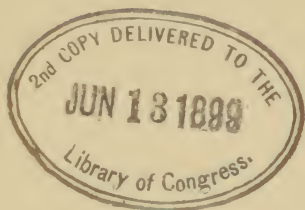




SECOND COPY.  
1899.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

Chap. .... Copyright No. ....

Shelf BR125

1162

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.





The Closing Century's Heritage



# The Closing Century's Heritage

BY

REV. J. D. DINGWELL

*"At evening time it shall be light"*



NEW YORK    CHICAGO    TORONTO

Fleming H. Revell Company

Publishers of Evangelical Literature

BR 125  
I 62

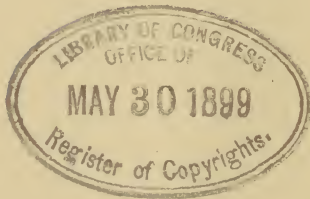
33139

Copyright, 1899

by

FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY

TWO COPIES RECEIVED.



35668

May 29. 99.



AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

TO  
MY WIFE



## Introduction

I have had the pleasure of reading the manuscript of the book which is now sent forth to readers everywhere. I received a spiritual uplift as I read, and so feel confident that there is a blessing here for all who will claim it. I know the consecrated spirit of the author, and pray God's choicest blessing—both upon himself and his work.

J. WILBUR CHAPMAN.

PHILADELPHIA.



## Preface

This little volume is neither the voice of a dogmatist nor a prophet, but is simply a setting forth in outline of a truth common to all who will stop and consider. The writer has written and published it in obedience to a keen sense of duty. If to any, or all, it proves an inspiration or a blessing, all glory to Him who leads persistently yet lovingly, through paths unsought and unexpected.

J. D. D.



## Contents

|                      | PAGE |
|----------------------|------|
|                      | I    |
| THE STATE . . . . .  | 13   |
|                      | II   |
| THE CHURCH . . . . . | 35   |
|                      | III  |
| THE BIBLE . . . . .  | 57   |
|                      | IV   |
| THE PULPIT . . . . . | 75   |
|                      | V    |
| THE PEW . . . . .    | 91   |





# The Closing Century's Heritage

## I

### THE STATE

“And the light shineth in the darkness: and the darkness overcame it not.”—JOHN i. 5, R. V. (Marginal).

THE words of Sir Isaac Newton shortly before his death, that he seemed to himself “like a boy playing on the seashore, diverting himself in now and then finding a smoother pebble, or a prettier shell than ordinary while the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before him,” are words as one has said significant of his habitual humility and reverence.

But for a man in the closing years of this nineteenth century to speak of our progress and discoveries, as the pebbles and shells upon the seashore, while the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before him, would be to manifest a false modesty or to acknowledge inexcusable ignorance.

Of course the ocean has not been ploughed through and sailed over in all directions, but the cardinal points of the compass have been followed far beyond the pebbles and shells of the

## 14 The Closing Century's Heritage

surf-wash; even beyond the far distant seeming termination of the horizon, and its depths have been sounded in so many and various places, with so many and various progressive results, that we are almost forced to ask ourselves at times, what other possible unheard of discovery yet remains to be made?

And yet, doubtless there are some, and perhaps many, but I am inclined to believe that they will be of a more intermediate nature—a filling in and a rounding out, suggested by the great discoveries already made, rather than entirely new and distinct acquisitions. The afternoon of our present century, the few closing years of which might be called the evening time, has been an afternoon of wonderful achievement. Undoubtedly they have been years in the world's history with different activities in different localities. We have by no means been entire strangers to the peculiarities and eccentricities of the past. Doubts and difficulties, wars and rumors of wars, and many other things, grievous rather than joyous for the present have manifested themselves.

But unto the nations of the world and the departments of life which have been exercised thereby the fruit of righteousness has been yielded, whether it has always been peaceable fruit or not.

Jesus you remember said, "Think not that I came to send peace on the earth ; I am come not to send peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law : and a man's foes shall be they of his own household." Friction and progress, sometimes and in some things are very closely associated.

The cloud bursts and the thunderbolt escapes, but the final result is purification. This universal note of progress, all through our century, particularly our century's afternoon, has been more than a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. Alfred Russel Wallace, in his recent book, "The Wonderful Century,"<sup>1</sup> compares the material achievements of the nineteenth century with other centuries, and in the closing part of the chapter gives a tabulated comparison of the nineteenth century with all preceding ages.

"Taking first those inventions and practical applications of science which are perfectly new departures, and which have also so rapidly developed as to have profoundly affected many of

<sup>1</sup> This little volume was entirely completed before I had access to Mr. Wallace's book, but finding the material aspect of the century so excellently and concisely treated, I thought it would be profitable in this introductory part to quote as I have done—especially for the sake of those who may not have access to the "Wonderful Century."

## 16 The Closing Century's Heritage

our habits, and even our thoughts and our language, we find them to be thirteen in number.

“1. Railways, which have revolutionized land-travel and the distribution of commodities.

“2. Steam-navigation, which has done the same thing for ocean travel, and has besides led to the entire reconstruction of the navies of the world.

“3. Electric telegraphs, which have produced an even greater revolution in the communication of thought.

“4. The telephone, which transmits, or rather reproduces, the voice of the speaker at a distance.

“5. Friction matches, which have revolutionized the modes of obtaining fire.

“6. Gas-lighting, which enormously improved outdoor and other illumination.

“7. Electric-lighting, another advance, now threatening to supersede gas.

“8. Photography, an art which is to the external forms of nature what printing is to thought.

“9. The phonograph, which preserves and reproduces sounds as photography preserves and reproduces forms.

“10. The Röntgen rays, which render many opaque objects transparent, and open up a new world to photography.

“11. Spectrum analysis, which so greatly extends our knowledge of the universe that by its assistance we are able to ascertain the relative heat and chemical constitution of the stars, and ascertain the existence, and measure the rate of motion, of stellar bodies which are entirely invisible.

“12. The use of anæsthetics, rendering the most severe surgical operations painless.

“13. The use of antiseptics in surgical operations, which has still further extended the means of saving life.”

Then he goes back over the preceding centuries, and after giving the result of each says: “Summing these up, we find only five inventions of the first rank in all preceding time—the telescope, the printing press, the mariner’s compass, Arabic numerals, and alphabetical writing, to which we may add the steam-engine and the barometer, making seven in all, as against thirteen in our single century.”

“Coming now to the theoretical discoveries of our time, which have extended our knowledge or widened our conceptions of the universe, we find them to be about equal in number, as follows:

“1. The determination of the mechanical

## 18 The Closing Century's Heritage

equivalent of heat, leading to the great principle of the conservation of energy.

“2. The molecular theory of gases.

“3. The mode of direct measurement of the velocity of light, and the experimental proof of the earth's rotation.

“4. The discovery of the function of dust in nature.

“5. The theory of definite and multiple proportions in chemistry.

“6. The nature of meteors and comets, leading to the meteoritic theory of the universe.

“7. The proof of the glacial epoch, its vast extent, and its effects upon the earth's surface.

“8. The proof of the great antiquity of man.

“9. The establishment of the theory of organic evolution.

“10. The cell theory and the recapitulation theory in embryology.

“11. The germ theory of the zymotic diseases.

“12. The discovery of the nature and function of the white blood-corpuscles.”

Then going back over the theoretical discoveries of the past, which with one exception—Euclid's system of geometry—do not ante-date the seventeenth century we find only eight, or to use the author's own words: “Thus in all past

history we find only eight theories or principles antecedent to the nineteenth century as compared with twelve during that century." Following the more detailed relations of each past century with the present, he then places in parallel columns the progress of the nineteenth century in comparison with all preceding ages.

## OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

1. Railways.
2. Steamships.
3. Electric Telegraphs.
4. The Telephone.
5. Lucifer Matches.
6. Gas Illumination.
7. Electric Lighting.
8. Photography.
9. The Phonograph.
10. Röntgen Rays.
11. Spectrum Analysis.
12. Antiseptic Surgery.
13. Anæsthetics.
14. Conservation of Energy.
15. Molecular Theory of Gases.
16. Velocity of Light Directly Measured, and Earth's Rotation Experimentally Shown.
17. The Uses of Dust.
18. Chemistry, Definite Proportions.
19. Meteors and the Meteoritic Theory.
20. The Glacial Epoch.
21. The Antiquity of Man.
22. Organic Evolution Established.
23. Cell Theory and Embryology.
24. Germ Theory of Disease, and the Function of the Leucocytes.

## OF ALL PRECEDING AGES.

1. The Mariner's Compass.
2. The Steam Engine.
3. The Telescope.
4. The Barometer and Thermometer.
5. Printing.
6. Arabic Numerals.
7. Alphabetical Writing.
8. Modern Chemistry Founded.
9. Electric Science Founded.
10. Gravitation Established.
11. Kepler's Laws.
12. The Differential Calculus.
13. The Circulation of the Blood.
14. Light proved to have Finite Velocity.
15. The Development of Geometry.

“Of course these numbers are not absolute. Either series may be increased or diminished by taking account of other discoveries as of equal importance, or by striking out some which may be considered as below the grade of an important or epoch-making step in science or civilization. But the difference between the two lists is so large that probably no competent judge would bring them to an equality. . . .”

“It appears then that the statement in my first chapter, that to get any adequate comparison with the nineteenth century we must take, not any preceding century or group of centuries, but rather the whole preceding epoch of human history, is justified, and more than justified, by the comparative lists now given. And if we take into consideration the change effected in science, in the arts, in all the possibilities of human intercourse, and in the extension of our knowledge, both of our earth and the whole visible universe, the difference shown by the mere numbers of these advances will have to be considerably increased on account of the marvellous character and vast possibilities of further development of many of our recent discoveries. Both as regards the number and the quality of its onward advances, the age in which we live fully merits the title I



have ventured to give it of—THE WONDERFUL CENTURY.”

This wonderfully vivid portrayal of material progress by Mr. Wallace will doubtless prepare the mind of the reader of this little volume for the more moral aspect of our century's progress, which aspect the writer distinctly desires to set forth and which any unprejudiced, thoughtful mind, must unmistakingly recognize at the close of this “Wonderful Century.” All the nations of the world, and all the departments of life have manifested and are manifesting a progressive spirit. Progress has not only been a striking reality to the nations which pray “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done,” but progress has been a reality to all nations howsoever realized and attained—and whether they are fully aware of it or not. For instance, China has been awakened by her war with Japan; Spain is wiser and we hope kindlier because of her war with America.

But so great has been the progress of the last fifty years, that the word progress in itself—which may mean any degree of growth in advance of stagnation—seems an indefinite and inadequate expression for the last half century's advances. Progress, in the sense of mere evolution, is only in keeping with a rational concep-

tion of God's way of working all the time, and at any time. Even the most Godless evolution would admit progress of this kind and degree.

The last four or five decades have been decades of more than a mere evolutionary progress. This might be all that we could claim, did we not recognize as Supreme Originator and Controller of everything worthy of progress, a living, personal, God and Father. But when we can see in addition to the natural the special intervention of the Divine, when we can see spiritual law in the natural world, as well as "Natural Law in the Spiritual World"; in short, when we can see the recognition of the two as one in God, and realize that this conception has developed more rapidly during the past half century than ever before, then it is, that we feel the insufficiency of the word progress as commonly understood. So rapidly have we progressed that our century's evening time, in comparison with the past, might be called the evening time of light.

The Closing Century's Heritage is Light. Light, which enables us to see the result of our past progress. Light, which enables us to see the things of the world in their relationship to God. Light, which enables us to see God in His relationship to the things of the world. Light, in

a word, for what we are accustomed to look upon in the sense of "secular" as distinct from "sacred," that removes much of this distinction, and enables us to see that what God hath cleansed, we have no right to look upon as secular as opposed to sacred; but that those things which necessarily belong to the affairs of the world, are just as much a part of the things of God, as are the things, which we have hitherto fenced around, with what almost might be called sacred superstitions.

The *absolute* divorce of church and state can never stand. The principles of righteousness must be carried into the affairs of the state in the future, or the practice of hypocrisy must be carried into the church.

Churchmanship and statesmanship must go hand-in-hand with the twentieth-century Christian as they have never gone hand-in-hand before.

The Christian statesman, or Christian citizen, or Christian public official, high or low, can no longer treat church and state as distinct and separate institutions, requiring attitude and action born of sacred motives on the one hand and secular motives on the other. This one thing in church, and another thing in state, this du-

plicity of attitude, is realized and recognized as inconsistent. Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde can no longer be two in one. He must be either Dr. Jekyll or Mr. Hyde. The church stands for more to-day than a congregation of sanctimonious-looking people, and the state stands for more than a department of the world requiring secular rather than sacred control.

Some one may say, "Has not the church always stood for more than a congregation of sanctimonious-looking people, and has not the state always recognized a Supreme Ruler?" Yes and no. The church I will treat in a separate chapter. As to the recognition of a Supreme Ruler by the state, yes and no, seems to be the only truthful way to answer the question. Perhaps yes and no, would make my answer to the question clearer, if I should add two words, and say yes theoretically, and no practically.

And as an explanation of the difference between the recognition of a Supreme Being theoretically and practically, I would refer you to the thought back of, and connected with the phrase, church and state, in itself. Why this decided distinction in phraseology, unless with the origin of the phrase, sacred and secular was the basis of the distinction? And if so be, that this differ-

ence exists, does it not look as if we recognized God as the rightful Head of the one, but only as the "figure-head" of the other? Some problems we can separate and distinguish between, for logical purposes, which cannot be separated and distinguished between for practical purposes, and church and state may be one of these problems. But if God is recognized as the foundation of both then the practical working of both, should be in keeping with the principles of Him who is counted worthy of being the right foundation. God has not one set of principles for sacred things, and another set of principles for secular things. God is love. God is truth. God is justice. He wants to be recognized as the Head and Foundation of such institutions and departments of life as only Love, Truth and Justice can be practically exercised in.

Now that these principles of righteousness, *because they are principles of righteousness*, have not been a part of the state's life in the past, as they should have been, all I think will agree. They have not been recognized as they should have been, not because the chief magistrates and their counsellors have all or always been ungodly leaders, but because even with God-fearing rulers and God-fearing counsellors, there has been what

might be called an inherited consciousness, of a distinct breach, and difference, between their religious life and their official life.

Mark you, I do not mean to say, that the God-fearing magistrates of our Christian nations, (and there have been many), have not been influenced in their state relations by their church relations, but, that they have done the right and righteous thing, not because of their conscious realization that church and state are, and ought to be one in motive, but because of their conception of right and righteousness received through the church they could not do otherwise than right. That is to say they did right in a mechanical manner rather than right for right's sake. The motor power in their lives has been the church, but the motive power has been neither single nor distinct. Their state life has borne the same relation to their church life, that the completed conveniences of the trolley car bear to the motor brake. The motorman sounds the gong with his foot, as a warning of the car's approach, and with a desire to avoid all accidents. The conductor rings his little bell as a signal to stop or go ahead, but these are only the *completed conveniences*, things which are done well, but done mechanically and according

to rule—almost motiveless actions. But to start or stop the car, to hasten or slacken its speed, the motor brake is grasped with a motive. The motorman sounds the gong with his foot unconsciously and from habit oftentimes, but he never turns his brake in either direction without having a motive back of his motion. To the Christian statesman and Christian citizen, the affairs of state, have been too much as the “completed conveniences”; many things have been done well, but done mechanically and according to rule rather than done from a sacred motive, with an eye single to God’s honor and God’s glory.

But the relationship between church and state no longer remains distinct, indefinite, or, as a matter of little or minor importance, to the enlightened Christian citizen. Our Christianity must be a part of our daily duty, and practice in every direction, or rather our daily duty and practice in every direction, must be a part of our Christianity. The enlightened Christian citizen can no longer have one code of action for sacred things and another code for secular things.

Neither can the enlightened Christian citizen throw off his personal responsibility in the affairs of state, in these closing years of this nineteenth century, without the consciousness that he is

## 28    The Closing Century's Heritage

guilty of shirking his duty. You notice I have used the word enlightened. I might have used any other word that would serve to designate that class of Christian citizens, who are living up to the light and knowledge of our present age.

Do not think for a moment that I am unconscious of our present darkness. Do not think for a moment that I mean to claim light as above described, as world-wide light, or even light as above described, for all the people of our own Christian America, or for all the Christians of our own Christian America. But I do mean to claim, that the light of our sacred duty is shining into the hearts of more Christians, with more enlightening power as to the relationship between the kingdoms of this world, and the kingdom of God upon earth than ever before in the history of the world.

Not long ago, while riding down the Mohawk Valley on a New York Central train in the early part of the day, looking off and up to the hills in the distance, I saw what seemed to me to be a perfect illustration of the thought, which I wanted to make plain as the Closing Century's Heritage. It was a hazy morning, and particularly so as I looked off among the hills. Sud-



denly my eyes rested on a spot on the side of the hills, which glittered as if an electric light was being focused on a reflector somewhere in the locality of that bright spot. I stared for a moment or two almost unconscious of the meaning of that bright and shining spot in the midst of all these acres, covered with mist and indistinctness. Another moment and I saw the explanation. There was a rift in the clouds just over this spot, and through that rift was shining a part of the brightness of the sun, which above the clouds was not only brightening a spot but brightening and burnishing the entire heavens, and so, I thought is the Closing Century's Heritage. It is not yet a universal diffusion of light, but it is even now the closing century's heritage as an individual appropriation and possession, and as the appropriation and possession of certain communities.

For proof of the individual appropriation and possession it may hardly seem necessary to cite any definite or single illustration, and yet one incident illustrative of this point cannot be passed by unnoticed by one who is a resident of the Mohawk Valley. I refer to the late Robert Ross, of Troy, N. Y., who died a martyr to the cause of Christian citizenship while defending the

purity of the ballot at the polls in that city in March, 1894. To the memory of the murdered man there stands on a hill in Oakwood Cemetery a bronze statue, seventeen feet high, protecting a ballot box and defending the shield of the state from stain. Well might the motto inscribed thereon read, "Martyr to right; well done." This monument stands not only as a memorial of the relationship of church life to civic life in Robert Ross, but it stands as an illustration of public appreciation of the martyr's motive and as a public recognition of the sacredness of the ballot.

Thousands of scattered individuals can testify to the enlightened conception of the relation of church and state, which has become theirs in the closing years of this century. As an illustration of certain communities appropriating and possessing this light, I need only refer to that magnificent illustration of principle transcending party in the recent municipal contest for mayor in Greater New York, inaugurated and manned by the Citizens' Union—the result of a rift in the cloud—a rift that is not necessarily going to mean the formation of a new national party, but a rift that is going to wonderfully help reform and purify the old ones. It is not only a rift in

the cloud, however, because God is withholding the entire light and brightness from us, but because we are withholding ourselves from God. We are yet without the universal diffusion of light, not because the light shineth not in darkness, but because men love darkness rather than light; because their deeds are evil.

Nearly nineteen hundred years ago, our present great majority and small minority were explained by Him who knew what was in the hearts of men when He said, "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God." Always remember though, that we are in the minority at the present time only from the worldly point of view. To Him to whom the nations are as a drop of the bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance, we are in the majority even now. Although only a human utterance Wendell Phillips spoke a divine thought, when he said, "One on God's side is a majority." It is the parallel thought in state affairs to the inspired thought in church affairs, "If God is with us none can be against us."

In the "Conclusion" of the "Wonderful Cen-

ture," Part II., of which book is devoted to the "failures" of the century, the author, whether because he wants to adhere strictly to the thought of "failures" or whether he knows of no moral "successes," makes some very discouraging as well as questionable statements concerning that which he himself chooses to designate as the "Wonderful Century." Here are two of his concluding remarks: "Instead of devoting the highest powers of our greatest men to remedy these evils, we see the governments of the most advanced nations arming their people to the teeth, and expending much of their wealth and all the resources of their science, in preparation for the destruction of life, of property, and of happiness. . . . When the brightness of future ages shall have dimmed the glamour of our material progress, the judgment of history will surely be that the ethical standard of our rulers was a deplorably low one, and that we were unworthy to possess the great and beneficent powers that science had placed in our hands."

Is not this the language of moral pessimism? How can such language be harmonized either logically or consistently with what immediately follows?

"But although this century has given us so

many examples of failure, it has also given us hope for the future. True humanity, the determination that the crying social evils of our time shall not continue; the certainty that they can be abolished; an unwavering faith in human nature, have never been so strong, so vigorous, so rapidly growing as they are to-day. The flowing tide is with us. We have great poets, great writers, great thinkers, to cheer and guide us; and an ever-increasing band of earnest workers to spread the light and help on the good time coming."

Of course "It is better farther on." But why rob the past and the present of what rightfully belongs to them? Why make the failure of the "Great Powers" to protect the Armenians "the crowning proof of the utter rottenness of the boasted civilization of the nineteenth century" as Mr. Wallace has done? Some of these "Great Powers" to-day perhaps are sorry they did not interfere. Of course mistakes have been made and opportunities have been lost, but such confessions are neither proofs of barbarous motives for war nor of a deplorably low ethical standard in our rulers. Cuba's freedom, won for her through a unique motive belongs to the nineteenth century. So also do Lincoln and Glad-

## 34 The Closing Century's Heritage

stone, McKinley and Victoria. Such incidents and such characters the future will not despise.

Prophetic foresight is not required to be able to perceive the steadily increasing righteous minority. The lump is being leavened, not only steadily but positively. Observation of our present statesmanship and its effects cannot but corroborate our faith in the progress of righteousness.

The things that are Cæsar's are being as conscientiously performed by many as are the things that are God's. God, as a God of nations and national affairs, as well as a God of individuals and individual affairs, rules and reigns triumphant, as never before. The world is learning that "righteousness exalteth a nation, and that sin is a reproach to any people."

## II

### THE CHURCH

“Ye are the light of the world.”—MATTHEW V. 14.

THE closing century's heritage for the church, is as great proportionately, as is the closing century's heritage for the state.

If the state realizes its relationship to the church as never before, the church realizes its relationship to Christ as never before.

If the state's heritage from the nineteenth century is an enlightened conception of its duty in civil affairs, the church's heritage is an enlightened conception of its responsibility in spiritual affairs. If church life must be carried into state life, more abundant Christ life must be carried into church life. And so, this realization on the part of the church, is bringing out the distinct and definite object of the church, namely, *the manifesting by the body of which Christ is the Head, the life and principles of the kingdom of God*. If the church fails to make this revelation to the world, it falls far short of its Founder's purpose. Thus far, God has always guided and controlled the church to this end, causing even

our mistakes to work together for good, and for the fuller knowledge and enlightenment, which even now it is our privilege to receive. But the responsibility and accountability of the future He is committing more fully to us. This does not mean the withdrawal of God's guiding and controlling hand from His church, but it means that God is committing to us, the members of His church, guiding and controlling understanding in the affairs of His church, which He will not have to overrule, because we have ignorantly made mistakes. He will be able to bless what we do without causing good to come out of evil.

He will work with us, rather than work through us; He will supplement our efforts, rather than overrule our efforts, *if we are faithful to the light He is giving us for guidance, if the light of Divine truth as it shines for us is followed and obeyed.* God has never before entrusted the church with such responsibility, for which He is going to hold it accountable. He has never revealed our duty so plainly, throwing to a larger extent than ever before, the future destiny of the church upon our shoulders.

Two things very noticeable and very closely associated as the closing century's heritage for the church, are BREADTH and DEPTH.



We have a breadth and depth hitherto unknown since Apostolic times, a broadening and a deepening consistent and Scriptural.

Consider the latter first. How is the church deepening, or what depth have we peculiar to the present, that we have not always had?

We are beginning to differentiate between church and congregation, as has not been done before since the early days of the church.

If church and state have been too much divided, church and congregation have been too much confounded. The God-intended distinction between the church and the crowd has been sadly obliterated.

“There is an immense distinction between a church and a congregation, although the two are oftentimes confounded.

“A congregation is an aggregation of unrelated people, a crowd of men and women flocked together in a certain place at certain times. But a Christian church is more than a flock. It is a brotherhood, a band of believers whose interests are interlocked, whose hopes and ambitions, sympathies and loves are intertwined, whose lives are interlaced and blended, a company of disciples compacted together, fused into one body for worship and work. We have many

## 38 The Closing Century's Heritage

congregations. Alas, not every congregation is a church!"

When the Founder of the church asked, Who do men say that the Son of Man is? And when Peter answered "Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God," it was to the rock principle of truth contained in Peter's answer, that Jesus said "Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I also say unto thee that thou art Peter (*πέτρος*) and upon this rock (*πέτρα*)—this rock truth—I will build my church and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."—R. v. It is Christ who is the Head and Foundation of the church and not Peter.

And only in so far as our different denominational folds—our church members and the members of our congregations—are builded upon, and are living upon, the rock principle of truth contained in Peter's answer, are we as individual members, and individual denominations, a part of that church, which shall become one flock, one shepherd. As different denominations, professedly confessing to be a part of the church of Christ, we have been lax in our desires and efforts, to make and keep our different folds, as separate from the world, and pure, as they ought

to be. As a church, we have not coöperated with our great Head and Meditator as we should have for purity. We have seemingly lost the Pauline conception of Christ's desire for His church: "Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it: that He might present it to Himself a glorious church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." The church to-day is spotted and wrinkled and blemished, much more than it ought to be and much more than it might be, if shepherds and sheep had not lost the lofty conception of the church's origin and infancy.

The church therefore has received and is receiving, a new and deepening sense of separation from the world: a new depth of insight into what God intended the church to be, a depth of insight that will bear fruit in every department of church life.

But along with the heritage of depth, and not less significant of God's wondrous blessings vouchsafed to us, in the closing years of this century, is the heritage of breadth—breadth of vision, breadth of realization. For any one denomination to lay claim to the only system of truth and government in which its adherents can

glorify God consistently with the divine system, is simply preposterous. And yet, notwithstanding the absurdity of such a position, there are those who do even now claim the absolute, and hosts of others who have only recently been released from such self-centred narrowness. The absurdity of such a position can only be fully realized, when we read a paragraph like the following from the report of the World's Student Christian Federation:

“The first convention of the World's Student Christian Federation, since its organization in Sweden in 1895, was held in the United States of America, in July, 1897. The regular Federation delegates first met at Northfield in conjunction with the annual conference of the American and Canadian intercollegiate Young Men's Christian Association. In addition to the 600 students from 136 universities and colleges of the United States and Canada, there were present students and Christian workers representing twenty-five other nations or races. They represented Orient and Occident, northern hemispheres and southern hemispheres, all of the six continents of the globe, as well as the islands of the Pacific and southern seas. Delegates were registered from not less than thirty-six denominations or branches

of the all-embracing church of Christ and from all the five great races of mankind.”

Just think of it, delegates from thirty-six denominations, all of whom would unquestionably say concerning Jesus, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” Thus we can readily see the breadth of vision and realization which is our heritage: we can readily see that the distinctions marked by our denominational names, need not necessarily mean distinctions in Christian character and Christian spirit.

Now this depth and breadth as above described, although significant of enriched Christian character, does not blind us to our present faults, but rather compels improvement along certain lines of church administration and control.

Our great error has been the one already alluded to, namely, church and congregation have been too much confounded. We have merged the two to such an extent, that the divine institution, the church, has become contaminated by our failure to keep separate and distinct the one from the other. Because of our sinful selfishness to go outside of our church membership for officers who will be social and financial pillars in the church, and because of our mistaken human charity which sees in some moral living people,

Christianity, because of these sinful motives and mistaken kindnesses, we have added officers and members to the church of Christ, as ignorant of spiritual things as was Nicodemus that night in which he asked Jesus "How can a man be born when he is old? How can these things be?"

We see the sad mistake of such church administration, when we turn to a picture of Apostolic church methods as recorded in the sixth chapter of the Acts, verses 2, 3, and 4. "Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables, wherefore brethren look ye out among you seven men of honest report full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business, but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word."

In this reference which was the incident that called the martyr Stephen into specific church activity, we get a glimpse into Apostolic church government. If men full of the Holy Ghost—men like Stephen—were the requisite men for temporal affairs, how exalted were their requirements as compared with what the church has been practicing.

A man of good business ability is enough to

satisfy some churches as to fitness for official position. A man of high moral character is enough to satisfy others, while others are satisfied with a mere passive goodness. Compare these requirements with those already referred to in the above quotation. "Wherefore brethren look ye out among you seven men of *honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom*. Not one commendable quality, but three, and three reasonable requirements too,—a man with no moral blot upon his character in the eyes of the community, a man whose faith is proved by his works, a man of sanctified common sense. If you cannot find as many such officials as you want, use as many as you have, and do not add other helpers lacking these qualities either from within the church or without unless absolutely necessary. These elements of Christian character in those who administer the affairs of the church—major as well as minor—have not been as earnestly desired as they should have been.

Church officers and officials, chosen only because of their social and financial standing is an insult to Christ who established His church upon truth and love, and is a stumbling-block and rock of offence to the world, which the church is intended to regenerate. Principle must ever tran-

scend policy if the church would fulfill her mission, and exercise her magnetism. The church and the congregation, or the disciples and the multitude have lost to an unfortunate extent their original—their Scriptural and their practical—distinction. Not only by admitting to official position men and women improperly qualified, but by admitting into the communion of the church many who are strangers to the new birth. How unfortunately true is the remark that we sometimes hear, that “A large proportion of the Christians in our congregations to-day would have to be placarded in order to be distinguished from the people of the world.” Its truthfulness being recognized not only by the world's people, but by ourselves—the people of the church also. And it has all come from mixing the world with the church, or rather from mixing the church with the world. That is to say, instead of the church retaining her exalted position in Christ Jesus and lifting the world to her high plane, she has stooped,—perhaps to conquer—but in her stooping has been partially conquered.

I know that Jesus said, “Let both grow together until the harvest,” and that among the twelve of his own choice there was a Judas, and that with all the carefulness possible there will be



tares among the wheat, goats among the sheep, and wolves in sheep's clothing. But even allowing for these things which Jesus Himself seemingly could not prevent, must we not as a church confess, that we have allowed many tares to be rooted, many goats to be pastured, and many wolves to enter through the door of the sheepfold, who at the time they came into the church, if we had remembered Christ's standard for admission to discipleship, "Ye must be born again," and had we as a church insisted on the necessary fulfillment of that condition, we would never have had many of the tares and the goats and the wolves, that to-day are choking the wheat, starving the sheep and worrying the flock. The "necessary fulfillment of that condition" does not consist in extracting from the individual, vows to local denominational church rules: neither does it consist in a denominational theological examination—it is the accepting of Christ as "The way, the truth and the life": the accepting of Christ conscientiously and understandingly as Saviour, as Master, as Lord. "Being born again" can mean neither more nor less than such allegiance. The individual experiences of regeneration and conversion may differ very greatly. With some it may be a simple, "I

will" to the still small voice "Follow me." With others it may be an experience like unto that of the Apostle Paul. With some "the hour they first believed" may be very vivid: with others it may be very vague. But whether vague or vivid, Paul-like or John-like, matters little, if Christ is accepted as Saviour and followed as Master, and worshipped as Lord. Such relationship to Christ ought to be required of every individual received into the church, *for his own sake*, as well as for the sake of the church.

Instead of the church being looked upon to-day as God's "peculiar people," loving one another, sacrificing for one another, living for one another, in order to fulfill Christ's commands; instead of the church being looked upon to-day as the body of which Christ is the Head, possessing these Christlike characteristics, it is looked upon as a body of quite respectable people, not very different from any other morally select fraternal organization. Lack of carefulness and discrimination in the reception of members, and an unwise choice of officials have been the means of lowering the church in the eyes of those who are without, and also of lowering the life of the church within. The world does not exclaim of us as they exclaimed of the early church, "Be-

hold how they love one another!" Of course we support great missionary and philanthropic enterprises; of course we do a great many commendable and laudable things which the early church did not do, "But these things ye ought to have done and not to have left the others undone." It is not a matter of thus far shalt thou go and no farther: enlarge as much as possible upon Apostolic practice, but not at the expense of Apostolic principle.

Money cannot atone for lack of consecration, but consecration would soon atone for our present deficiency in money which is so crippling our world-wide work. Granting for the sake of argument, that there is no financial deficiency in the church, would such a blessed assumption, if it were a reality, necessarily mean that all is well.

A church may have a great financial record. Every member in it may tithe his or her income. Foreign missions as well as home missions may never be forgotten, nor ever stinted. In short every enterprise or want, major or minor, local or foreign, philanthropic or spiritual, having a rightful claim, may be supported, and yet all may not be well. Such a record of course is very creditable, but you can conceive of a church with such a pride for its past record, with such

an ambition for its present record, and with such selfishness for its future record, striving to do all these and even more, and after all not transcending in motive and spirituality the Pharisee who stood praying, "God I thank Thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican, I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all I possess." High, exceedingly high morality, but low, exceedingly low spirituality.

This parable of the Pharisee and publican reveals a possibility in this direction, not only for the individual man or woman but for the individual church. It shows us how near and yet how far we may be from the genuine requirements of God. Except our righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees we shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Let us never mistake Pharisaic deeds and Pharisaic motives in our church life for Christlike deeds and Christlike motives. Let us never be satisfied with a mere financial record, because such a record may not exceed the righteousness named above.

Foreign mission collections are not always a guarantee of home mission consecration. A

church may become a slave to habit as well as an individual, and so may do many righteous-looking things, without any righteous motive. It is the church work that is done in the purity of spirit of him who prayed "God be merciful to me a sinner," that receives the Master's approval; and it is the church collections given in the spirit of her who passed in but two mites, that God can use to evangelize the world.

God can do more with a broken sentence and a broken dollar offered in Jesus' name, than He can do with a hundred sermons, and a million dollars offered merely for the sake of talking and the sake of giving.

Not long ago I was present at a meeting of a church society where the question came up, "What disposition shall we make of a certain amount of surplus money this year?" Some one asked, "What did we do with the surplus last year?" Some one else said, "I move that we do the same as we did last year." The motion was seconded, unanimously carried, and so half of the amount was given to a foreign cause and half to a home cause. No prayer offered that God might bless the gift; no prayer offered that God might use the gift, done simply in a cold, business manner, without any distinct desire or

hope that God might use it to relieve a suffering body or save a dying soul. And so we may contribute and disburse in this indefinite and unspiritual way—glorifying in appearance and not in heart, deceiving ourselves oftentimes, unless we search and try our ways. No mere church records minus spirituality, can be records acceptable to God.

Of course He wants our money, but He wants our hearts and our life allegiance, and if we give Him these and then give our money because it is a part of these, He can use it not only to bless the world but to bless the giver.

But to recognize only the faults and failures in connection with church administration and control, would be unjust, unnecessary, as well as inconsistent with what in the beginning of this chapter I mentioned as breadth and depth.

Although referring to those things above mentioned as faults and failures, nevertheless our recognition of them as such is complimentary to the present—a practical result of our deepening spiritual perception. In addition to this desire to make better and purer our old methods, we have also added new and broader methods.

To speak of the missionary and Sunday-school movements as new methods of working would

scarcely seem permissible, and yet to pass them by unnoticed would seem less permissible. They are not new as others are to which reference will be made later, but in their present fitness—one might almost say perfected fitness—for the accomplishing of the intended work of each, they stand as two of the great new friends of church organization and church efficiency.

In "A Concise History of Missions" by Edwin Munnsell Bliss, there is a table of the principal foreign missionary societies, with the date of organization. Three belong to the seventeenth century, nine belong to the eighteenth century, while ninety up to 1891, belong to the nineteenth century. A like progress and proportion might also be claimed for the Sunday-school of the nineteenth century. From the few scattered Sunday-schools at the beginning of the century we can now number schools by the thousands, and teachers and scholars by the millions. It has become a world-wide organization.

According to statistics of 1893, compiled for the World's Sunday-school Convention at St. Louis, Mo., the totals of the table show 224,562 schools, 2,239,728 teachers, 20,268,933 scholars. The United States alone has 123,173 schools, 1,303,939 teachers and 9,718,432 scholars. It is

hard to deprive either of these organizations of classification with new or modern methods when we realize their relationship as they now exist to nineteenth century progress.

But apart from these two mighty and magnificent world-wide activities there are certain new and broader methods particularly modern. One of these is the Young Peoples' Society of Christian Endeavor; "An organized religious movement, which numbers within its ranks a million and a half young people of both sexes. The Society of Christian Endeavor is a purely religious organization, though there may be social features, literary features, and musical features connected with it. In fact, the society is meant to do anything that the church wishes to have it do. The scope of its energies is almost limitless. It may relieve the destitute, visit the sick, furnish flowers for the pulpit, replenish the missionary treasury, build up the Sunday-school, awaken an interest in the temperance cause, preach a 'White-Cross Crusade.'" Then there are the kindred organizations, the Epworth League of the Methodist church and the Baptist Young Peoples' Union of the Baptist church; also the Brotherhood of Andrew and Philip, The Boys' Brigade and similar movements.



The Young Men's Christian Association is perhaps less vitally connected with the church than the organizations named above, and yet who would dare separate it from church activity when the *whole young man for Christ* is the foundation principle of the institution.

Another one of our new and broad methods of working for Christ is the institutional church. This I believe the future will recognize as one of God's specially approved modern methods. I have called it a modern method: this is true only in so far as it is controlled by our modern methods. The spirit and principle at the bottom of institutional church work is as old as the spirit and principles of the Saviour's church work. Eating with publicans and sinners, preparing breakfast for a company of weary and faint fishermen, ministering to the body as well as to the soul, to the head as well as to the heart, these are the institutional church methods of the Saviour. We have yet to perform our first consistent modern act in our institutional churches, which the Son of God did not inaugurate nearly nineteen hundred years ago. The modern institutional church that adheres to the institutional church principles of Jesus, with our modern facilities for their accomplishment, is the church that can do

the largest work for God. It may not be wise or necessary for every church to be an institutional church in the sense of modern equipment for institutional church work. Whether a church should or should not be institutional in its methods, depends largely upon the class of people who attend it, and the class of people who live round about it. If the homes are unattractive and devoid of the requirements and legitimate desires of youth,—intellectual, social, physical,—then there is open to the church an opportunity to supply these home lacks by furnishing the reading room, the game room, the sewing room, the gymnasium or whatever in the judgment of the church is most desirable for the community. If the boys and girls can be made to feel that the church is their larger home, the place where their spare evenings can be most enjoyably and most profitably spent, the place where Christ is not only preached on Sundays but revealed in kindness and helpfulness on the other days of the week, then it would be fulfilling its whole mission to that community.

One of the grandest features of the institutional church, as well as of many other new methods of church work is the aim to save the children. This is one of the strongest recommendations in

their favor. The strength of the church is in the children and the present is wise enough to grasp the opportunity. Of course the institutional church methods have their dangers—every good thing has. But if Christ's motive for doing such work is kept ever in mind, the dangers will be avoided, and the desired results accomplished. Jesus ate with publicans and sinners, not simply because He wished to get acquainted with them, but because He wanted to break to them the "Bread of Life." He prepared breakfast for the weary fishermen not simply because He desired to relieve their physical weakness and satisfy their physical hunger; He caused the deaf to hear, the blind to see, and the lame to walk, not simply because of His sympathy for afflicted and suffering human nature. Ah no! but He did all these kindly, beneficial and beautiful things, only that He might be able to minister to the sole needs of men.

"Ye must be born again," was the ever unobscured requirement for mankind, always stamped upon the Saviour's heart, mind and eye, wherever He went and in whatever He did. Any kind of church work and church life that has not the reaching of men in this deeper sense, its motive and object, is only tending to degenerate rather

## 56    The Closing Century's Heritage

than regenerate the church of Christ, tending to make the church and the crowd one, obliterating the divine distinction between church and congregation. If the church of the twentieth century fails to accomplish great things for God it will not be the fault of our methods, but our motives. The church was never so magnificently organized as it is to-day, and never nearer the spiritual condition where all can conscientiously sing :

“ Like a mighty army moves the church of God ;  
Brothers, we are treading where the saints have trod ;  
We are not divided, all one body we ;  
One in hope and doctrine, one in charity.”

### III

#### THE BIBLE

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.”—Ps. cxix. 105.

THE words of the prophet, “The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand forever,” remain almost as unquestionably true to-day as they did before questionings arose.

Not only have the grasses of many centuries withered, and the flowers of many seasons faded, but the criticisms and comments of many *worldly-wise* critics have withered and faded also, while the Bible, “the word of our God,” remains steadfast, immovable, always revealing the wisdom of God.

It has been more than a conqueror in every conflict. It has been “weighed in the balances” of history, philosophy, and science, and in so far as its pretensions or intentions to teach either are concerned, it has *not* been “found wanting.” If the 617 scientific men of the British Association, which met in 1865, could meet again in the

## 58 The Closing Century's Heritage

closing years of our century, methinks they would all sign anew a part at least, of the declaration they signed at that time, namely, "We conceive that it is impossible for the word of God as written in the Book of Nature and God's word written in Holy Scriptures to contradict one another, however much they may appear to differ.

"We are not forgetful that physical science is not complete but is only in a condition of progress, and that at present our finite reason enables us to see as through a glass darkly, and we confidently believe that a time will come when the two records will be seen to agree in every particular." Although this time of obvious agreement in every particular has not yet fully come, nevertheless there is no doubt but that it is coming, and nearer than ever before, notwithstanding our profusion of modern, scholarly antagonisms between science and scripture. We are learning that science is a friend and not a foe to scripture.

We are passing beyond that stage of fearfulness, wherein we were afraid of scientific investigation and light. We have learned that whatever is *true* in scientific discovery is scriptural, and that whatever of scripture is scientific is modern always. We have learned that science

and scripture have the same foundation, that they are two parts of one great whole, which when properly understood will both glorify God. Truth belongs to God wherever it may be found, and "we," according to the great lover and defender of truth, the Apostle Paul, "can do nothing against the truth but for the truth."

Even the irreverent, self-contained, and self-explained scholar, unconsciously and unintentionally, adds to the already revealed truth of God. His contribution to truth may not always be given in a constructive spirit. His motive may be to weaken rather than to strengthen and defend, and yet the very spark he tries to smother may be fanned into a blazing light for God, by the very attitude of his attack.

Thus the explanation of the Psalmist's expression, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee." So we might say that the harder such men work to destroy truth the harder they work to build it up and make it plain, "They can do nothing against the truth but for the truth." The reverent scholar has never tried to do anything against the truth. He has sought diligently to understand, to explain, and to corroborate the truth. He has proceeded in a fearless manner, searching every unsearched nook and corner related

to his task, ready to grasp anything and everything hitherto unknown. The real explorer and lover of truth proceeds with no predetermined ideas and results. He goes forward with his every available method and instrument, using them to the best of his ability, committing the products of his efforts to the Author of all truth. He is unconscious of both the desire and the possibility of interfering with God's truth, and therefore he leaves nothing unturned that will supplement his endeavors. This is the type of philosopher, scientist, and higher critic, that has done noble service for both God and humanity. This is the type of scholar that has done most during the past half century toward making the Bible the living Word of God. There have been times when we feared and trembled lest they would deprive us of something that would take from us our old-time faith in God. There have been times when not only we, but the critics themselves, have been discomfited by the seemingly antagonistic results of their labors, but out of the results which caused these temporary depressions, have come the most nourishing food for our faith in God's Word. After the results have passed through the refiner's fire, and been washed with the fuller's soap, most of the dross has disap-



peared, and the sons of reverent scholarship have offered unto the Lord, an offering in righteousness, an offering pleasant unto the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

Many, perhaps, think that they have been unnecessarily disturbed by our modern testing process. I wonder if they really have? Many, of course, never doubted the Bible being God's word, and never questioned many questions that have been raised and discussed, even during the period of their discussion, but would that prove that they were unnecessarily disturbed? Is there a single believer in God's word credulous or incredulous, whose faith in the Bible is not stronger because of the attacks and testing it has passed through? Some may have discarded their superstitious and childish ways of reading and understanding it, but is it not God's book to all, in deed, and in truth, as never before? It has proven its origin and authority anew. It has not only conquered human ignorance, as it did in the early days when ignorance and enmity would have obliterated it if they could, but it has in these latter days withstood and triumphed over human wisdom, saying anew by its dauntless steadfastness, "*I am not of man, but of God for man.*"

And so, as it has been so excellently expressed, "Whatever the advances of modern science, there will still be the poison of sin which no earthly antidote can neutralize: there will still be the sorrow of bereavement to be solaced only by the vision of the angel at the door of the sepulchre: there will still be the sense of loneliness stealing over the heart even amid the bustle of the world, to be dispelled only by the consciousness of the Saviour's presence: there will still be the spirit shudder at the thought of death, which only faith in Christ can change into the desire to depart and to be with Him, which is far better."

For these things science has no remedy and philosophy no solace, and strong in its adaptations to these irrepressible necessities of the human heart, the Gospel of Christ will outlive all philosophical attack, and survive every form of scientific belief.

"Should science increase its present knowledge tenfold, there is nothing it can discover which will enable it to close up that region in man where the spirit communes in prayer and praise with its Father, where the longing for rest is content in the peace of forgiveness, where the desire of being perfect in unselfishness is satisfied by union with the activity of the unselfish

God, where sorrow feels its burden lightened by divine sympathy, where strength is given to overcome evil, where as decay and death grow upon the outward frame the inner spirit begins to put forth its wings and to realize more nearly the eternal summer of His presence in whom there is fullness of life in fullness of love."

God's word is the only mirror into which man can look and satisfactorily understand the whys and the wherefores, the whence and the whithers, connected with his life: it is the only source of explanation for our desires and ambitions, the only adequate answer for our needs and hopes. This is so because God is the Creator of the one and the Author of the other. He who had power to create man with desires, has power also to answer them, and this He has done in His word and in His works.

"Only he who knows man could have made man a book. Only he that made all hearts could produce a book that could go to the wants of all hearts."

Where other books fail the Bible fits; when other books become monotonous and meaningless the Bible remains fresh and inspiring: no other system has ever approached its sublimity, no other book has ever sounded the depths of

humanity, or revealed the glories and possibilities of eternity. All other systems, and all other books, which have tried to take its place and fulfill its purpose have either waned completely or are waning, while the Bible with age increases in power, fascinating and controlling all over whom it has an opportunity to exert its life-giving influence.

But all this searching and sifting and scrutinizing, has not only served to renew our confidence in Biblical truth, but it has served to renew our understanding of Biblical truth. We have learned anew the purpose of the scriptures, which hitherto we have somewhat misunderstood. We no longer think of the Bible as the final text-book on geography, geology and astronomy. As Cardinal Baronius has said, "The purpose of the Holy Scriptures is to teach us how to go to heaven, and not how the heavens go." In other words, God gave us His truth as revealed in His word to teach us the principles of religion, and not to teach us the particulars of natural science. It was not God's intention in revealing to us His word, to give us instruction in the arts and sciences. Our relations to our Creator, our duties toward Him and toward each other, these are the things concerning which God's word gives no

uncertain sound. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind, and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"—how to fulfill these two commandments, was and is, the real purpose of God's written revelation.

Of course almost every conceivable branch of knowledge is used in connection with this purpose, but they are all used indirectly as connected with the special department to which they belong, and therefore in justice to God and His written revelation these indirect references should not be used as final or positive proofs, simply because they happen to appear on the pages of sacred truth. To Moses and John, Paul and Peter, God has revealed the final word and truth, which regulate the duties of man toward God and man toward man, but He has left to Galileo and to Newton, to Watt and to Edison, the discovery of the laws which preside over the universe. "It was never Christ's intention to reveal scientific truth in His word: but He has left ample verge and scope for it. The indentations of the two revolving wheels will be found to fit wherever they really come into contact; and the only thing broken will be the premature human harmonizing."

But a heritage greater even than our renewed confidence in God's word, and our renewed understanding of the purpose of God's word, is the heritage of a revived interest in the study and doctrines of God's word. Perhaps, "It must be admitted that the Bible is not so much read as it once was." If you mean by the Bible a bound separate volume in itself, then perhaps I would agree with the above admission in part, and say that in proportion to the increase of the Biblical world's population, it must be admitted that the Bible is not so much read as it once was. But is not the study of the Bible as a separate volume too narrow an understanding of Bible study? Must we limit Bible study and Bible reading to the hours spent in reading and studying the Bible itself? To do this, would be to do a cruel injustice to a great host of students and lovers of God's word. Not so many people may be able to quote verbatim, the letter as recorded, as once was, but to those who would make verbatim, parrot-like recitation, the test of the value of scripture to others and the test of appreciation of scripture by others, I would say remember two quotations, one from Paul, the other from Shakespeare. "The letter killeth but the spirit giveth life." "The devil can cite scripture for his pur-

pose." But mark you, I do not mean to say that the Bible as a volume in itself is not the preferable book or help by which to understand its own contents. I do think the tendency of the present time is to make too free and indiscriminate use of outside helps.

Neither do I mean to say that the memorizing of scripture is not profitable or proper. But I do mean to say that a man may be a Bible student and a Bible practicer, and not be a great student of the Bible, as a volume in itself, and without being able to quote either verbatim or verbosely scripture passages.

The Lord's prayer would mean a great deal more, to a great many of us, if we knew its spirit better, and its letter less. It is a revived interest in the study of the spirit of truth that characterizes the present. The Bible is being recognized more as a book of life than as a book of law. The "Thou shalt nots" and the "Thus saith the Lord" are being hearkened to and obeyed out of love rather than out of fear. The Bible, as never before, is not only acknowledged to contain the principles of eternal life, but the principles which ought to govern every sane person in this life. Its truths are being sought not only to die by, but to live by. Pilate's question

## 68 The Closing Century's Heritage

“What is truth?” would not dumfound or puzzle any company of enlightened men very much or very long to-day. “I am the way, the truth and the life,” is a satisfactory answer to any thinking and believing soul. Therefore because of the Bible's acknowledged wisdom and practical relationship to life here, as well as to the life beyond, the world is seeking to know its contents as never before. As an illustration confirmatory of this truth, let me quote here a paragraph which appeared in the *Congregationalist* of June 16th, 1898.

“World's conferences to promote religious and philanthropic work for young people are coming to be common affairs. This week the Young Women's Christian Association is holding in London its first meeting of this sort. The United States sends about eighty delegates, and India, South Africa and Australia are represented, besides the countries of Europe. The world's student conference at Northfield, Mass., is to begin July 1st and continue ten days. It is expected that fifty delegates from the United States will attend the World's Young Men's Christian Association Conference at Basle, Switzerland, which is to be in session from July 6th to 10th. From July 11th to 16th the World's Sun-



day-school convention will hold meetings in London. At all these assemblies the addresses will be in the English language except that at Basle, papers are to be read in French and German also. The Bible will be a prominent topic in all these gatherings. Then in this country Christian Endeavorers will gather in large numbers, at Nashville next month, and Baptist young people will assemble at Buffalo. Chautauquas are as numerous and attractive as ever. Jews of Atlantic City, New Jersey, and Roman Catholics, on Lake Champlain, have put the Chautauqua idea into operation. We speak of the summer as a season of rest, but the next three months will witness as great religious activity along many lines as any months in the year."

Now the Bible will not only be a "prominent topic in all these gatherings," but the Bible is the basis of all these gatherings, and the result of all these gatherings will be a fuller knowledge of the spirit of the kingdom. Of course the convention spirit is running very high in these days—national, international, inter-denominational, and local—and yet there is no doubt, but that all the evangelical gatherings and conventions serve to disseminate the spirit of truth, the spirit of God's word.

As to a revived interest in the study of the doctrines of God's word, all familiar with present religious thought and publications will readily admit. The old doctrines to many, have been revived and revealed anew. "Once in grace always in grace" no longer serves to quiet and comfort the man with no works and very little faith. Any doctrine which is part of a church's creed, which does not in the practical life of its members corroborate the scripture, "Faith without works is dead," is a misunderstood and misapplied doctrine. But the chief revival in doctrinal interest has been along the line of neglected doctrines. It would not be strictly true perhaps to designate them as unknown doctrines, but it would be strictly true to designate them as unappreciated doctrines. Take for instance the doctrine of the second coming of Christ—a doctrine very greatly abused and misused by many who believe in the pre-millennial theory, and yet a doctrine which if we will search our Bibles to find the truth concerning, the unprejudiced I think will decide to be classed with the increasing host of those who believe that Christ may come at any moment. Not necessarily a pre-millennialist, although some ardent advocate of the doctrine may try to persuade you that to be-

lieve thus, you cannot but be a pre-millennialist. Every doctrine has its cranks and this one is by no means an exception. But the normal representative of this doctrine and the one who understands the Biblical revelation, will not tell you the exact time of Christ's coming, neither will he tell you that belief in this doctrine is the highest incentive to a holy life, but he will tell you that "Christ is liable to come at any moment, and that if that belief becomes a part of your life because you believe the Bible teaches it, then it will be an inspiration to you to 'watch and be ready.'" I wish we could separate from this doctrine of the second coming of Christ, these *pre* and *post* extremists who interpret this doctrine to fit their theological theories; the former of whom say Christ *must* come before certain things can be completed; the latter of whom say He *cannot* come until certain things are completed. "But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son but the Father only." Matt. xxiv. 36, R. V.

Another doctrine, if such it might be called, that the Christian world is beginning to understand and appreciate, is the omnipresence of Christ—"Lo I am with you always even unto the end of the world." "Say not in thine heart who

shall ascend into heaven (that is to bring Christ down from above) or who shall descend into the deep (that is to bring up Christ again from the dead)." "Closer is He than breathing and nearer than hands and feet." That line in one of our hymns "He walks beside me all the way" contains not only a wonderful but a beautiful truth. It is the explanation of the third line of the same verse "And keeps me faithful day by day." The Christ of glory, at the same time the Christ of earthly companionship: the Christ of the heavenly way, the Christ of the sorrowful way; the Christ with God, the Christ with man.

But the last and particular doctrine which I want to call attention to, is the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Hitherto we have not only given the Holy Spirit third place in the Trinity, but we have given Him third place in our lives, and almost no place in theology apart from His doctrinal connection with the Godhead. We have used to express Him the pronoun of the third person, neuter gender. We have recognized Him more as an attribute and influence than as a person and a power. This third person of the Godhead has been so misunderstood, so mystified, and so subordinated that God has not been able to do any mighty works in our midst. Not that

the Holy Spirit has not been at work: not that the Holy Spirit has not helped each one of us do the little we have done for God; not that the Holy Spirit has been utterly ignored—no, not so bad as that, but His work has been limited; His work has been hindered; our work in proportion to our efforts has been fruitless and all or largely because we have not understood the Spirit's mission. We have been treating the third person of the Trinity since Pentecost in about the same manner that the world has been treating Niagara's power. We have been *spectators* rather than *appropriators*. All these centuries has that mighty cataract thundered, and foamed, and rushed madly and aimlessly on in its course, until as it were just the other day, its power has been harnessed, its force directed and now the result toward progress, What may it not be? All these years it has been calling to its many admirers and spectators, "Use me, use me, use me!" and we have been deaf to its entreaties. In like manner also we might say the Holy Spirit has been unrecognized. But we are rejoiced that the evening time of light is beginning to break. The Holy Spirit's rays are focusing upon our hearts and upon God's word with such enlightening and life-giving effect, that now we

## 74    The Closing Century's Heritage

are beginning to see His real relationship to this dispensation in which we live—to Bible truth and Christian life. The world is being stirred anew for God, by the new and scriptural understanding of this doctrine. He is taking of the things of Christ and revealing them unto us. He is leading us into all truth.

## IV

### THE PULPIT

“If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.”—*MATT.* vi. 22.

THE hero preacher of the recently published and largely read book, “In His Steps,” or “What Would Jesus Do?” although an imaginary character as therein named and described, is nevertheless much nearer a real character in more than one pulpit, than perhaps many think. The only regret I had when I finished the book was, that Henry Maxwell was not a real character. And yet I am convinced that the imaginary character therein described, in so far as it is correct, and applicable to the individual case is but the forerunner of the reality, not far distant for many pulpits. “What Would Jesus Do?” in Henry Maxwell’s case might not be the particular thing Jesus would do in your place or mine. The old phrase, “Circumstances alter cases,” is perhaps truer of the minister of the gospel, and in his work than in the case of any other individual or of any other vocation in life.

## 76 The Closing Century's Heritage

The fact that our environments differ, neither prevents nor excuses us from individually asking "What Would Jesus Do?" And the fact that our methods and messages differ, neither denies nor disproves Christ's attitude and actions in our individual efforts. Variety of means need not exclude singleness of purpose. Our commission is such that our methods and messages must necessarily differ. We must be "Wise as serpents and harmless as doves" if we would accomplish the most possible for God. We must be "made all things to all men, that we might by all means save some." Good common sense, born of conviction, and executed with courage, is a qualification of the Christian ministry, indispensable to the highest possible success. Such common sense will exercise the principles of Jesus and Paul above referred to as they ought to be exercised, not acting with harmful duplicity at any time, either toward self or others. But the fact that our environments differ and that therefore our messages and methods must differ does not prevent any one of us who will from walking "In His Steps," or from asking the question at all times and under all circumstances "What Would Jesus Do?"

Jesus' methods included the washing of the



disciples' feet, the broiling of fish for the fishermen's breakfast, the visiting of individuals and homes in times of affliction. His messages ranged all the way from the "Sermon on the Mount" to the multitude, to a conversation with two men, which necessitated a walk with them all the way from Jerusalem to Emmaus. And so to do what Jesus would do if He were in our places, would be to do what Jesus did nearly nineteen hundred years ago, namely, adapt himself to the varying needs of the various individuals, classes and communities with which He came in contact, never failing to say or do something in the way it would do the most good, toward helping God-ward those in His presence. No one of us may be privileged to enjoy the variety of opportunity afforded our Master, or be able to adapt ourselves to such a variety were it given us, but not being able to do so much, or not being able to do the exact same things which Jesus would do, in the exact same way, is neither necessarily our fault nor our misfortune. Jesus was the God-Man, we are but man. "It is required according to what a man hath and not according to what he hath not;" and therefore although our efforts may not be Christlike in degree, yet they may be Christlike in principle; and thus be what Jesus would

do if He were human and human only. Human nature, because it is human nature, is necessarily limited. "In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," but in us that fullness cannot dwell, because even the fullness of humanity is but the reflection of the influence of that perfect fullness of God in Jesus Christ. Our efforts are limited because we are limited. They are accepted of God as what Jesus would do, because they are wrought in and through Christ's power and grace. Thus because we are only human and limited need not discourage us, for if God had required divinity rather than humanity to fulfill His purposes and plans as committed to us, He doubtless could and would have made more than humanity possible to us. Our anxiety therefore should be, not about our human limitations, but about our human inclinations and aspirations. If our hearts incline aright and if our motives and hopes are inspired, by holy aspirations, God will not only use us, but will be glorified through us. And this understanding of God's plan and purpose for and in us, we recognize as never before. Individual fitness to preach the "unsearchable riches of Christ," is being considered with a sincerity unparalleled in the history of the Christian ministry since Apostolic days. Children born

naturally good or constitutionally delicate, used to be considered the legitimate aspirants in the family for the ministry. The boy of decided individuality was despaired of as a possibility for the holy office ; the boy physically large and strong was looked upon as fitted for something heavier and more difficult of performance.

I do not mean to say that God does not call into His service, those who are born naturally good, or those who are born physically weak. Natural goodness, plus supernatural grace, must mean a powerful life in God's service, and physical weakness plus spiritual strength may mean a life bordering on omnipotence, if God wills. Neither do I mean to say that the fitness physically or spiritually has been decided according to the old parental conceptions. God surely has called into His service many whom the father and mother considered fit. He has called into His service many whom the father and mother never dreamed of as being fit. He has restrained from entering and performing His service, many whom parents and friends would have been rejoiced to see in the profession. In other words God has done the selecting and rejecting, notwithstanding nature's recognized qualifications according to human wisdom, and He will con-

tinue to do the same in the future. Nevertheless there is from the human side, a distinction between the past and the present, in regard to fitness, which is very noticeable and significant. Natural goodness, and physical weakness are looked upon as slight indications of fitness even by parents nowadays. In fact physical weakness is considered a very strong indication in favor of a life-work in some other direction. The only satisfactory mark of fitness to either wise parents, or honest sons, is a direct call from God. This call may come so that we may phrase it in the language "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel," or it may come through such unmistakable circumstances in our lives that we are compelled to say "It is of the Lord, and of the Lord only because He wants to fit me for His service." Sometimes God calls as loudly and as plainly in this latter way as He does in the former way. God has no one definite formula by which He makes known His decrees. He may deprive a man of a desire to do anything else but preach the gospel; He may deprive a man of an opportunity to do anything else but preach the gospel; He may obstruct, or construct our plans so that no other possible course is left open to us, or He may call us as plainly as He called Paul. But however He

calls, whether by outward circumstances or audible voice, He will call us so plainly that we will know His call if only we are willing to listen and obey. Only he who recognizes God's hand or voice in this way, has any right to put his hand to the plow.

The thoroughly conscientious man of the future is going to be fully persuaded in his own mind that God calls him, before he will venture to preach the gospel.

The ministry as a profession and as a means of livelihood no longer plays an important part in the way of decision for the sacred calling. Professional dignity, and the necessities of life are adjuncts of the ministry, but God surely never intended them as reasons for any man to choose the ministry as his life-work. And yet by the fruits of some men, we are almost compelled to believe that respectability and remuneration were the prominent attractions connected with their choice and decision. Herein I believe is where the future is going to radically differ from the past. No worldly advantage is going to be strong enough to tempt the thoughtful man to handle the word of God deceitfully. Back of all the social, intellectual, and financial temptations, must be heard God's approving voice—

God's call to the preaching of the gospel as an apostle, a prophet, an evangelist, a pastor, or a teacher.

In the sixth of a recent series of articles<sup>1</sup> in the *Congregationalist*, by Dr. Jefferson of the Broadway Tabernacle, under the caption "What is the matter" these suggestive and true sentences appeared: "No, I have no objection to telling you what I conceive to be the radical defect in much of the preaching of our time. It is a lack of spiritual passion. The tone of authority is faint. Too much of the preaching is that of the scribes. Clergymen are numerous, but prophets are few. It is this 'something religious' which one misses in too many of our American churches and in too much of our modern preaching. Bright things, true things, helpful things are said in abundance, but the spiritual passion is lacking. The service smacks of time and not of eternity. The atmosphere of the sermon is not that of Mount Sinai or Mount Calvary, but that of the professor's room or the sanctum of the editor. The intellect is instructed, the emotions are touched, but the conscience is not stirred nor is the will compelled to appear before the judgment throne and render its decision. The old tone of the 'Thus saith the

<sup>1</sup> Since published in book form.

Lord' of the Hebrew prophets is lacking. Men are everywhere hungering and waiting for it, but in many churches they have thus far waited for it in vain."

Now this lack of "spiritual passion" and this "something religious" which one misses in too many of our American churches, is lacking and missing largely because of the indistinctness of our mission as ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I would not say that most ministers of the gospel have not been called; I would not say that they are not where they ought to be, so far as their life calling and work is concerned, but I do believe that only a small percentage have grasped the distinctness of their mission, and definiteness of their personal responsibility, as heralds of the gospel of Christ. We have been too long and too much accustomed to look upon the ministry as one of the professions and nothing more. A minister of the gospel is more than a mere member of a mere profession. "The position of a minister is unique. His mission is momentous. His work, while fitting into the labors of all other servants of the Lord, is different from theirs. The moment he forsakes the task appointed him and attempts to share the work and honors of other men, swift retribution

follows in his track. Woe to the preacher who in these modern days shirks the wrestling and agonies of the prophet, and attempts to perform the duties assigned to others!" Let us therefore hearken unto the Psalmist's admonition "Be still and know that I am God." Let us hear anew what God the Lord has to say unto us, concerning our office as Christian ministers. May we so wait before God, and listen, that if hitherto we have been uncertain of either our call or our message, God may speak to us anew, reassuring us of our commission, and rekindling our faith in the "story of the Cross." Conviction that God has called us, and that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth, are furnishings without which the minister will be a failure in his work.

Another requirement, that these modern times is making plainer to the ministry is their own personal heart culture. In the past there has been a tendency to rest satisfied with ourselves and to devote all of our efforts toward the bettering of others. This disproportionate, unjust and dangerous method, is changing. We are beginning to realize in our church life and work, the old scientific principle, "That water cannot rise above its level." If the spirituality of the



pulpit is low, the spirituality of the pew will very likely be low also. "Like priest, like people" may be either sadly or inspiringly true. If a preacher is a leader of his people, as he is supposed to be by virtue of his office, then it is we can readily understand how the temperature of the pulpit affects the temperature of the pew. Now whether it is the realization of the ministry of its influence over the people, or whether it is the realization on the part of the ministry of its own spiritual barrenness that has forced this personal introspection on the part of so many in the ministry, I am not prepared to say. The latter I am inclined to think. Be this as it may, the fact remains that the ministry is examining their own hearts to-day as never before. Men are crying "Create in me a clean heart O God, and renew a right spirit within me," with an earnestness unparalleled since the early days of Christianity. As an illustration of this hungering and thirsting after righteousness on the part of the ministry, and God's willingness to fill or saturate, which is the promise to all who hunger and thirst, let me quote here in full one of the papers read before a ministerial association a few months ago, on a Symposium entitled "The Minister's Own Heart Culture," by one of our

## 86    The Closing Century's Heritage

hoary-headed, highly-educated and much-respected ministers.

“I am asked to speak on the necessity of heart culture. Had I been asked a month ago, I might have spoken more in harmony with generally accepted views on this subject than now. Some three weeks ago while reading the words of Jesus for my own spiritual profit, and what might be called heart culture, I found myself consciously for the first time in the school of Christ. I seemed to hear Christ speak to me; down to the very depths of my heart His words went. Never was I so conscious of my poverty of soul, of my need of that furnishing which He alone can give. And in my sense of utter need I said to myself now I shall be furnished, but with this thought there came as by a flash of light the great truth that no words of Christ, no teaching of this school, can in any way prepare me to do effective work. No mere culture in the ordinary sense of that word; no mere spiritual training. Though I might hold in my memory all the words of Jesus, and though I might be able to speak with great human eloquence, all this would be as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. What I really needed was Christ in me. All possible culture, all possible training, the

teaching of His school was of absolutely no value unless I had Him. 'Apart from Me ye can do nothing.' The necessity is seen just here. His presence *must be cultivated*. Standing then on this great truth; seeing what spiritual culture really is, nothing is more plain, more self-evident or axiomatic than this necessity. Just here I believe the barrenness of my ministry is seen; I have not neglected heart culture in the usual acceptance of that word, but I have largely neglected the culture of the presence of Christ. What the church needs, what God's prophets need, is not so much more truth, more prayer, more self-denial, more activity; the pressing urgent need, the necessity of these times and of all times, is that Christ in the person of the Holy Ghost should come to His church. Then 'shall the lame man leap as a hart, then shall the dumb speak, then shall the plants of the Lord bud and bear fruit.' Intellectual culture will no doubt make man self-reliant. It will fit him to be a good lawyer, a successful physician, a competent engineer, but no culture of mind or heart can make a man successful in winning souls. The great lesson for us to learn is our weakness, and Christ's power. It is only when we are conscious of our own helplessness and discover by the

## 88    The Closing Century's Heritage

revelation of the spirit that all power is given unto Christ, both in heaven and on earth, that we will so cultivate His presence, that we shall go forth in His strength."

Three other ministers on this same occasion spoke of similar experiences. I mention these things simply to show that the ministry is in search of the deep things of God. Ability to exegete a difficult passage, analyze a parable or a miracle, or vividly describe a scene in the Master's life—all philosophical and rhetorical ability—fail to satisfy a heart conscious of some spiritual discrepancy which he knows he ought to have, or might have if he would. A man need know very little about the deep things of God in order to preach what the world calls a scholarly sermon, but a man must know something about the deep things of God, before he can preach the gospel that makes men what they ought to be for eternity. Mere theorizing is not enough. It must be a case of, "We believe therefore we speak." If we would instill the deep things of God into our people, they must first be instilled into ourselves. This is what the ministry realizes; this is one of the reasons why the ministry is seeking for the fuller life of God in Jesus Christ.

I have said little about the pulpit's head culture, perhaps because it is an implied necessity, but never before was education such an absolute necessity for the pulpit as it is to-day. Heart culture without head culture, will make just as great a failure, as will head culture without heart culture. Not necessarily because the ministry of the present and future must be more argumentative than the ministry of the past; not necessarily because we have more questioners and doubters in our congregations, or because scientific theories and diplomatic debate must take the place of the preaching of the gospel, but because public sentiment demands an educated ministry. It was Richard Baxter, I think, who said he preached one sermon a year entirely over the heads of his people just to show them that if he wished he could do so every Sunday. Richard Baxter's object was a legitimate one, but one which the modern preacher must accomplish not only once a year, but once a week if he would win and retain the highest possible respect of the community, and if he would do the most possible good for the Master.

This may not necessitate the preaching of a single paragraph over the heads of our people: it may only mean the proper utilizing of common

truth—scientific, philosophic, historic—to illustrate and corroborate the “Wonderful Story of Love.” Lack of this combined ability—head and heart—I believe is the explanation of the late Henry Drummond’s advice to young men. “I want to urge the claims of the Christian ministry on the strength and talent of our youth. I find a singular want of men in the Christian ministry and I think it would be at least worth while for some of you to look around, to look at the men who are not filling the churches, to look at the needs of the crowds who throng the streets and see if you could do better with your life than throw yourself into that work.”

It was not only said of Jesus, “Behold how He loved him!” but it was also said, “Whence hath this man this wisdom.” The two are compatible, and the minister of the gospel who ignores either for the sake of the other, need not be surprised if his is an unsuccessful ministry.

## V

### THE PEW

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven.”  
—MATT. v. 16.

THE pew after all from the human point of view, is really the regulator of all that has preceded. It is the pew that mans the state. It is the pew that demands the church. It is the pew that practically reveals the Bible; and it is the pew from which the pulpit is supplied. If out of the heart proceed the issues of the individual life, out of the pew proceed the issues of the world's life. Therefore, it is well that we should consider our responsibility in view of these facts, profit by our past mistakes, remedy our present errors, and go on unto perfection. By the pew I do not mean necessarily only church-members, but church adherents, recognizers and supporters of the church: those to whom the truth of the church is a necessary part of their life, and therefore to whom the support of the church becomes a personal responsibility. Before God, the recognizer of the church as right, and the supporter of

the church as necessary, whether he is a church member or not, will be held responsible for the pew's destined duty. "These things ye ought to have done and not to have left the others undone." "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them," but unhappy are ye if ye do not do them, but, happy or unhappy, responsible before God for the doing of them. There has been a tendency in the past—perhaps it has extended into the present, I am inclined to think it has—to imagine that non-connection with the church by membership, excuses such people from the discharge of spiritual duties. In and before the world they may stand excused, but before God, our judgment will not be according to church membership, but according to knowledge. If concerning some it shall be said, "Depart from Me I never knew you," concerning others it shall be said, "Depart from Me for ye knew Me, but would not obey Me." Thus, in this chapter under the caption of the pew, I would include as responsible to God, and to the world, not only the professors of truth but the *perceivers* of truth,—the recognizers of God's way as the right way. This will include many who are not professors, but who to Him, who looketh not on the outward appearance but on the heart, will be



responsible when the secrets of all men shall be disclosed. "If I had not come and spoken to them they had not had sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin." The pew has been, and is being spoken to directly. God has not only spoken to it through the mouth of His servants, but He has spoken to it through His word. Of course there is a sense in which the professing Christian, the church member, is more responsible than the non-professing portion of the pew, but both are being spoken to, and this according to the above saying of Jesus is enough to place all in the ranks of the inexcusable.

There are hosts of non-professing Christians, regular attendants of all the church services, who excuse their uncompleted Christian duty by quoting the inconsistencies and failures of those who profess better things: there are hosts of others, professors as well as non-professors, who blame their ignorance and half-hearted living upon the pulpit.

Now the CLOSING CENTURY'S HERITAGE for the pew means the knowledge of a life as our ideal and example, higher, holier, and much more closely associated with us than either our pastor in the pulpit, or our neighbor in the pew. Both perhaps ought to be better than they are, but

either or both at their best, will ever be unsatisfactory as ideals, to him who knows anything of the Man of Galilee. Earth's ideals and examples may inspire and encourage sometimes, but to make our inspirations and encouragements depend upon them, would be to make the biggest mistake of our lives,—even if no other reason could be given than that of an imperfect ideal at best, “seen through a glass darkly.”

In Jesus we have an ideal and example, who in the very face of His enemies nearly nineteen hundred years ago defied the accusation of sin; whose incarnate life has been searched, and sifted, and studied, by friends and enemies, even until the present, and in the end, as in the beginning, is still pronounced “The life void of offence toward God and man, the sinless life, the perfect life.” He is not only our only Saviour, but He is our only ideal and example, incapable of being impeached by human judgment, or criticised by human knowledge. The longer we live, the more we know about the life of Christ, and the more we know about human life, the less likely are we to idealize the human individual. I venture to challenge the sincere student of the life of Christ, to produce a single character in the range of your acquaintanceship, or friendship, whom

for one moment in comparison with Christ, you would present to the world as a perfect ideal ; one with all his perfection as seen through your eyes, for whom you would not fear every hour of the day, lest he might bring reproach upon the life of Christ. If therefore this is our feeling concerning those in whom we have the most implicit confidence—those whom we believe to be as near Christlike as man can be—how foolish are we to expect of the babes in Christ, (for of such the church is most largely composed), any other kind of a life, but a life of imperfection as compared with the Christ-life.

Instead of such imperfections being detrimental and discouraging, they ought to serve as incentives to urge us into closer union with Christ ; they ought to be practical revelations to us of what Jesus said, "Without Me ye can do nothing." Of course if the world was totally devoid of lives whose "works" and "fruits" did not reveal the influence and help of the divine life, the fault-finder and criticiser of the church might have some ground on which to base his insincere argument.

But such a state of affairs does not exist, even in the mind of the most chronic fault-finder. There is nobody but knows some life made bet-

ter by contact with the divine life, and there are only a very few who are honest with themselves and honest with their God, who do not know scores of lives transformed and kept by the power of God.

To blame my own willful disobedience toward God upon the weakness or ignorance of poor unfortunates who fail to lay hold of the Christian life as they ought and might, is a pretty unmanly, and cowardly way, of facing what we know to be our positive and inexcusable duty both toward God and self.

“Too many hypocrites already in the church” and “He doesn't practice what he preaches,” are lame excuses for intelligent men and women to offer even to man, not to say anything, as to how they must appear to God. Sympathy with those who offer such excuses in this enlightened age of individual responsibility, will not relieve the troubled conscience as it has in the past. Jesus' answer to Peter “What is that to thee? Follow thou Me,” when Peter began to use John's circumstances as a pretext for doing things differently, is an answer realized, if not admitted by the majority of those who adopt the principles of Peter's argument to-day.

The pew's understanding of Christ's teaching

concerning our individual duty and responsibility, is too thorough and too plain to hide behind the faults and failures of any one but self. God may be lenient toward those who are ignorant of the Bible—even toward those who are not permitted to read and interpret it for themselves, which seems to be quite a heathenish thought for civilization to carry into the twentieth century—but God cannot be lenient and forgiving to intelligent hearers and readers of the Bible, who try to excuse themselves for their carelessness and indifference with the flimsy excuse, “Others are not what they profess to be.” The past has been inclined to accept this manner of excuse with sympathy, but to the present it is mere “baby talk.”

Only two straightforward excuses can be given for not being an open confessor of Christ—unbelief or disbelief. That is to say, I am unable to believe or I am unwilling to believe. No other excuse, honest or honorable, can be given either God or man. Let us away then with this cheap carping and criticising: let us face the duty that confronts us honorably. Let us say to God and the world one of three things, “I can’t believe,” “I won’t believe,” or “I will believe.” But never again say, “I would be a Christian

if there were not so many hypocrites in the church." Individual responsibility is too plainly understood to be conscientiously disputed with any argument, much less the argument of faults and failures in others. Not only he who runs may read, but the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein. These old Scripture sayings which have always been true, seem to be truer and more reasonably conceivable as true, in the present, than ever before. No longer is the professional man considered the only educated man in the community. He may still be the professional specialist, but for what the world used to consider an educated man—a man well posted in the arts and sciences, theology included—we are no longer absolutely dependent upon the professorial chair or the ministerial dogmatist. Ignorance nowadays is a matter of choice, rather than an unavoidable calamity. There isn't a department of knowledge from scientific agriculture to a scientific study of the Bible, but is open and attainable for any individual who chooses their acquirement. Therefore there stands upon the threshold of the twentieth century as it were, our paternal guardian, handing to each intelligent son and daughter his or her "majority papers," saying as he passes

them, "No longer can you hold me responsible for your present or future welfare. Every man shall bear his own burden, and if any man lack wisdom let him ask of God."

Coöperation with the pulpit, or the relationship of the layman to the minister in preaching the gospel, is the second specific and positive revelation that the closing century reveals to the pew. Simply repeating with the minister, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done," or repeating responsively a psalm at the regular Sunday morning service, or any other church service participation, is not necessarily coöperation as it ought to be at all, and even if it is, is but such a little bit, that it is scarcely worthy of the name. And yet, sad as it may sound, this is all, or more than all the coöperation that nine-tenths of the pew give the pulpit. One of the most discouraging features of our present church life and work, is the few competent workers to be found—I might leave out the word competent altogether. Think of churches with a membership of 500 and more, finding it difficult to secure a Sunday-school superintendent for the infant department, or a superintendent for a Junior Christian Endeavor Society. Think of the unformed Sunday-school classes because of no teachers. Think of the

broken up and scattered Sunday-school classes because of disinterested and disinteresting teachers. Think of the young men who have been lost to the church, lost to their homes, and lost to their God, simply because there was no one to gather them into the Sunday-school, and teach them concerning sin and salvation. Think of the empty pews to which preachers preach on Sundays, and talk on Wednesdays, simply because there is no one, or but a very few to help fill them up. Why this poverty of instruction and coöperation? Why? A false understanding of the relationship of the pew to the pulpit. A recent writer in one sentence exposes the mistake and reveals the remedy. "A preacher of extraordinary gifts may draw a crowd into a building, but little is gained unless laymen are present to draw the crowd into the kingdom of God." Hitherto we have been accustomed to think of the preacher, as the most important personage toward helping the unsaved into the kingdom. As an *individual*, he may be *one* of the most important. But the pulpit in itself, as set over against the importance of the pew in soul-winning—in so far as either of themselves has power to win a soul—fades into insignificance. As already said in the opening sentence



of this chapter "It is the pew that practically reveals the Bible." The world expects the man who stands behind the pulpit to be a good man: they expect to hear him say good things: they expect him to invite them to church: they expect almost everything of him that he ventures to do for their good, taking it as a matter of fact, because of his profession and salary. His singleness of purpose is oftentimes questioned by the man to whom he speaks because of the position he occupies. He fails to receive many times the unselfish credit he deserves, simply because of the false relationship in which the pew stands to him. Preaching the gospel has been so professionalized, and so pulpitized, that the "good news" has neither had free scope nor been glorified. Many of us would pray with very little heart, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done," if we believed the human part of its accomplishment rested entirely with the pulpit. Mark you, I would not be understood as belittling anything essential for the highest possible qualifications of those especially set apart for the specific purpose of preaching the gospel—those whom we license, ordain, and approve, as especially qualified. But I do agree with that London preacher, who "counts all in 'Holy Orders,' who

in any sphere, however humble, are doing the work of God in obedience to a divine call; and who counts all others as laboring in vain, who have no evidence that they are thus called."

Professional titles, professional dress, and professional spots, in which to perform the expected duty is a narrowing of the preaching of the gospel, foreign to the intention of the divine revelation. When the pew realizes that in the persons of its elders, and deacons, and doctors, and lawyers, and business men—every one in the pew to whom God has given ability to preach a word, or utter a sentence of encouragement or warning, to a despondent or sinning soul—when I say the pew realizes that this is a part of the preaching of the gospel, and a part of its duty and privilege, and grasps the opportunity and performs it, then shall pulpit and pew pray with zeal and expectation, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done." Sunday preaching, and that alone by the minister, is a very slow way of hastening the millennium. When the pew lays hold of its privilege and opportunity, and when the world realizes that the pew is preaching as well as practicing, then will reality take the place of professionalism, and the worth of the ministry will be acknowledged by the world, and the need of

the ministry will be realized by the world. When in short, instead of criticising what is lacking in the minister's sermon, it will coöperate by supplying the lacking part, or better still, coöperate by supplying the whole part, where there is no regular minister to preach, then will the pew not only be grasping a present opportunity open in many country districts and city missions, but it will be grasping its God-intended work.

Only a few weeks ago it was my privilege along with my congregation to sit at the feet of a layman—a business man in our city—and listen to a gospel address, a sermon that would have done credit to any preacher of the gospel, and one which I feel quite sure meant more to my people on that occasion than anything their pastor could have said, no difference how theologically eloquent you can imagine him as being. It was a more real and practical experience of "A man among men" than mine could be, notwithstanding the fact that I pride myself on being in touch with the life and lives of my people. It was a man stripped of professional hindrances, a man stripped of everything but manhood, telling the "old, old story" of Christ's redeeming Love. That evening's experience brought me nearer the people, and brought the people nearer

me. No pulpit can be too sacred for such a service, no service can be more sacred in the sight of God. Such services in our regular pulpits occasionally, would illustrate the fruits of the ministry, and magnify the grace and power of the gospel. Now the encouragement of this practice is in the hands of the pew. Many a regular pastor, well disposed in this direction, is hindered by congregational tradition and sentiments, and whether well disposed or not the matter rests with the pew. May the time come, and come speedily when the pew shall have more to do with the preaching of the gospel; when especially the unsupplied, financially embarrassed churches and missions, and the distant destitute churches and schoolhouses, shall have in our capable laymen, servants of the "Most High" to preach the gospel of Christ; when our Men's Bible classes (young and old) shall be taught by men of like temptations and like occupations with themselves; when fellow-professional man shall advise or admonish his fellows concerning eternity; when the business man shall make it a part of his business to urge his fellow-business man to live according to the principles of the author of the Golden Rule; when as the prophet expressed it, "They helped

every one his neighbor; and every one said to his brother, be of good courage. So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smootheth with the hammer him that smote with the anvil." When we see the pew in this relationship to the pulpit, preaching when and where it has an opportunity to corroborate or add to the efforts of the pulpit, then shall we see the proper coöperation that should exist between the pulpit and the pew—then shall we see the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, recognized as a practical reality.

Thus far in this chapter I have called attention to personal responsibility, and personal coöperation, emphasizing each as being necessarily realized in this progressive age as never before. It would be decidedly unjust to say that only consciousness of responsibility and conscious need of coöperation existed. These two things have already borne, and are daily bearing fruit in a deep personal consecration of life to God.

And so the Closing Century's Heritage for the pew is not only the conviction of personal responsibility, and the consciousness of the necessity of personal coöperation with the pulpit, but the desire for a deeper and fuller consecration of self. Jesus' expression that the doer of evil

hateth the light, and the doer of truth loveth the light, are truer of the present than any other time since Jesus uttered them. The doers of truth are not only coming to the light, but are seeking and praying for the fuller light, whilst the doers of evil not only hate the light, but are seemingly seeking a denser darkness. In other words, the path of the just is shining more and more unto the perfect day, whilst the path of the unjust and the hypocrite is a path of blacker darkness than ever before realized or trod. We have gotten to the place where the light of God is shining with such brilliancy upon His word and upon our own hearts, that most Christians are going to do one of two things, either they are going to claim the fullness of their birthright in Jesus Christ as revealed by the Holy Ghost, or else they are going to become disgusted with what they are as compared with what they know they ought to be, and lapse into a kind of life, concerning which it may be said, "The last state of that man is worse than the first." We have gotten to the place where we realize very decidedly the impossibility of being able to serve two masters. God or Mammon must rule. "Either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other." The Christianity

of our century's evening time and close is either going to become hot or grow cold. Lukewarm Christian living we realize as not only being nauseating to God, but humiliating and depreciating to ourselves. Therefore man's higher and nobler nature demands an acceptance and acknowledgment of things spiritual as they ought to be. Appearances, and the traditional church membership idea, are the least important factors toward the satisfying of the thoughtful, honest soul, to-day. "The root of the matter" is the only comforting assurance nowadays. Paul's admonition to the Corinthians, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your ownelves," is one that many have been wrestling with and positively deciding anew. There never was a time in the history of the Kingdom of God upon earth when there were so many thoroughly consecrated and Christlike people as at the present. The pessimistic refrain on the lips of many "The world is getting worse every day," is a slander upon the truth and the power of God. Hall Caine was not over-sanguine, when in an interview he said: "The voice of Christ was never so powerful as now, His teachings were never so eagerly and intelligently studied as now, nor was there ever a time when so

## 108 The Closing Century's Heritage

many gave up all to follow Him." Intelligent consecration of body, soul and substance to God was never so marked as it is now. The fact that we are not our own, and that we have been bought with a price appeals to our manhood and is receiving an honest and earnest consideration.

The truth is marching on; the "time" is being quickened and the church of Christ *individually*, is falling into the line of march, "forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before; pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."



By Rev. F. B. Meyer

---

**The Shepherd Psalm.** Illustrated. Printed in two colors. 12mo, cloth, gilt top, boxed, \$1.25; full gilt, \$1.50.

**The Bells of Is.** Echoes from my early pastorates. With portrait. 12mo, cloth, 75 c.

**Prayers for Heart and Home.** 8vo, flex. cloth, 75 c.

**Paul: a Servant of Jesus Christ.** 12mo, cloth, \$1.00.

**Old Testament Heroes.** 8 vols., 12mo, cloth, each, \$1.00; the set, boxed, \$8.00.

|          |         |           |         |
|----------|---------|-----------|---------|
| Abraham. | Elijah. | Jeremiah. | Joshua. |
| David.   | Israel. | Joseph.   | Moses.  |

**The Expository Series.** 12mo, cloth, each \$1.00; the set, boxed, \$4.00.

|                   |                            |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Tried by Fire.    | The Way Into the Holiest.  |
| Christ in Isaiah. | The Life and Light of Men. |

**The Christian Life Series.** 18mo, cloth, each, 30 c.

|                    |                              |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| The Shepherd Psalm | Through Fire and Flood.      |
| Christian Living.  | The Glorious Lord.           |
| The Present Tenses | Calvary to Pentecost.        |
| The Future Tenses  | Key Words to the Inner Life. |

\* \* The first four also issued in flexible, decorated cloth, 16mo, each, 50 c.; the set, boxed, \$2.00.

**Addresses.** 12mo, paper, each, 15 c.; cloth, each, net, 30 c.

|                           |                        |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Meet for the Master's Use | A Castaway             |
| The Secret of Guidance    | Light on Life's Duties |

**Saved and Kept.** Long 16mo, cloth, 50 c.

**Cheer for Life's Pilgrimage.** Long 16mo, cloth, 50 c.

**Peace, Perfect Peace.** 18mo, cloth, 25 c.

**The Psalms.** Notes and Readings. 18mo, cloth, 60 c.

**Envelope Series of Booklets.** Packets Nos. 1 and 2, each containing 12 Tracts, assorted, net, 20 c.

**Choice Extracts.** 24mo, paper, each, 5 c.; per doz. net, 35 c.; 16mo, paper, 15 c.

---

**Fleming H. Revell Company**

NEW YORK: 158 Fifth Ave. CHICAGO: 63 Washington St.  
TORONTO: 154 Yonge St.

## By Rev. Andrew Murray

*Authorized; copyright editions.*

**THE SCHOOL OF PRAYER.** 2 vols, 12mo,  
cloth, each 75c. ; the set, boxed, \$1.50.

**The Ministry of Intercession:** A Plea for More  
Prayer.

**With Christ** in the School of Prayer: Thoughts  
on Our Training for the Ministry of Intercession.

**THE WITH CHRIST SERIES.** 6 vols., 16mo.

Paper, each 25c.

Cloth, each 35c. ; the set, boxed, \$2.00.

**With Christ.**

**Holy in Christ.**

**Abide in Christ.**

**The Spirit of Christ.**

**Like Christ.**

**The Master's Indwelling.**

**The New Life.** Words of God for Young Disciples  
of Christ. 16mo, cloth, 50c.

**The Children for Christ.** 12mo, cloth, \$1.00.

**The True Vine.** Meditations for a Month on John  
xv. 1-16. Long 16mo, cloth, 50c.

**Waiting on God.** Daily Messages for a Month.  
Long 16mo, cloth, 50c.

**The Lord's Table.** Long 16mo, cloth, 50c.

**The Deeper Christian Life.** An Aid to its Attain-  
ment. 16mo, cloth, 50c.

**Jesus Himself.** 18mo, cloth, 25c.

**Love Made Perfect.** 18mo, cloth, 25c.

**Humility.** The Beauty of Holiness. 18mo, cloth, 30c.

**Be Perfect.** Meditations for a Month. 18mo, cloth, 30c.

**Let Us Draw Nigh!** 18mo, cloth, 30c.

**Why Do You Not Believe?** 18mo, cloth, 30c.

**Money:** Thoughts for God's Stewards. 18mo,  
cloth, 25c.

**The Spiritual Life.** 12mo, cloth, 50c.

**The Holiest of All.** An exposition of the Epistle  
to the Hebrews. 8vo, cloth, net \$2.00.

**Envelope Series of Booklets.** 12 tracts. Per dozen,  
net, 20c. ; per hundred, net, \$1.50

### Fleming H. Revell Company

NEW YORK: 158 Fifth Ave. CHICAGO: 63 Washington St.  
TORONTO: 154 Yonge St.

## LITTLE BOOKS FOR LIFE'S GUIDANCE

"Surely no writers can put Christians generally under greater obligations than those who bring a message to that which is deepest and best in our personal life with Christ."—*The Congregationalist*.

*Long 16mo, decorated cloth, each 50 cents.*

**Praying in the Holy Ghost.** By Rev. G. H. C. Macgregor, M.A.

**The True Vine.** Meditations for a Month on John xv. 1-16. By Rev. Andrew Murray.

**Discipleship.** By Rev. G. Campbell Morgan, of London.

**A Holy Life, and How to Live It.** By Rev. G. H. C. Macgregor, M.A.

**Sin and its Conquerors; or, The Conquest of Sin.** By the Very Rev. Dean Farrar, D.D.

**The Lord's Table.** A Help to the Right Observation of the Holy Supper. By Rev. Andrew Murray.

**Waiting on God.** Daily Messages for a Month. By Rev. Andrew Murray.

**Saved and Kept.** Counsels to Young Believers. By Rev. F. B. Meyer, B.A.

**Cheer for Life's Pilgrimage.** By Rev. F. B. Meyer, B.A.

**Yet Speaking.** Unpublished Addresses. By Rev. A. J. Gordon, D.D.

**Ways to Win.** Thoughts and Suggestions with regard to Personal Work for Christians. By Rev. Dyson Hague.

**I Believe in God the Father Almighty.** By Rev. John Henry Barrows, D.D.

**Inspired Through Suffering.** By Rev. D. O. Mears, D.D.

**Life's Everydayness.** Papers for Women. By Rose Porter, author of "A Gift of Love," etc.

**When Thou Hast Shut Thy Door.** Morning and Evening Meditations for a Month. By Amos R. Wells.

**Foretokens of Immortality:** Studies "for the hour when the immortal hope burns low in the heart" By Rev. Newell Dwight Hillis.

---

**Fleming H. Revell Company**

NEW YORK: 158 Fifth Ave. CHICAGO: 63 Washington St.  
TORONTO: 154 Yonge St.

## The Quiet Hour Series

18mo, cloth, each 25 cents

**A Life for a Life**, and Other Addresses. By Prof. Henry Drummond. With a Tribute by D. L. Moody, and a Portrait.

**Peace, Perfect Peace.** A Portion for the Sorrowing. By Rev. F. B. Meyer, B.A.

**Money: Thoughts for God's Stewards.** By Rev. Andrew Murray.

**Jesus Himself.** By Rev. Andrew Murray.

**Love Made Perfect.** By Rev. Andrew Murray. With Portrait.

**The Ivory Palaces of the King.** By Rev. J. Wilbur Chapman, D.D. With Portrait.

**Christ Reflected in Creation.** By D. C. McMillan.

**How the Inner Light Failed.** A Study of the Atrophy of the Spiritual Sense. To which is added "How the Inner Light Grows." By Newell Dwight Hillis.

**The Man Who Wanted to Help.** By Rev. J. G. K. McClure, D.D., author of "Possibilities."

**Young Men in History.** By Rev. F. W. Gunsaulus, D.D.

**St. Paul: An Autobiography.** Transcribed by the Deaconess, a servant of the Church.

**Faith Building.** By Rev. Wm. P. Merrill, D.D.

**The Dearest Psalm**, and **The Model Prayer.** By Henry Ostrom, D.D.

**The Life Beyond.** By Mrs. Alfred Gatty. An Allegory, adapted by M. A. T.

**Mountain Tops with Jesus.** By Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, D.D.

**Fleming H. Revell Company**

NEW YORK: 158 Fifth Ave.

CHICAGO: 63 Washington St.

TORONTO: 154 Yonge St.



MAY 30 1899

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.  
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide  
Treatment Date: April 2005

**PreservationTechnologies**

A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive  
Cranberry Township, PA 16066  
(724) 779-2111



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 085 333 1

