, if I could only ride in such style as that." Wealth cannot purchase health, nor can it give a contented mind. All that is most valuable can be had for nothing. They come as presents from the hand of a kind indulgent parent, and neither the air nor the sky, no beauty, health, strength, nor genius, can be bought and sold.— Whatever may be thy condition in life remember these things and therewith be content.

The Love of Christ.

BY REV. E. DAVIES.

The love of Christ! a sea without bottom or shore, a river without beginning or end. This love of Christ shed abroad in the hearts of the apostles constrained them, inspired, actuated, incited or impelled them to brave all dangers, to make all sacrifice, run all risks, and to count not their lives dear unto them, so they might carry out the great plan of redemption in bringing souls to Jesus, and plucking brands from the eternal burning.

It was this love that gave them such power to turn the world upside down, and fill not only Palestine but also the civilized world with their doctrine. Without temples, without wealth, without secular or political power, still they went on till they numbered their converts not only in the city of Rome but in the palace of Cæsar. This was the love that inspired the reformers and martyrs, which led them to do and dare, and to die for the souls of men. This sustains the missionary in his self-sacrificing toil. See the sainted Judson with his devoted wives, sustained amid their awful sufferings in the wilds of India. An Indian missionary said, "I could only hear one Indian cry out, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.'"

Such was the love of Christ in the hearts of the Moravian missionaries when they were told that they could find no wood in Greenland to build houses, they replied:
"Then we will dig in the ground and live there."

This is the burning love that every minister of Christ ought to have.— This will give them the right temper of soul for pulpit for pastoral work. This will lead them to plead with men to come to Christ, in public and from house to house. What is learning without love? It is like coals without fire, or like gunpowder without the spark. The learned John Smith said, "I am resolved to lay aside all other studies, and to travail in the salvation of men's souls."

Eloquence in the minister can never take the place of this love of Christ. Take this love from the hearts of Punshon or Spurgeon, and you have taken away their strength. What would the devoted Summerfield or the flaming Payson have been without this fire of love?

This love will help the minister to overcome the wickedness of the human heart. This will give him the victory when every other source fails. This love will not rest without success. The author of "Allene's Alarm" was infinitely and insatiably greedy of the conviction of souls, and to this end he poured out his very heart in prayer and preaching. Bunyan said, "In my preaching I could not be satisfied unless some fruit did appear in my work." Matthew Henry said, "I would think it a greater happiness to gain one soul to Christ than mountains of gold and silver to myself. If I do not gather souls I shall enjoy all other gains with little satisfaction."

Dr. Doddridge wrote to a friend, "I long for the conversion of souls more sensibly than for anything else beside. Methinks I could not only labor but die for it with pleasure."

The local preacher, class leader, Sabbath School teacher, yea, all the laborers in the vineyard of the Lord, need this all-inspiring, all-conquering spirit, till they can sing with the poet,

"The love of Christ doth me constrain
To seek the wandering souls of men;
With cries, entreaties, tears to save,
And snatch them from a gaping grave."

To secure this love be much in prayer, and in the exercises of faith, and give full vent thereto, in the earnest and constant toil for the salvation of men. May this heavenly fire fall on all.

The Gospel is just good news about God and his Son Jesus Christ. It is not good news about myself—but simply and solely about God and Christ. It tells me of the exceeding riches of the grace of God. It tells me that there is salvation for me—salvation to the uttermost through the cross and blood of God's beloved Son

Which will You do?

Which will you do, smile and make others happy, or be crabbed and make everybody around you miserable? You can live among beautiful flowers and singing birds, or in the mire surrounded by fogs and frogs. The amount of happiness which you can produce is incalculable, if you will only show a smiling face, a kind heart, and speak pleasant words. On the other hand, by sour looks, cross words, and a fretful disposition, you can produce unhappiness almost beyond endurance.— Which will you do? Wear a pleasant countenance; let joy beam in your eye and love glow in your forehead. There is no joy so great as that which springs from a kind act or pleasant deed, and you may feel it at night when you rest, and in the morning when you rise, and throughout the day when about your daily business.

Fate of the Apostles.

Matthew is supposed to have suffered martyrdom, or was slain in the city of Ethiopia.

Mark was dragged through the streets of Alexandria, in Egypt, till he expired.

Luke was hanged to an olive tree in Greece.

John was put in a boiling cauldron at Rome, but escaped death. He died a natural death in Ephesus, Asia.

James, the great, was beheaded at Jerusalem.

James, the less, was thrown from a pinnacle and beaten to death.

Philip was beheaded.

Bartholemew was skinned alive.

Andrew was crucified and pounded while dying.

Thomas was run through with a lance.

Jude was shot with arrows.

Simon was crucified.

Matthias was stoned to death.

Parnabas was stoned.

Paul was beheaded by the tyrant Nero at Rome.

Luther.

Besides subordinate, historical and allegorical figures, the gigantic representation of Luther, at Worms, stands amid a group of four other colossal statues, above all of which it rises sixteen and a half feet. These statues represent the four precursors of the Reformation—the French Peter Waldo, the English John Wycliffe, the Bohemian John Huss, and the Italian Jerome Savonarola.

The Law of Veracity is Violated.

When we state as true what we do not know to be true.

When we intentionally produce a false impression.

When we find that we have, though undesignedly, conveyed a false impression and do not hasten to correct it.

When in the statement of what may be true in fact, we purposely omit any circumstances which are necessary to a correct apprehension of the truth.

When we exaggerate or extenuate any of those circumstances.

When we purposely arrange the facts of a true representation in such a manner as to deceive.

When, with intention to deceive, we accompany a statement with a look of the eye, a tone of the voice, a motion of the hand, or anything which may influence the mind and conduce to a false impression.

When we answer a question evasively, so as to deceive, under the secret pretense that the enquirer has no right to know the truth.

When by word or act we create an expectation which we do not intend to fulfil.

When we create an expectation which, though we intend to fulfil it, we afterwards fail to fulfil, without due care to explain the cause of the failure.

When we do not fulfil a promise in every respect precisely as we supposed the promise understood it.

When we fulfil a contractor's promise in every particular except as to "time," and make no effort, show no disposition, to give early notice that the delay was unavoidable.

On Swearing.

Cowper was an English poet. He wrote beautiful hymns. He wrote some lines also about swearing, which it would be worth while for every boy in the land to learn.

"It chills my blood to hear the blest Supreme
Burdely appealed to on each trifling theme;
Maintain your rank; vulgarity despise;
To swear is neither brave, polite nor wise."

If you wish never to swear big oaths, the best plan is not to make use of little ones.

Some who would not swear by the name of God, think nothing of swearing "by George," or "by jingo," or by something else; others often cry out, "good gracious," or "mercy on me," and the like. These are the beginnings of swearing. They are to profane swearing what acorns are to the oak.

Our Savior said, when on earth, "Let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay; for whatever is more than this cometh of evil." This means we should use plain, simple language. David had a short prayer to this point—"Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; and keep the door of my lips."

The Dignity of the Ministry.

When the celebrated George Herbert informed a court friend of his resolution to enter into holy orders, he endeavored to dissuade him from it, as too mean an employment, and too much below his birth, and the excellent abilities and endowment of his mind. To whom Herbert replied:

"It hath been formerly judged that the domestic servants of the King of heaven should be of the noblest families on earth. And though the iniquities of the late time have made clergymen meanly valued, and the sacred name of priest contemptible, yet I will labor to make it honorable, by consecrating all my learning and all my poor abilities to advance the glory of that God that gave them, knowing that I can never do too much for Him that hath done so much for me, as to make me a Christian. And I will labor to be like my Saviour, by making humility lovely in the eyes of all men, and by following the merciful and meek example of my beloved Jesus."

God Unchangeable.

God can as well cease to exist as cease to be true. Here is a safe anchorage: "He will not alter the thing that is gone out of his lips." The public faith of heaven is engaged to believers. Can we have better security? The whole earth hangs upon the word of God's power, and shall not our faith hang upon the word of God's truth? There is nothing else we can believe in but God's unchanging truth. This is a golden pillar, on which faith can rest. God will not deny himself.—*Old Author.*

SOME NEW STATISTICS.—A statistical genius declares that "more is expended in the United States for cigars than for all the common schools in the country." A wag, undoubtedly a lover of the weed, seeing the statement going through the papers, gets off the following: "It has been estimated that the cost of washing linen that might just as well be worn two days longer, amounts to enough in this country to more than defray the expenses of the American Board of Foreign Missions. The expenses of buttons on the backs of our coats, where they are of no earthly use, is equal to the support of all our orphan asylums. It is estimated that the value of old boots thrown aside, which might have been worn at least a day longer, is more than enough to buy flannel night-gowns for every baby in the land. Also, that the cost of every inch on the full shirt collars of our young men is equal to the sum necessary to put a Bible in the hands of every Patagonian giant."

A clergyman observing a poor man by the road breaking stones, and kneeling to get at his work better, made the remark, "Ah, John, I wish I could break the stony hearts of my hearers as easily as you are breaking those stones." "Perhaps, master, you do not work on your knees," was the reply.

The door between us and Heaven cannot be opened if that between us and our fellowmen be shut.

Crop reports from Arkansas are very encouraging. The late rains have been general.