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IN ESSENTIALS, UNITY; IN NON-ESSENTIALS, LIBERTY; IN ALL THINGS, CHARITY.

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Poetry.

SPYING OUT THE LAND.

"And they came unto the brook of Ebal, and cut down from thence a branch with two clusters of grapes, and they bore it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates and of the figs."
The place was called the brook Ebal, cluster of grapes because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence." Numbers xiii. 23, 24.

O land of precious fruits and flowers,
In desert wastes for thee I pine,
And long to dwell in Canaan's bowers,
When all thy glories shall be mine.

Oh plants that ever your course oppose,
And towering walls abstract my way,
Paining with fear, I shrink, with those
Who still this side of Jordan stray.

Oh, that some eager, ardent soul,
Who fully followeth the Lord,
Might cross where Jordan's waters roll,
And bring me back some cheering word.

While silent doubt, and timorous fear
The dangers of the path portray;
Caleb and Joshua I would hear,
In triumph pointing out the way!

My strengthened soul shall joyful bear
Their words of faith and courage grand,
Shall see the clusters that they bear,
And hasten to possess the land.

Well able, in the strength of God,
To meet and conquer every foe,
The desert, I too long have trod,
Now into Canaan I would go.

Selections.

THE PROPHET OF EVIL.

The prophet of God is the prophet of evil. If there were no sins to rebuke and no dangers to predict, where would his mission be? Men who are doing right have little need of prophets; it is to those who have sinned, apostatized and rebelled, that God sends his ambassadors and messengers.

And the warning messages of God's prophets have usually been sent, not to outside sinners, but to the people of God their apostasy and iniquity. Other nations have occasionally had their sins rebuked and their doom foretold, but the warnings and admonitions of true prophets have usually been directed to, and rejected by, the professed people of the Lord. And the persecutions which have caused the prophets "of whom the world was not worthy," to wander in sheep-skins and goat-skins, destitute, afflicted, and tormented, have usually arisen, not from the heathen around, but from the very people who claim to be the Lord's chosen ones. It was by their hands that God's servants were stoned, and sawn asunder, and slain with the sword. It was to them that Peter put that awful question, yet unanswered, "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?" It was upon God's professed people that all the innocent blood, "from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias," was to come; it was upon their heads that the guilt of our Saviour's death was laid.

Now why was all this? It was because God's prophets denounced the sins of God's chosen nation. They might have thundered hell and damnation at the antediluvians, the Sodomites, the Egyptians, and the Assyrians to their hearts' content; but when they were bidden to show God's people "their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins," then trouble began.

And it was this rejection of the mandates and messages of the Most High which provoked the wrath of God against his people. It was that people that had passed through the Red Sea dry shod, and been led with manna from the skies, who murmured against Moses, and commanded to stone Caleb and Joshua. It was the priests and leaders of Israel who embittered the life and caused the death of Jeremiah. It was the ancients of Israel who worshiped in the chambers of imagery; and when judgment began at the house of God the slaughter commenced at his sanctuary. Ezek. ix. 6.

It was thus when Jerusalem met her awful doom. Then "all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the Lord which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place; but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no

remedy. Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young men or maidens, old man or him that stooped for age; he gave them all into his hand." 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14-17.

And it was thus in latter days, when rebellious Israel slew the Lord of glory, simply because he had rebuked the sins of their most sanctioning rulers and leaders.

The history of King Ahab illustrates this subject. A villain of the deepest dye, with a wife, Jezebel, whose name stands to day as a synonym for cruelty and devilishness, the godless pair had killed the Lord's prophets and digged down his altars; and had crushed out the worship of the Most High, and substituted in its stead the obscene and idolatrous orgies of Baal, whose hundreds of well-kept prophets fattened at the royal table, while God's solitary messenger was glad to beg a cake of a poor widow who had but a handful of meal, and finally to wait the coming of the ravens who brought him his scanty provision.

The doom of Ahab was decreed. Elijah, long denounced and hunted as a troublemaker of Israel, had foretold his fate, but when some signs of penitence and humility appeared, the calamity was for a while deferred.

At length when Jehoshaphat king of Judah came down to visit Ahab king of Israel, Ahab proposed an assault on Ramoth-gilead, and Jehoshaphat at once attempted the offer, but first desired that Ahab should ask counsel of the Lord. Ahab assembled his four hundred prophets, and when the question was put, "Shall I go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear?" with one voice they said, "Go up; for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king."

Not satisfied with the unanimity of Baal's prophets, Jehoshaphat said, "Hath there not here a prophet of the Lord besides, that we might inquire of him?"

"And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, Their is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imiah, by whom we may inquire of the Lord: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so.

"Then the king of Israel called an officer, and said, hasten hither Micaiah the son of Imiah. And the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, sat each on his throne, having put on their robes, in a void place in the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets prophesied before them. And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah, made him horns of iron; and he said, Thus saith the Lord, With these shalt thou push the Syrians, until thou have consumed them. And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, Go up to Ramoth-gilead and prosper: for the Lord shall deliver it into the King's hand.

"And the messenger that was gone to call Micaiah spake unto him, saying, Behold now, the words of the prophets declare good unto the king with one mouth: let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak that which is good. And Micaiah said, As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak.

"So he came to the king. And the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we forbear? And he answered him, Go, and prosper: for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king.

"And the king said unto him, How many times shall I adjure thee that thou tell me nothing but that which is true in the name of the Lord? And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd; and the Lord said, These have no master; let them return every man to his house in peace.

"And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, did I not tell thee that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil?

"And he said, Hear thou therefore the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left. And the Lord said, who shall persuade Ahab that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on that manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so.

"Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee.

"But Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah, went near, and smote Micaiah on the cheek, and said, Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me to speak unto thee?

"And Micaiah said, Behold, thou shalt see in that day when thou shalt go into an inner chamber to hide thyself.

"And the king of Israel said; Take Micaiah, and carry him back unto Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son; and say, Thus saith the king, Put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I come in peace.

"And Micaiah said, If thou return at all in peace, the Lord hath not spoken by me. And he said, Hearken, O people, every one of you. So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth-gilead. 1 Kings xxii.

The prophet of evil went to his prison, and the proud monarch went to his doom. The setting sun of the day of battle shone upon the dying agonies of the impious Ahab; the hosts of Israel returned kingless to their homes; and where they washed the tyrant's bloody chariot and stained armor, the dogs licked his blood as the prophet Elijah had foretold.

The prophet of evil was justified, and the words of the troublemaker of Israel were accomplished. Thus does God set his seal to the warning testimony of his servants, while those who profess smooth things, though they may revel for a time in the favor of men, perish at last like Balaam of old beneath the curse of God.—Common People.

CHRIST AND COMMON SENSE.

Thoughtful readers have observed that the criticisms upon the teachings of Christ in which unlearned writers are wont to indulge—from David Hume down to John W. Chadwick—are usually based on forgetfulness of a very obvious principle of interpretation; or on such lack of spiritual sympathy as renders the writer unable to see a subject in its true light and from Christ's point of view.

When our Saviour addressed men, he had a right to assume that they possessed, and would exercise, common sense. The trite axioms of the judge and the young lawyer is here in place. When the new-fledged advocate proceeded to lay down, to prove, and to illustrate certain rudimentary principles of law, the judge quietly interrupted the flow of logic and rhetoric by remarking that there were some things which the court might be presumed to know. An audience may say the same to a speaker. They do not want baby-talk. They are supposed to know something already; to be possessed of ordinary intelligence. Christ acted on this conception to a reasonable degree. He left something to be supplied by the good sense of his hearers; and the inspired writers have placed his words on record, relying on the same interpretative faculty. Christ had a rational right to assume that his language would not be construed in the most bald and literal sense, contrary to the natural implications of the time, place, and circumstances, and the nature of the subject matter. A very forcible writer and speaker avoids undue explanation and qualification, as weakening to the thought and style. Something must be trusted to the reasonable suggestions of the minds addressed and something to the qualifying effect of facts and truths advanced on other occasions. Bold declarations impress with a sense of authority. Strong statements are apt to be remembered. Striking figures fix themselves in the mind, and have power through the reason. One who never ventures to make an emphatic assertion, without adding all possible safeguards against misconception, and specifying all exceptional cases, might as well remain silent. His assertion will make small impression, left in such a diluted state. One aspect of a subject at a time is usually a wise rhetorical rule. Give each truth a chance to make its own deep impression; the limiting or balancing truth can be taken up in its turn. So Jesus evidently thought, and so think all successful teachers and public speakers; and it is because Jesus acted upon this principle, that his sayings have sunk so deeply into human memory, and are laws written on the very hearts of men.

Take a few illustrative cases. In the Sermon on the Mount we read: "Give to him that asketh thee, and

from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." The skeptics pounce upon these words, and say: "How far from wisdom this is! Here is an injunction to practice indiscriminate almsgiving and money-lending! The effect of it would be to fill the world with paupers, professional beggars, and do-nothings. True benevolence always discriminates, lest it should injure the applicant and the community." Is it to be supposed that Jesus did not know this; or that it was reserved for his critics of the nineteenth century subsequent, to make the discovery?—absurdity! Paul put no such construction on the words of the Master; for he as decisively affirmed "that if any would not work, neither should he eat. Jesus took it for granted that his hearers would use their common sense in interpreting his precept and take it with its natural and inevitable limitations. His idea thus was: "Help every really necessitous person, as you may be able; and be willing to lend money, to assist the truly needy, even though no interest can be paid and you have to wait long for the principal; since lending may be of ten a genuine charity." Our Lord was fond of a paradoxical way of giving a precept; stating it in the mere letter so boldly as to seem to contradict the necessities of human life, and leaving us to make the appropriate modification, while retaining in full the spirit enjoined. This method attracted attention, and made it difficult to forget the precept. Hence the extreme form of expression used in many of the commands and prohibitions of the Sermon on the Mount. He seemed to forbid all oaths, even those of a Judicial nature, when he said, "Swear not at all;" and so George Fox, the Quaker, understood him. But when we notice the illustrative cases which he gives of swearing, and consider whom he was addressing, and the profane customs which were prevalent, we see clearly that he had no reference to judicial proceedings, but only to social converse. His words taken literally seemed to forbid all resistance to offered violence or wrong: "Resist not evil (or the evil doer)." etc. But he simply trusts our common sense to apply the idea with reasonable and necessary limitations, growing out of our duty to enforce law and to protect those placed in our care. He means plainly; "Cultivate meekness and patience, as the rule of life, and avoid a revengeful, litigious, and combative spirit. It is often better to bear an injury than to have a quarrel, and to do too much rather than too little, in obedience to authority. Do not be so anxious to triumph over an enemy, and to repay him the evil he deserves, as to conquer his ill will and to win him to friendship."

Christ properly demanded of his auditors a willingness to look at things with a spiritual sympathy, and from his own point of view. He took pains to give them his point of view, in contrast with that of worldly men, and of false religionists like the Pharisees. He was neither ascetic nor ritualistic. He went behind forms, ceremonies, and outward institutions. He appealed to the heart, he sought to create and mould character; he taught and exemplified spiritual religion. He began his famous discourse, already referred to, with his matchless Beatitudes, which are the key note of the grand composition. Now here a certain spiritual common sense comes into play, and is an essential necessity. He alone who is in fellowship with this conception of things can see the force and value, or even the meaning of our Lord's sayings. Hence the blind criticisms of the infidels, who have insisted that there was a lack of manliness in our Lord's ideal, and that some of the traits which he enjoins would make a weak and mean character. Hence the philosopher Hume went so far astray as to declare, that humility, which Christ so constantly praises, should be stricken from the catalogue of virtues, and added to that of vice! Being out of sympathy with Christ, Hume missed a perception of the evil which is in man, a sense of which should humble us; and he mistook the very nature of humility, which is only a species of honesty—a willingness to be estimated at our real value, however low that may be. It requires spiritual intelligence and culture to see that to forgive is a higher attainment, and requires more strength of mind, than to resent and retaliate. This latter power the feeblest and meanest are equal to, while the former trait is the characteristic of moral nobility, and indicates that one is "a partaker of the divine nature." One must be in accord with Christ, who could say, "I am meek and lowly in heart," before he can be

sufficiently clear eyed to see the false news and meanness of pride, and the beautiful candor and needful acquiescence in the divine order, which are involved in humility.—Sunday School Times.

TOILING IN ROWING.

BY REV. JOHN HALL, D. D.

It was the sea of Galilee and it was after midnight. The disciples were without their Master and the wind was contrary. The waves threatened their boat, and they seemed to ply their oars in vain. He had parted from them the evening before and gone up to a mountain for retirement and prayer. He had sent away an admiring crowd of people always restive under the Roman yoke, and now ready to raise their cry to him, "Hail, King." The disciples themselves, perhaps, would have joined in the cry. He sent the people to their homes and the disciples he "constrained" to get into the boat and to go to the other side. But it looked as if they would never reach the other side. They seemed to row in vain. But they kept up the "toiling in rowing." It was right for them to be there, for did not he constrain them to embark? Has he forgotten them? No, he saw them toiling and rowing, and in due time and in his own way, he came to cheer them, lay the wind, and their toil, and bring them safely to land.

Let us learn the lesson. There are enterprises in which he has constrained us to embark. But the wind is contrary; the progress is slow; the labor is severe, and he seems to take no notice. It only seems. He is now high, ever living to make interest, as perhaps he was then doing for a people who wanted a carnal kingdom, and not spiritual freedom. But he sees his disciples toiling in rowing. He will come by-and-by, and over the waves and through the darkness, will be heard the voice, "It is I, be not afraid."

Teachers at home of self-willed children, in Sabbath schools of thoughtless pupils, with some opposition and little visible success, hold on to your work. Ministers with thinly-attended meetings, and missionary collections so small that it seems hardly worth while to make them, hold on to your efforts. Christians, fired with a true and enlightened patriotism, and indignant at the licensed enemies of all good, at tolerated polygamy, and oppressed Indians, do not abate your efforts one particle. He sees you "toiling in rowing." He constrained you to set out. He will come to you in due time.

Perhaps you need the lessons to be learned in the darkness and among the waves. The disciples had been in a storm before, and Christ with them, so that they had to awaken him and be secure against harm. Now they advance a step. They are to trust and hope, and row and feel secure, even though he is not seen in the boat. They must do without him by-and-by, and "endure as seeing him who is invisible." So he taught them. So he would have you learn. Keep your places; disregard the wind and the waves; heed not the slow progress and the darkness. He sees you toiling in rowing.

THE TRUE MOTIVE OF LIFE.

BY J. A. DE BAUN, D. D.

Not long ago I heard, on a public occasion, a very earnest and eloquent address by a faithful and efficient minister of the Gospel, who began with the foundation principle, that the true motive of right living is an over-mastering sense of duty. I heard him with great interest, and silently yielded assent to almost all of his conclusions, and felt myself greatly moved by his appeals; but I went away feeling that the result he sought with his audience was greatly weakened by the radical defect of his premises.

A sense of duty is indeed a master power for good. Many a weak arm it nerves, many a lagging step it quickens, many a struggling life it enables. Often has it prompted to heroic self-sacrifice; and many a noble man has done a lifework remembered by generations after him with admiration and thankfulness, because duty led the way and he followed after. It arouses to enthusiasm, which with singleness of purpose can plod through years unrecognized, climb hills of difficulty, insurmountable to ordinary effort, and find sufficient reward at last in duty done. Simply for duty men and women have gone bravely to the stake and the scaffold, not counting their lives dear unto themselves. Is there a higher motive than this which prompts such living, and such self-renunciation?

Just one. The true motive of the true life is love. Duty doing is mainly and often heroic—true love is divine, and always saintly. A man may conquer inclination, and do duty in spite of himself, but what he does with all his heart as well as with all his might, and so is doubly strong. Duty drives, but love draws. Duty says, "I must;" love says, "I will." Both are constraints, but the one is from outside and the other within the heart. Duty shows the rugged way, and says "Go;" love looks above and beyond it all, and says, "Dear Lord, I come."

Love is the highest motive, for it is the one required by both the law and the gospel. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself;" that is the Divine law motive. "Lovest thou me? feed my sheep; do my work?" that is the gospel motive. Noble as it is devotion to duty may be a heathen virtue; love in its true sense is a Christian grace.

Love is the strongest motive. It gives more than effort, more than self-denial, more than enthusiasm, more than life; it gives all of these when occasion calls, and it gives the whole heart besides.

Love is the distinctively Christian motive. It is what the Master asks of all his own, not as a sentiment but as a life principle. "The love of Christ constraineth us," that is the confession of faith which works.

The final appeals for Christian effort, therefore, should be to the highest Christian motive, love for Christ, and love for every good word and work for Christ's sake. Men may not have the courage for duty, but love courage when it has its way. To appeal to anything forgetting love for Christ is to weaken the appeal and mistake the true motive. The best way to reach the depths of the Christian heart is to say, "Let us do what in us lies for the love of our Lord and Saviour."

the most, all the way down from having a tooth extracted to scouring the knives. There was philosophy as well as folly in the reply of the dandy when asked, "How do you tie such a splendid bow?" "I give my whole mind to it." So must we do whatever work we have in hand. Fortunately for us, if we have adaptation and fondness for that work. Find your sphere, and occupy it if you can. If you haven't any, make one and entrench yourself in it. Excel in something, albeit you must do a dozen other things meanwhile, and lay yourself liable to the standing charge preferred against "Jack at all trades." Concentrate your spare forces, and it will appear in time that you are good at one trade at least.

System facilitates labor. How will you ever make that redingote to day if you spend an hour or so hunting up the pattern? A place for everything, etc. You can soon answer that letter, but where to find it; there's the rub. One who cannot quickly lay hand on his possessions may well confess,

"Each of my time has run to waste."

When our newly arrived kitchen girl systemizes her dishes before washing them, the cups and saucers after their kind, the sauce plates after their kind, the silver and goblets and everything after their kind, we gratefully accept the omen, believing she will not lose her place in the confusion incident to each day's domestic campaign. Self-reliance is a powerful auxiliary. Don't distrust your powers. Believe you can do a thing and it is virtually half accomplished. If you make a botch of it, try it again till practice makes perfect. But what of obstacles? "It-health," you say. We concede it to be one of the greatest. But how do we account for the amount of labor, literary and manual accomplished by invalids, often by bed ridden, or at least as Ecod would have it) house-ridden people? They contrive to do something and do it well.

Again, I am told that the models under present consideration are born not made. How many of us would consent to be called inefficient? Then let us assiduously cultivate this coveted capacity. We have no business to be inefficient. We are put here to do something. For our own part we know of no greater drawback in doing the desired degree of work than a feeling of frustration, which we are compelled continually to fight. We are no sooner seated for the purpose of completing a garment than visions of other conflicting duties, haunt every moment. It is true the dinner was on; yeast must be made to day; that letter received yesterday should be answered; I ought to finish that borrowed magazine and send it home, and there are these stockings to darn, whereupon I find myself fuming and fretting and doing nothing. This habit of darning duties up in dread array may be resisted. There come the so-called sayings, "Duties never clash."—"Duties that lie nearest thee." To these the heart replies, "Oh but they do crowd dreadfully," and behold I only know which duty is nearest, which leads us to the conclusion that valiancy is requisite to efficiency. Fluster and bluster are futile. A clear head, keen thought and quiet ways make dispatch, and constitute a reserve power not easily exhausted. For these we must strive.

Pretty people are pleasant, patient people are persons from their scarcity; vivacious people are breezy and refreshing. Even nice people have their niche; but for the world's work, the sick-room service, and the oft emergencies of our busy life, efficient people are in daily demand.

"IN A DECLINE."—Dr. R. V. Pierce: Dear Sir—Last fall my daughter was in a decline and every body thought she was going into the consumption. I got her a bottle of your "Favorite Prescription," and it cured her. Of all druggists.

Mrs. MARY HENSON,
Montrose, Kan.

Mere beauty is often the highest utility and the highest art and literature—farthest apart from immediate practical use—usually define the highest civilization.—Christian Advocate.

Fortunate is the child whose parents teach it that the Christmas present is valuable, not on account of the money it costs, but on account of the love which it symbolizes.—Watchman.

The New World's Dispensary and Invalid's Hotel at Buffalo, N. Y., is now completed and ready to receive patients.

EFFICIENCY.

WORKING PEOPLE AT A PREMIUM.

BY MRS. LEIGH R. JAMES.

"Don't you know that Mrs. D. can do anything she wants to. Instead of yielding to circumstances, she bends circumstances to her convenience."

Doubtless this is done to some extent by those who possess this enviable, almost indefinable, power. Alas! that the Mrs. D.'s are not more numerous! The name of the efficient souls is legion. Let us keep off the list. Yet unsuccessful people often possess unquestioned capabilities. Wherefore, then, the failings with which our lives are filled? Great is the gulf between engineering and executive ability. The truly efficient person possesses both. He can plan and persevere in the performance of his plans. Energy is sometimes mistaken for efficiency, of which it is only an important element. Energy is the Alpha, perseverance the Omega, of this excellent attainment. Procrastination prevents efficiency. There are certain things which you must do, but you "don't feel like it." It is generally unsafe to wait until you do. Attack the duty you dread

ANNoyANCE AVOIDED.—Gray hairs are honorable but their premature appearance is annoying. Parker's Hair Balsam prevents the annoyance by promptly restoring the youthful color.