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EDITORIAL NOTES.

"The man who never retracts his own opinion loves himself more than he loves the truth." The wisest man may sometimes be mistaken. It is the part of wisdom to correct opinions when we discover that they result from errors of fact or of judgment.

Manhood is made by resistance. The best type of development and strength results from the overcoming of obstacles. Emerson said of a bright young man who graduated from Harvard: "He lacks but one thing. If he could lose his popularity with his class, or some one would slander him, or some great misfortune should come into his life, it would make a man of him." Obstacles are opportunities. They are blessings in disguise. He is wise who is not deceived by the disguise, but views them as opportunities for overcoming.

The awakening of the South to its educational needs, that has resulted from such conferences as the one held recently at Pinehurst, N. C., suggests the responsibility and the opportunity that the minister has in aiding in the present crisis. The minister is generally the best educated man of the community. He is welcomed heartily by any school or any assembly of teachers. He should attend teachers' institutes and give encouragement and helpful suggestions to the earnest trainers of the children. They will welcome his suggestions. He should make it a part of his regular work to keep himself informed about the progress of the great educational movements. He will find a field of effectiveness here that has been neglected too long. The minister, as was his Master, is a teacher and nothing is foreign to him that concerns other teachers.

Another thought is suggested by the agitation of the educational needs of the South. It is that prayer should be made in our public worship for the teachers of our public schools. Such prayers are rare, and only recently has it been called to the attention of the writer that there is neglect just here. It is surely a great sin to omit to pray for those who more than any others mould the thoughts and life of the children during their most impressionable age. We pray for teachers in Sunday schools and in our church schools and colleges, but when have we heard in our public worship prayer for the public school teacher?

Selfishness steals from the soul its purest aspirations and its noblest impulses. It destroys the fountains of goodness and greatness. No selfish soul ever grows to be truly great. Both God and men honor most the man who forgets himself and gives his powers to promote the eternal well-being of others. The favorite theme of poet, orator or historian is the deed of self-sacrifice, the life lived for the uplifting of others. It is the sublime paradox of the soul that the more it forgets itself, in order that it may help others, the greater grow its powers and its enjoyments.

The parables proclaimed by Jesus are peculiarly suggestive. When he said, "So is the Kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep and rise night and day and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how." He expressed most strikingly a great truth about the spirit-

ual life. The seeds of truth spring up and grow in a man's heart "he knoweth not how." The sower does not make the seed grow. He cannot tug and pull and make it spring up and grow. He plants it in soil prepared for it, under favorable conditions, then he must acknowledge that a power independent of and greater than himself must make it grow. So we cannot by a mere act of will make our character grow into what God desires. We must place ourselves within the softening, quickening influences of God's grace and His Spirit will cause us to grow "we know not how."

Since the last issue of the "Christian Observer" was sent out, news has been received of the death of three of our ministers. Rev. Louis Burwell Johnston, the pastor of the South Boston church, in Virginia, died at the Memorial Hospital, Richmond, on Saturday, June 8th. He was a son of the late Frederick Johnston, an honored ruling elder in the church at Salem, Va. Dr. Johnston was born December 26, 1848. He was educated at Hampden-Sidney College, and Union Seminary, Va., and was ordained in August, 1871, by the Presbytery of West Hanover. He was greatly loved in Goochland and Orange counties, in Harrisonburg, and at South Boston, where his usefulness as a pastor is held in high esteem. He was a member of the Board of Trustees of Union Seminary, and Chairman of the Home Mission Committee of Roanoke Presbytery at the time of his death.

Dr. W. G. Neville, the President of the Presbyterian College of South Carolina, died of heart disease at his home at Clinton on the same day, Saturday, June 8th. He, too, was cut off in the midst of a very useful life. He was a man of decided convictions and splendid character and worth. His death is a serious loss, not only to the Presbyterian ministry, but to the cause of education in South Carolina.

The Rev. J. L. Williamson died at his home in Newberry, S. C., on Friday morning, June 7th. He, too, was a consecrated and energetic worker, a pastor warmly beloved. Fuller sketches of Mr. Williamson and of Dr. Neville will be found on page 22. In the great scarcity of ministers, the death of three efficient workers in two days' time seems, from a human standpoint, like a great calamity to our Church. May it prove a message from above to young men who are preparing to enter upon the active walks of life to consider seriously the question whether God has not a work for them to do in taking up the unfinished work of those He has called above.

The *Interior* says, "The immense benefactions of money that Princeton Seminary has received in recent years are not as important for the work of the institution as the wise gift of Mr. John H. Converse, who has presented to the trustees a residence property in Philadelphia to be used as headquarters from which the students on Sunday may work out into the city in evangelistic labors. The weekly pilgrimage to Philadelphia will be a big element, if not in theological education, at least in ministerial education at Princeton."

The Theological Seminary of Kentucky has an advantage over Princeton, and over many other Seminaries, in that it is located in the very heart of a large city, so that the student while pursuing his studies has abundant

Dream not of noble service elsewhere wrought;
The simple duty that awaits thy hand
Is God's voice uttering a divine command,
Life's common deeds build all that saints have thought

Life and Service

THREE QUESTIONS.

Voices, sad with sin and suffering,
From the lands beyond the sea,
Ever came in pleading accents,
Till they seemed a call to me;
But I strove to answer "No"
As I questioned, "Must I go?"

Still I mused, till growing pity
Touched and filled my inmost soul.
I could tell the "old, old Story"
Of the Love that maketh whole;
Yet I wavered to and fro,
Pondering always "Shall I go?"

Then I saw as in a vision,
One who stood with outstretched hands,
And a face of tender yearning
Turned towards those heathen lands;
At his feet I bent me low,
Whispering softly, "May I go?"

—Selected.

BRYAN ON BELIEF.

In an address at Springfield, Mass., to "the largest Sunday audience composed of men only that ever assembled in the city," Hon. William J. Bryan, said:

"We all have some conception of God and our relation to him, and in proportion as it is a true one it moulds our lives for good. There is nothing in this world that so largely determines a man's life as this relation which he establishes with God. We are weak enough at best, and there is an immeasurable gulf between the strength of a man who does right because he thinks others are watching him, and the strength of the man who does right because he knows God is seeing him all the time. For the former the time will come when he thinks that he is not seen, and then he will fall. But if a man believes that the eye of God is always on him, he has the strength and support that he cannot have who disbelieves in the existence of a personal God.

His Experience With Doubt.

"I passed through a period of doubt and skepticism when I was in college and I am going to speak to you of it because some of you may be passing through that very stage at this time. I was studying theories of the creation, and I got somewhat perplexed about it, and in my perplexity I went back to Genesis and found it written there that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And I took my stand on that proposition and determined to stand there until I found some theory of creation that went back of the beginning, and I am still waiting. I found that the nebular hypothesis holds that force working upon matter produced the world; I prefer to assume a designer back of the design, a creator back of creation. And so long as God stands back of the beginning and back of creation I care not how long you draw out of the processes of creation.

Miracles.

"Now as to miracles, we have only two questions to answer: First, could God perform a miracle? and, second, would he want to? The first is easily answered; a God who can make a world can do anything he wants to with it. If God is the creator, then we will not put limits to his power to cause a miracle. Would he want to? The difficult part of that question is that some people think they know so much about God, his purposes and his affairs and his methods that they assume to say what God would or would not do. The older I grow the less disposed I am to speak positively in the negative, for I have found it so difficult to decide certainly what God wants done today that I am not presumptuous enough to look back over the ages and tell what God wanted at some time in the distant past. I have seen so many things about me more mysterious than any miracle, that I am not willing to allow a miracle to stand between me and the Christian religion.

We Understand Enough to Keep Us Busy.

"I do not understand all the mysteries of the Bible, but if we live up to all the things in the Bible we can understand we will be kept so busy that we will not have time to worry over the mysterious. My observation is that the people who are all the time worrying about the mysterious things are mighty little concerned about the plainest things in the Bible, that they could apply with profit to themselves. Living in the midst of mystery, I shall not for that reason refuse to accept a religion that will mould our lives for good.

Salvation Through Suffering.

"There are some who cannot conceive of a plan of salvation which rests upon the idea that one shall die for others. Is that so strange a doctrine that one shall sacrifice and suffer for others? That is the most familiar thing in the world. From

the time we know anything till we die we are in the presence of illustrations of this willingness of men to suffer and die for others. Each generation in turn sacrifices for the generation that comes after.

"Nor is this confined to domestic life. It is true in history. Every movement has behind it the sacrifices of people willing to sacrifice. We do not call a man great till he understands how small he is in comparison with the things with which he has to deal. 'He that saveth his life shall lose it.' Is that a strange doctrine? It is an epitome of history. The man who is trying to save his own life leads a little life. It was a citizen of your own state, Wendell Phillips, who expressed the same idea in other words: 'How prudently most men sink into nameless graves, while a few forget themselves into immortality.'

"How could Christ better have reached the human heart than by the method that he employed? Sacrifice is the mark of love, and what greater love is there than the love that would prompt one to give his life for another? Because this is the mark of love; it has touched the heart of the world.

Proving Christ's Divinity.

"If I were to attempt to prove the divinity of Christ, instead of beginning with mystery or miracle or the theory of the atonement, I should simply tell you the story of his life and how he lived and what he said and did and how he died, and then I would ask you to explain it by any other theory than that he was divine. Reared in a carpenter's shop, having no access to the wisdom of the other races and people, he yet, when about 30 years of age, gave to the world a code of morality, the like of which the world had never seen before, the like of which the world has never seen since. Then he was put to death. He was nailed to the cross in shame and those who followed him were scattered or killed. And then, from this little beginning his religion spread until hundreds of millions have taken his name upon their lips, and millions have been ready to die rather than surrender the faith that he put into their hearts. To me it is easier to believe him divine than to explain in any other way what he said and did."

CHRISTIANITY AS A PRESENT ASSET.

Christianity's chief value is for this world—while we are in this world. It pays better for the present, as well as for the future, than any other investment we can make. To be sure, that is never one's reason for following Christ,—for if it were, one would not be a follower of Christ. But the immediate and temporal gain of Christianity is one of the unsought and unexpected blessings that the Saviour loves to bestow. Because this is God's world, the observance of God's laws brings better results here and now than the breaking of those laws. Honesty is one such law: honesty at the cost, if need be, of everything we have. And when such honesty controls a man and all his business, he finds that his business improves. Self-denial to the extreme of laying down life is another such law; and when self is thus trampled upon, Christ looks after that ignored self, and the man receives "a hundredfold now in this time," according to the promise. As representing Christ before the world, let us lay the emphasis upon men's need of him now and here. For one who has gone into partnership with Christ in this world need have little thought for the next. —Sunday School Times.

CHRISTIAN LOVE.

Love is a compound thing. Paul tells us. It is like light. As you have seen a man of science take a beam of light and pass it through a crystal prism broken up into its component colors—red, and blue, and yellow, and violet and orange, and all the colors of the rainbow—so Paul passes this thing, Love, through the magnificent prism of his inspired intellect, and it comes out on the other side broken up into its elements. And in these few words we have what one might call the Spectrum of Love, the analysis of Love. Will you observe what its elements are? Will you notice that they have common names; that they are virtues which we hear about every day; that they are things which can be practised by every man in every place in life; and how by a multitude of small things and ordinary virtues, the supreme thing, the summum bonum, is made up? The Spectrum of Love has nine ingredients: Patience—"Love suffereth long;" Kindness—"And is kind;" Generosity—"Love envieth not;" Humility—"Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up;" Courtesy—"Doth not behave itself unseemly;" Unselfishness—"Seeketh not her own;" Good Temper—"Is not easily provoked;" Guilelessness—"Thinketh no evil;" Sincerity—"Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." These make up the supreme gift, the stature of the perfect man. —Prof. Drummond.

The Sunday School

BY REV. E. P. MICKEL, D. D.

SPECIAL MISSIONARY LESSON.

Sabbath School Lesson for June 30, 1907.

Phil 2:5-11.

Scripture Lesson.—5. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6. Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7. But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11. And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Golden Text.—"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow."—Phil. 2:10

SHORTER CATECHISM.

Q. 64. What is required in the fifth commandment?

A. The fifth commandment requireth the preserving the honor and performing the duties belonging to every one in their several places and relations, as superiors, inferiors or equals.

LESSON COMMENTARY.

For the past six years, we have had each quarter one lesson selected with the object of teaching temperance. While total abstinence from alcoholic beverages is always to be thoroughly inculcated, still it appeared that there were other great subjects which also ought to receive a prominent position,—and the General Assembly of 1906 directed the Committee of Publication "to substitute two special missionary lessons for two of the temperance lessons during the year." Our present lesson is the first of these two.

The work of missions constitutes one-half of all that the Church has been organized to do. The work of the Church is two-fold;—to encourage and direct the people of God in their spiritual development, and to carry the Gospel of Christ's salvation to those who have never heard of the way of eternal life. This second part of the Church's work is the work of missions. The word "Mission" means "that for which one is sent,"—and to preach the salvation of the Son of God is the mission of the Church from the Lord to the world, it is what he has sent the Church to do for others.

In fact what we have named last, God puts first in the great commission to His Church,—"Go ye therefore and teach all nations;"—then follows the command for the work of instruction in the congregations, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." (Matt. 28:19 and 20.)

After his resurrection, Jesus taught his disciples "That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." (Luke 24:47). So today the work of the Church in preaching the Gospel should begin in each congregation,—but it must not stop there. There are communities in every state where there is no church or Sabbath school;—it is the duty of God's people to send them the Gospel. Then beyond the sea are the great nations that worship idols and have no way of knowing the truth of God's law and salvation unless we who have it shall send it to them. If in the ages of the past, the Church has failed to go into every land with the glad tidings of redemption—then there is only the more reason why we ought to do all that lies in our power to carry the light of life to all nations as our Saviour has commanded.

In our usual employment of words, we do not call preaching the Gospel in our own communities "missions," but "congregational work," because this is done without sending anyone away. The work of preaching outside of our self-supporting congregations we divide into two departments,—Home Missions, in our own country, and Foreign Missions in other lands. Whoever is interested in any of the work of Christ's kingdom, ought to be interested in all of it. Our study of Missions in our present lesson includes both Home and Foreign Missions. There is no dividing line between them except the boundary lines of human territories and of human language.

Paul's Epistle to the Philippians was written near the close of his life, when he was a prisoner in Rome. Philippi was a Roman military town in Macedonia, and was the first place in Europe to which Paul had carried the Gospel in his great Foreign missionary work. Many were converted under Paul's preaching, but on account of persecution the apostle was soon forced to pass on to other cities. But it is recorded that he visited Philippi at least twice more, and between Paul and this church there