

BX

6333

.I55P7

Present Day Life
and Religion

A. C. Dixon.



Class BX 6335

Book .I 55 P 7

Copyright N^o _____

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT.



Present Day Life and Religion

A SERIES OF SERMONS ON CARDINAL
DOCTRINES AND POPULAR SINS.

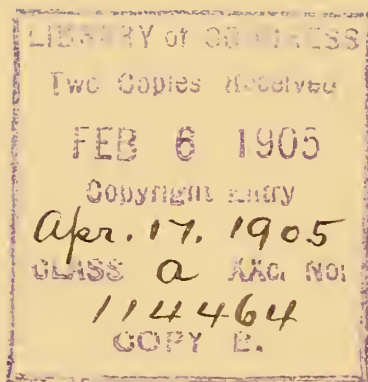
By A. C. DIXON,
RUGGLES ST. BAPTIST CHURCH
BOSTON

)
))
))
))
))

PUBLISHED BY
F. M. BARTON
CLEVELAND, O.

[1905]

BX6333
.D55P7



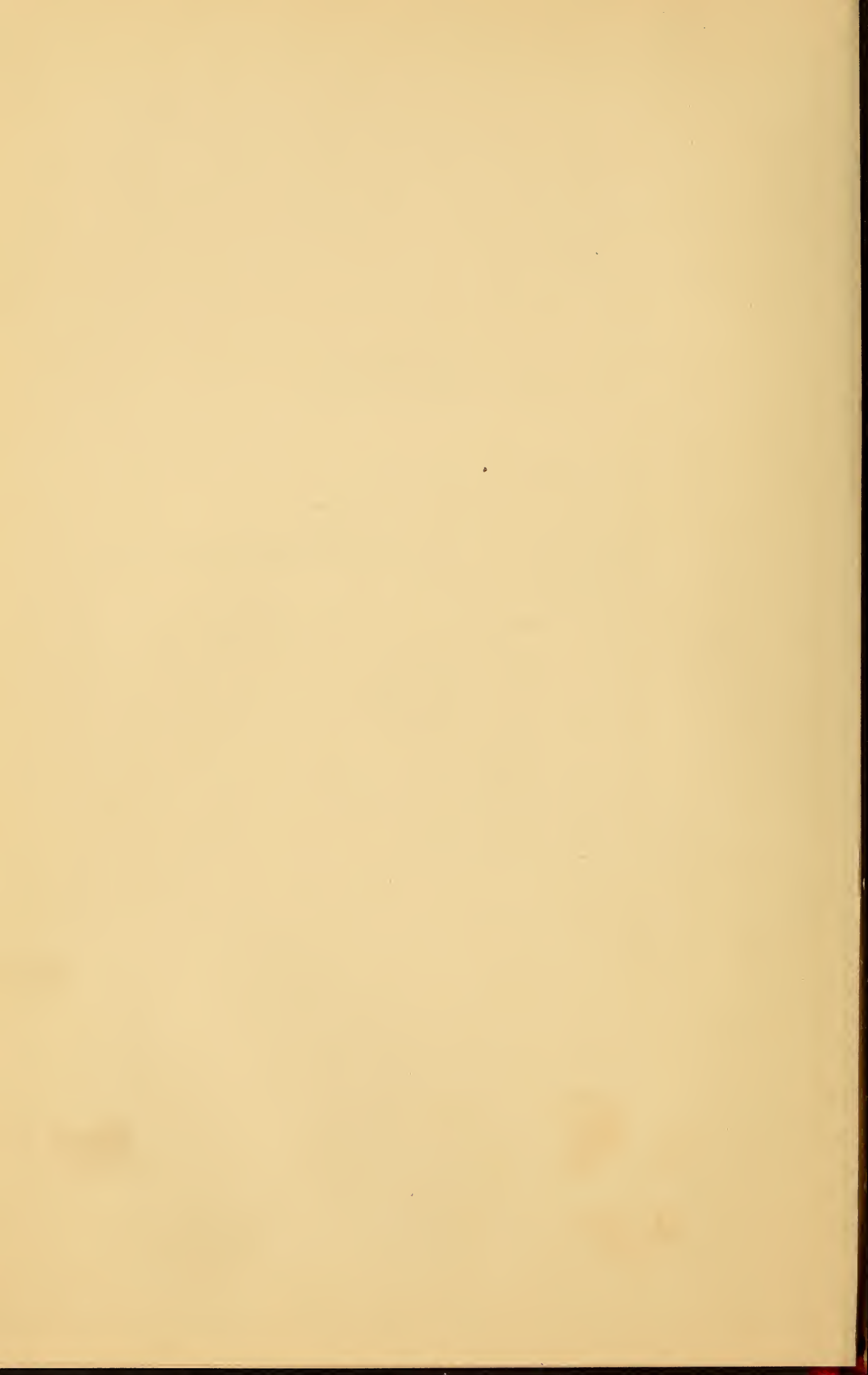
Copyrighted 1905
BY
F. M. BARTON.



Recat. R. 2 N. 13 ge 34.

CONTENTS.

1. THE ETHICS OF PRAYER.
2. ETHICS OF THE ATONEMENT.
3. ETHICS OF THE DOCTRINE OF HEAVEN AND HELL.
4. ETHICS OF BUSINESS.
5. ETHICS OF MARRIAGE AND HOME LIFE.
6. ETHICS OF AMUSEMENTS.
7. ETHICS OF THE THEATRE.
8. ETHICS OF THE DANCE.
9. ETHICS OF THE CARD TABLE.
10. ETHICS OF NOVEL READING.
11. ETHICS OF SECRETISM.



The Ethics of Prayer

“ Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? ” GEN. xviii : 25

“ Men ought always to pray. ” LUKE xviii : 1

THESE TWO SCRIPTURES bring us into the realm of ethics which has to do with the rightness and oughtness of things. When a man is ethically sound, he is what he ought to be. Abraham with holy boldness applies the ethical test to God himself. He feels that it would be wrong to destroy the righteous with the wicked, and he is equally certain that it would be right to spare the many wicked for the sake of a few righteous. His horror at the thought of God's doing wrong and his approval of his doing right make him ask the question, “ Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? ” This gives us the divine side of prayer from an ethical point of view. Is it right for God to answer prayer? Does the “ Judge of all the earth ” do right when he gives audience to such petitioners as Abraham pleading for Sodom?

The second text gives us the human side of prayer from an ethical point of view. It answers the question: Who is ethically right, the infidel who boasts that he never bows the knee, or the christian who prays? Is a prayerful life a moral life and, conversely, is the prayerless life immoral? In other words, can one who refuses to pray be ethically sound in his relations to God and man? Are ethical Associations that divorce morals from religion moral or immoral institutions? Jesus answers these questions: “ Men OUGHT always to pray. ” Prayer belongs to the realm of oughtness. It is an ethical proceeding, so that the institution which inveighs against praying is unethical in character. It would prevent God from doing right in answering prayer, and

Rev. A. C. Dixon's Sermons

man from doing right in praying. The philosophy of this is found in the teaching of Jesus Christ.

We will look first at the Divine side:

First. GOD IS KING, and it is right for a king to hear and answer the petitions of his subjects. Prayerlessness ignores, if it does not despise, the ruler of the universe by refusing to consult or petition him about any need or grievance. The prayerless man has placed himself outside the pale of civilization by denying to the ruler the right to hear the petitions of his subjects. If he admits that there is a God, while at the same time he denies that he hears prayer, he has brought his God down to the position of a petty savage chieftan who lives for his own pleasure without regard for the welfare of his subjects. Prayerlessness is, therefore, a species of barbarism.

Second. GOD IS JUDGE, and it is right for a judge to hear and answer the prayer of a plaintiff. In the parable the widow has a grievance against her adversary, and pleads that he shall be punished. Though the judge is unjust, his judicial position compels him to hear her plea, and her importunity constrains him to grant her petition. Now if an unjust judge is compelled by official position to hear the plea, and constrained by the importunity of the plaintiff to grant it, how much more will a just God respect his judicial position and answer without demanding importunity. "I tell you that he will avenge them speedily." For men to reject God as the arbiter of their affairs and wreak vengeance upon their own adversaries is an index to the spirit of barbarism, where there is no recognition of judicial power, but every man is his own judge and jury. Prayerlessness is ethical anarchy. It ignores or despises the "Judge of all the earth" by refusing to consult or petition Him about grievances.

The parable of the Pharisee and the publican, which follows without break the parable of the unjust judge and the widow, carries with it the idea of God's judicial position. It is really a parable of the just judge who has

Ethics of Prayer

been introduced to you by contrast with the unjust judge, and we have a different type of petitioner. The widow's plea was for herself against her adversary. The Pharisee's plea is also for himself, though he recognizes no adversary. He tells God all the good things he can think of about himself and makes self the plea for self. He has come into the court not for defense but for parade, a most unseemly proceeding. He does not seek for a verdict of acquittal, because he has pronounced upon himself a verdict of approval. He simply addresses the Judge and then pays attention only to himself, going out as he came in inflated with his own importance. He has simply patronized the court, and evidently feels that the Judge ought to be complimented by the appearance of such a man before him. He stands as the type of those whose reverence for themselves displaces reverence for God.

The publican, on the other hand, comes unto God with becoming spirit and demeanor. His bowed head speaks his humility. He is unworthy to look up to heaven, much less to enter. Like the widow he would make a plea against his adversary—his own sinful self. He strikes upon his breast to indicate the home of that adversary—his own sinful heart. "God be merciful to me a sinner" is more than a confession of guilt. A more literal translation is, "Be a propitiation, make atonement for me a sinner." On this prayer is the blood of Christ. In it you can hear the heartbreaking of Calvary, as he who knew no sin is made sin for us. It is really a plea for mercy on the ground of Christ's merit.

The Pharisee uses the name of God once and the assertive pronoun "I" five times. He would like to make a stream of mercy flow upward to God by the pressure of his own egotism. The publican links AND the name of God with the dependent pronoun "ME" "me," and puts himself in the stream of mercy that flows downward from God through Jesus Christ on the cross. God shows his love, power and benevolence in a thousand ways, but I know of only one channel through which mercy, which means favor for guilty sinners, flows, and that channel is the cross of Christ.

Rev. A. C. Dixon's Sermons

It would not be right for a judge to forgive a man who has been proven guilty unless satisfaction to justice can be made. Without this satisfaction God could not be

**MERCY
MAY BE
INJUSTICE** “Just and the justifier of him that believeth.” Mercy without satisfaction to justice is a species of injustice. It may be based upon kindness, but that does not rid it of injustice. The guilty one has not been treated as he deserves, but if his guilt has been atoned for by another, then mercy is prompted by justice to forgive. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive.” To punish sin after it has been atoned for would be an injustice to the atoner and unkindness to the one who has confessed the sin and accepted atonement. God righteously demands that guilt shall be punished, but Jesus Christ died the “Just for the unjust.” “He bore our sins in his body on the tree.” “With his stripes we are healed.”

To say that confession of sin is atonement enough ignores the righteousness of God. Confessing judgment in court is not equivalent to satisfying judgment. Confessing the debt does not pay the debt; it rather enforces the obligation to pay it. But if the judgment has been confessed and the demands of the law satisfied by another, it would be injustice to enforce the judgment a second time. If the debt has been confessed by the debtor, and justly paid by another, it would be flagrant injustice to demand a second payment. It is well known that Henry Clay, the orator and statesman, became involved in debt until he was bankrupt. A wealthy political friend offered to pay Mr. Clay's debts, but the proud Southerner refused to accept the offer. However, the pressure of the creditors and the injury it did his reputation led him, when the offer was made a second time, to accept the payment with thanks. The friend, prompted by love, had a right to pay Mr. Clay's debts, and Mr. Clay had a right to accept the payment. The creditors could not, of course, collect a second time. Jesus taught us to pray “forgive us our debts.” Sin is a debt to justice and must be paid by someone. The bankrupt sinner confesses the debt and is willing that Jesus Christ by his death on Calvary

Ethics of Prayer

should pay it. It is right for God to accept the payment and cancel the indebtedness. Of course the publican went down to his house justified. He had been dealing with a just judge, and when he pleaded for mercy through the propitiation of Christ, a clear receipt was given him at once.

It would have been wrong to forgive the Pharisee, because, in the first place, he confessed no debt, and, in the second place, he attempted to bring the judge into debt to him. His so-called prayer was more of a charge that God was under obligation to him because he had been such an ideal citizen. To justify a man like that would be to justify self-inflated vanity and the spirit that despises others. To take such a man to heaven would be to fill the Father's house with sensorious critics rather than obedient children. Such a man, spreading the peacock feathers of his own vain assumptions, would be an incongruous figure among those who are singing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." He could not join in the song, because the only hymn he knows is, "Worthy is myself." This Pharisee stands at the head of the class who to-day exalt man and talk of the divinity of human nature, while they reject the deity of Christ. When they come before God in prayer, it is to tell him how great man is, as seen in the discoveries he has made, the books he has written and the civilization he has produced. They preach sermons on the love of God in which they declare that God can love only the worthy, and they infer from this that they are very worthy, because God loves them. "Salvation by character" is their watchword. They do not come to the judge for acquittal, but rather to inform him that, so far as they are concerned, he may as well adjourn court, for they are not on trial. All the charges of original sin that come to them through their forefathers, or of actual sin which they are alleged to have committed, are false. Sin does not deserve condemnation, and there is, therefore, no need of atonement. For God to pronounce a sinner guilty and worthy of death would be to deal harshly. They, dear, soft, tender souls that they are, would not treat a sinner in that way, and

PHARISEEISM

MAKING
A GOD

Rev. A. C. Dixon's Sermons

of course God would not do what they would not do. Their God they have created in their own image, and he must accept their confession and their standard of right and wrong. What appears harsh to them God must not do; and, if he does it, they will reject him as their God. In other words, they have pushed God off His throne of judgment and seated themselves on it. Instead of allowing him to try them, they are boldly trying Him. And they have decided that He has no right to be judge. They will permit him to be only a very indulgent father. They assert that the vilest of earth are his children, forgetting the libel which this implies, since children are expected to be like their father. The king who rules in righteousness is made a weakling in dealing with conspirators and traitors. His decrees have no weight, because he is too gentle to enforce them. His laws of nature are acknowledged to be inflexible, but in the moral realm he must not be judicial.

It would, of course, not be right for God to forgive when His right to condemn is denied. How can He forgive when the authority of His throne has been impeached and no forgiveness is asked, because no guilt is acknowledged? The Pharisee goes out of court unforgiven because he did not ask it. Unjustified before God because he had justified himself independently of God. The only God he recognizes is one to be thanked and informed as to his own merit. Satisfied with whitewashing himself, he did not ask God to wash him white.

But it is right for God to answer prayer for forgiveness when his authority to condemn is accepted and the guilt of sin has been confessed. And this authority is based not upon sentimentality or even mercy, but upon justice, for the guilt of the petitioner has been borne by another, not compelled to do so by the sentence of the court, but prompted by His own heart of love. And the rightness of such a procedure becomes apparent when we learn that the judge himself has had part in making the atonement by which the guilty may be not only acquitted but declared righteous. Judges have been known to pass sentence upon criminals and then set them

WHITE-
WASHING
vs.
WASHING
WHITE

Ethics of Prayer

free by paying the fine which the law imposed, and they have been applauded for it. They have the right to do so, if they wish.

Though there is much in the atonement which we cannot understand, and all illustrations of it are imperfect, yet from this it is plain that it is ethically right for God to answer prayer for remission of sins when sins have been confessed in such a way as to acknowledge His authority; and when such confession is made with a prayer for forgiveness on the ground of Christ's atonement, it would be wrong for Him to refuse to answer. Such a refusal would be injustice to Christ.

Third. GOD IS FRIEND, and it is right for one friend to hear and answer the appeal of another friend. In Luke 11 : 5-8 we have these words of Jesus : "Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.'" This takes us a step beyond the parable of judgment. If we have confessed sin and received forgiveness, we have become friends of God. Abraham approached God as friend comes to friend. A friend on a journey applies to a friend for bread, and the friend, not having it, goes to his friend and requests the loan of three loaves. Now is it right for one friend to apply to another for the supply of urgent need? Is it right also for one friend to make friendship the basis of appeal for another friend in need? Is intercessory prayer ethical? The friend at first refuses to rise at the inconvenient hour of midnight, and gives as his reason that his children would be disturbed. His consideration for others makes him hesitate; as if to say, Why should one person be deprived of sleep, which body and mind need, in order that another should be supplied with bread? Can your friend not wait until morning, so that in helping him I will not disturb others?

Here is a conflict of friendship with love. The father's love for his children makes him seek their comfort, while the friendship of the man for his traveling friend causes him to be importunate in his entreaty. The

Rev. A. C. Dixon's Sermons

importunity of friendship prevails against the desire of love to give rest and comfort. The children in bed are not praying to be allowed to sleep. Their helplessness is their only plea. But here is a friend in need with a friend to plead his case, and the inconvenience, the out-of-seasonness of the hour, suggests the urgency of the need. God cares for His children, though they do not ask Him; but, when a friend of His comes with a prayer for others in need, he is willing to put His children to inconvenience that this prayer may be answered and the need supplied.

**LOVE AND
FRIENDSHIP**

Is there anything wrong in all this? Is it not right for a father to be tenderly solicitous about the comfort of his children? And then is it not right that the father should disregard the mere comfort of his children that he may answer the prayer of an importunate friend as he pleads for his friend in need? The whole matter reduces itself to this: Is friendship ethical? The reply of every noble nature is that it would be wrong for friend to refuse to help friend in need. Indeed, true friendship says that it would be wrong for a man to refuse to make known his need to one whom he knows to be his friend.

The one thing in this parable which appears at first glance to be harsh is the refusal of the friend to rise at midnight and give the bread, lest he should disturb his children. And yet that apparent harshness goes to confirm the fact that we believe it is right for one friend to answer another friend's prayer, even though it puts him to inconvenience. Will the opponents of prayer deprive God of the right and privilege of responding to friendship, that he may supply the needs of His friends who call upon Him? Friendship justly claims the right to help friendship. And to deny to God what we concede to man is unreasonable.

Fourth. GOD IS FATHER, and it is right for a father to hear and answer the cry of His child. If you confess the fatherhood of God and then deny that he is influenced by the cry of His child, you would degrade him below the level of the beasts of the field and the birds of the air, for they heed the cry of their young in distress and hasten to their relief. So right is

**GOD AS
FATHER**

Ethics of Prayer

it for the Father to hear the prayer of His child, that the universal consciousness of mankind gives Him no option. He must hear it, or be branded as infamously heartless. Even pagan ethics demand it. For a parent to be insensible to the cry of his child is a sign of insanity, mental or moral.

The father has, of course, the right to use his superior wisdom in deciding whether or not the child's request shall be granted. He has no right to give poison to his child because he cries for the beautiful package that contains it, but he is compelled to answer the cry by "yes" or "no." He has no right to be insensible or indifferent to it. I heard Mr. Moody say that he liked to have his children ask him for everything they wanted. They did not always receive it, because he might not be able to give it, or he might think it best to withhold, but he was pleased with their asking. It showed loving confidence. That is a true father's heart; and God is a true father. He tells us in all things with thanksgiving to make our requests known unto Him. And if we ask anything according to His will He will grant it. The child has no right to command the father except by his obedience. In nature we can command God only by obeying Him. If we obey the laws of electricity or steam, we may command them and they will do our bidding. But if we refuse to obey their laws, they refuse to obey us. And so when God promises upon certain conditions, and we fulfill the conditions, His promise becomes our command, and we may lovingly insist upon its fulfillment.

Dr. Weston has said that prayer is not ordering God in an arbitrary way to do our bidding. If such were the case, he would not want to live in this world, for millions of people, many of whom are young and inexperienced, would be ordering God to do things every day, and in doing them he would give us "a mess of a world" to live in. But real prayer is asking and receiving from God grace to do what He wishes us to do. It is the child making known his desires to a father whose wisdom and love he can trust to do what is best, all of whose resources are at the disposal of the child within the circle

Rev. A. C. Dixon's Sermons

of that loving will. For a father to give to a child what every whim of fancy or selfish desire might prompt him to ask, would be to injure the child and make the order of home give place to the anarchy of discordant demands. It is right, therefore, for God as a ruler to give attention to the petitions of His subjects; as a Judge to hear the plea of a plaintiff; as a Friend to grant the request of His friend; and as a Father to give to His child all he asks within the limitations of His superior wisdom. So much for the Divine side of prayer.

**PRAYER
DEFINED**

Let us now consider the human side:

Is it right for man to pray? The question has really been answered, for, if it is right for God to answer prayer, it is certainly right for us to pray.

The poor widow comes to the Judge to avenge her of her adversary. Would it be right for her to refuse to submit the case to the Judge, while she takes vengeance into her own hands? No, for "vengeance is mine, saith the Lord." Is it right for christians to pray against people as this woman prayed against her adversary? Yes, for the martyrs in heaven say in Rev. 6: 10, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" The feeling which demands that injustice and cruelty should be punished is not alien to heaven. It is a righteous feeling. But we have no right to do the punishing. It is our right to bring the case to the "Judge of all the earth," believing that he will do right. If you have been wronged by another, do not try to right the wrong by punishing your adversary. Tell God on him. Leave the matter in God's hands. You need not be importunate in your plea for justice. God will avenge speedily.

**THE
PLAINTIFF'S
RIGHT**

The imprecatory Psalms bring before God the enemies of the Psalmist, who are also the enemies of God, and plead that justice be meted out to those who will not repent and accept mercy. The Psalmist leaves his foes in the hands of a just God, and every christian has the same privilege. This does not mean that he is to bear

Ethics of Prayer

hatred and malice. Far from it. He may even forgive them for the crimes they have done him, while he prays that God's righteous rule shall be vindicated. He is jealous for God's honor, while he knows that just retribution is the best that God can do for any one who refuses to repent.

IMPRECATORY PRAYER

The widow was making the best possible prayer for her adversary, when she asked for his punishment. Better for him, in the long run, that he should smart for his wrong doing than that he should go on unrebuked and impenitent. Thus we truly pray for our enemies when we pray against their evil doings.

It is right for any man as a subject of the King of Kings to come before Him with petition. If he has a grievance, let him not tell it to others, and thus back-bite the King. The King invites him into His presence, and will give audience even to his complainings. If he is in need "Let him come boldly unto the throne of grace, that he may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." The throne stands for royal rule. God is enthroned in grace and invites every subject in need to approach with boldness. And the promise is clear: "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." The resources of God's throne are at the disposal of all His needy subjects. With such a King would it not be wrong to refuse to make petition? Would it not be disloyal? Prayerlessness is, indeed, disloyalty to the King of the Universe.

It is right that a friend should come to a friend in need. Coming in need is as much a proof of friendship as supplying need. After God has not only told us, but

proven that he is our friend, is it not right for us to believe it and show our appreciation by telling Him of any need for myself or others?

Shall I hesitate to apply to Him even at midnight when I have opportunity of doing good and cannot secure the means for it without His aid? Shall David refuse to tell Absalom of his danger and grief? Shall Damon keep from Pythias any secret need which he knows his friend will be glad to supply? Mutuality is the test of

THE FRIEND'S RIGHT

Rev. A. C. Dixon's Sermons

friendship. If we are God's friends we are ready to do His pleasure; and, if God is our friend, He is ready to do our pleasure in a way limited only by His superior wisdom. Prayerlessness is, therefore, a practical denial of the friendship of God.

It is right that children should come to their parents not only with words of gratitude and loving appreciation but with any burden of need. It is the right of **THE CHILD'S RIGHT** children to be guided and supplied by parental wisdom and wealth. It would give a loving father great pain to learn that one of his children had decided never to ask him for anything else. It would be an aspersion upon his love and friendship. Prayerlessness, therefore, proves an unfilial state of mind.

As a subject petitioning a ruler, as a plaintiff pleading before a judge, as a friend making known his need to a friend, and as a child crying to a father, every christian has a right to pray. Not to pray is, therefore, to live an unethical life in our relations to God and man, in that we are not doing what we ought to do. To pray in the name of Jesus Christ is to be indued with the power of the King of the Universe, to receive pardon from the "Judge of all the earth," to be supplied with the bounty of the richest friend in the world, and to have the constant care of a loving father. **FOURFOLD RIGHT**

If you are not living that life of prayer, will you not come before God with the publican's penitent petition, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and you will go down from this house justified before God and with a song of praise in your soul.

Ethics of the Atonement

“Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?” LUKE xxiv : 26.

“Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead.” ACTS xvii : 3.

“We also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.” ROM. v : 11.

THE WORD “ATONEMENT” occurs about eighty times in the Old Testament, and only this once in the New. But the fact of atonement is everywhere in both Testaments, beginning with Abel’s bloody sacrifice and ending with “the Lamb as it had been slain in the midst of the Throne.” A friend said to John Newton : “I cannot see the doctrine of atonement in the Scriptures.” Mr. Newton replied : “I tried to light my candle the other evening with the extinguisher on it.” One who reads the Bible without seeing atonement has on his mind the extinguisher of prejudice or false teaching. It is the sun in the heavens of revealed truth. The types of the Old Testament, the ordinances of the New, and the teachings of prophet and apostle join with John the Baptist in saying “Behold the Lamb of God.” As the scarlet thread runs through all the cordage of the British navy, so the atonement of Christ runs through all the teaching of the Bible.

The necessity of atonement is denied only by those who make light of sin. If sin be embryonic goodness, or merely hallucination of mortal mind, there is, of course, no need of paying attention to it ; **THE NECESSITY OF ATONEMENT** the less said about it the better. But it is plain that God sees sin as alienation from Him, rebellion against Him, disease of soul ending in eternal death,

Ethics of the Atonement

moral and spiritual anarchy that keeps heaven out of man and man out of heaven; and seeing sin as it is, His righteousness demands, while His love provides, atonement.

Origen in the third century taught that the atonement made satisfaction to the Devil. Man had sold himself to Satan, and Christ by his death purchased him back to God. It came from his magnifying unduly the importance and position of Satan. Man had no right to sell himself to Satan, and Satan had no right to make the purchase. Satan himself belongs to God, and the right of ownership has not been destroyed by his rebellion. Satan is usurper even of himself. All that God owes him is punishment for his persistent wickedness; and if man sold himself to Satan, all God owes him is punishment for being *particeps criminis* in Satan's sin.

Another view of the atonement which has no scriptural basis makes the death of Christ avail for sins committed before baptism, while sins after baptism must be atoned for by penance and purgatory. This teaching keeps our Roman Catholic friends in bondage to the law and the priests, who will absolve them on condition of such penance as they may prescribe; and it even holds over them the lash of purgatorial fires in the future world. Such a view of atonement is a clever device for emphasizing the pernicious doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and for keeping the members of the church in subjection to ecclesiastical authority. While real atonement gives liberty, this forges chains of servitude.

Another very subtle and attractive, though equally false, view of the atonement is that Christ died a martyr to a noble mission, and is merely our example, teaching

Ethics of the Atonement

us by His life how to live, and by His death how to die. He did not come into the world to die, but died because He was in the world. The crucifixion was an

THE RATIONALISTIC VIEW

incident which resulted from the mad frenzy of an infuriated mob. This view cannot explain the text "Christ must needs have suffered," for, according to it, there was no need of such suffering. The question of Jesus, "Ought not Christ to have suffered?" is made meaningless. It also contradicts Hebrews ix: 26, "Once in the end of the age hath He appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." The purpose of His appearing in the flesh was "to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." The cross was no incident nor accident. It was the Mont Blanc among the events of His earth-life. His resurrection merely confirmed the virtue of the cross, giving to the gold of His sacrifice the stamp of heaven, and thus making it coin current. Thomas recognized the living Christ by the nail-prints, and to the other disciples he "showed His hands and His feet." The marks of the cross he carried with Him as a badge of honor into heaven. In the book of Revelations we hear the celestial choir singing "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain."

Judas was guilty in betraying his Lord, and the Jewish Sanhedrim were guilty in condemning him to death. But we need to remember that the betrayal of Judas and the condemnation of the Sanhedrim were no part of the atonement. Jesus would have "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" without their aid. He permitted them to work out their own condemnation while He was making possible their salvation. In this, as in all things else, He made the wrath of man to praise Him.

A thousand martyrs have willingly died for civil and

Ethics of the Atonement

religious liberty, and we praise them, while we blame their murderers. The guilt of the murderer is not lessened, but rather increased by the virtue of his victim.

This false view of the atonement is based upon the fallacy that repentance and confession of sin is all that God requires. But when we apply this principle to human affairs it does not work satisfactorily. **AN OLD FALLACY** A christian woman, while sick, was attended by an infidel physician, who tried to induce her to take, in addition to his drugs, some of his theological vagaries, among which was the theory that there is no need of atonement, because confession and repentance are sufficient. After the lady's restoration to health she invited him to dine with her, and at the table she said: "Doctor, I am sure that you have been at much expense in treating my case, and I certainly owe you a good fee." He acknowledged that his outlay had not been small, and he was glad to hear her confess her obligation to his skill. "And now, Doctor," she continued, "I have confessed to you the debt I owe, and in order to show you my true repentance for it, I am determined not to do so any more, that is, I shall not send for you again when I get sick." He saw the point at once, and, with some embarrassment, remonstrated against such a practical application of his teaching. But the good woman, with loving earnestness, insisted that he must give up either his teaching or his fee. Let us hope that he saw his folly and acknowledged that to pay the debt of sin more than confession and repentance are necessary — indeed, that confession enforces the necessity of paying the debt, and repentance does not take the place of satisfaction to justice, but rather emphasizes the righteousness of the demand that satisfaction shall be made.

The divine side of the atonement is in Romans iii:

Ethics of the Atonement

24-26 : “ Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of **THE DIVINE SIDE** sins that are past, through the forbearance of God ; to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness ; that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”

Five things are clearly taught by these words :

First. We are “ justified by grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” “ By grace ” means that it is without merit on our part. The basis of it is “ the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” It is of grace, and to add works as the ground of justification is to destroy grace ; but to add works as the result of justification is to crown grace with the glory that is its due.

Second. God has “ set forth Jesus Christ to be a propitiation.” “ Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” (I John iv : 10.) **LOVE FOR THE UNLOVELY** God did not love us because we loved Him ; He loved us while we were yet unloving and unlovely. He manifested His love in many ways, but the climax of its manifestation was in sending His Son to be, not our example, our inspiration or our teacher, but “ the propitiation for our sins.” Man is guilty, and, in order to salvation, guilt must be removed. The great purpose of the incarnation was to make it possible for Him to remain God and justify the sinner. All this implies depths of iniquity in sin which we have not fathomed, and heights of righteousness in God which we have not scaled ; and yet our dim vision can see that a righteous God cannot maintain His righteous rule and save the guilty without propitiation. And His love, as well as His righteousness, is

Ethics of the Atonement

vindicated when we are informed that love prompted and provided the propitiation—"not that we loved God, but that He loved us." God does not require propitiation by the sacrifice of another, but He makes propitiation demanded by His own nature, through the incarnation, humiliation and sacrifice of Himself. What His righteous nature demands His loving nature gives.

Third. This propitiation comes to us "through faith in His blood." On the night of the Passover a living lamb tied to the doorpost was not sufficient. Propitiation does not come through faith in a living **FAITH IN A DYING CHRIST** Christ. Faith in a perfect model may inspire to noble deeds, but it does not save from sin. Faith in a wise teacher may lead one to sit at his feet and learn, but it does not remove guilt. Faith, even in the miracle worker, may give us glimpses of a God of Power, but it does not relieve the guilty conscience.

Fourth. God's purpose in this propitiation is "to declare His righteousness." Calvary is God's declaration to the universe that His throne is established in **TO DECLARE AND COMMEND** righteousness. Jesus died that all the world might know this righteousness. Now link with this the Scripture, "God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." In the death of Christ, God declares His righteousness and commends His love. He would have us believe in His love while we see the manifestation of His righteousness. Love gives all that righteousness demands, and righteousness is pleased with all that love would give. In a very deep sense Jesus Christ is the Peace of God. His death keeps peace among all the divine attributes. Justice and mercy cannot be at peace because in their natures they oppose each other, unless

Ethics of the Atonement

justice is satisfied with what mercy brings ; and when mercy, prompted by love, furnishes all that justice has a right to demand, then, and not till then, can mercy “rejoice against judgment,” while judgment exults in mercy ; and thus it is that all things may be reconciled through the atonement of Christ. Calvary gives the keynote of harmony for earth and heaven.

Fifth. Through this declaration of His righteousness God can now “be just and the justifier of him which believeth.”

If, therefore, I accept Jesus Christ as the “Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world,” I may lovingly demand salvation upon the ground of justice.

**JUSTICE AND
MERCY WORK
TOGETHER** “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive.” Forgiveness is now demanded by justice as well as granted by mercy. “Mercy and Truth are met together, Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other.” Justice demands what mercy delights to give. There is no war between the attributes of God. To save a sinner without atonement would destroy His righteous rule — would, indeed, be the abdication of His throne. But now that atonement is made and justice satisfied, for Him to refuse to save the sinner who comes to Him pleading propitiation through the blood of Christ would be again to abdicate the throne, which is founded upon the righteousness which demands that the sinner whose debt of sin has been paid, and the payment accepted, shall be acquitted. God’s throne would fall if a sinner who refuses atonement should be saved ; and God’s throne would just as certainly fall if a christian who has accepted atonement should be lost. The foundation of both heaven and hell is the righteousness of God.

And yet, let us never forget that back of all this is the

Ethics of the Atonement

love of God. We believe it can be proved that hell itself, terrible as it is, is the expression of God's love. We leave this fact to another sermon, while we dwell
LOVE BACK now upon the love which gives heaven here
OF ALL and hereafter through the atonement of Christ. God does not love us because Christ died; Christ died because God loved. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." Back of Calvary is love. It was love that led to the satisfaction of justice.

This atonement is general. "He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (I John ii: 2.) And yet it is
ATONEMENT limited; for we read in I Timothy iv: 10,
GENERAL "We trust in the living God, who is the
AND LIMITED Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe." The reservoir has water enough for all, but only those who are willing to drink can have their thirst quenched. Salvation is *sufficient* for all, but *efficient* only for those who believe. The atonement is world-wide in its extent, but in its efficacy only so wide as those who will accept it. "There is a wideness in God's mercy like the wideness of the sea;" but there is a narrowness in God's justice like the narrowness of the ship on the sea. All who would cross this sea into the haven of rest must submit to the limitations of the ship. Its timbers are made of justice and love, worked together in beautiful harmony. One who trusts himself to the sea without the ship will fail as surely as one who trusts himself to the ship without the sea. "What God hath joined together let not man put asunder."

This brings us to the heart of our subject, and we can best develop it by answering two questions:

First. IS IT RIGHT FOR ONE PERSON TO SUFFER FOR ANOTHER? "Ought Christ to have suffered?" Ought a mother to suffer for her child?

Ethics of the Atonement

Ought friend to suffer for friend? Damon became hostage for his friend Pythias, who, after being condemned to death, was permitted to go home and see his loved ones before the execution. Before the return of Pythias, Damon was heard to express the wish that he might be permitted to die for his friend; and when, to the surprise of his enemies, Pythias appeared the day before the execution, there was a generous dispute between the two friends as to which one should be permitted to die for the other. It is to the credit of the tyrant Dionysius that his heart was melted by such an exhibition of the self-sacrificing spirit of friendship, so that he pardoned Pythias and expressed a desire to be partner in their friendship. Has any one from that day to this been mean enough to blame Dionysius for admiring the devotion which made Damon willing to die for his friend? The story has been woven into poetry, and is to-day an inspiration to noble minds.

A blacksmith in Germany was seated in the village postoffice, surrounded by his neighbors' children, when a rabid dog appeared in the door, and the noble man, forgetful of self, throttled the beast in the grip of his sturdy hands, but not until the virus had passed into his own blood. Will any one deny him the right thus to risk his life, and die, if need be, for his neighbors' children? The villagers put flowers on his grave every day.

I saw written on the pedestal of a soldier's monument in Manchester, N. H., the words "Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori." Was that a mistake? Is it sweet and honorable to die for one's country? If so, we have admitted that patriots have a right to suffer and die for others. Every granite stone in Bunker Hill Monument echoes that sentiment.

Ethics of the Atonement

Regulus, the brave Roman general, refused to advise the Roman Senate to accept the terms of Carthage, and **REGULUS AND CURTIUS** went back with the envoys to be tortured to death. Has any one, ancient or modern, been base enough to blame him for it?

The legend of Mettus Curtius sacrificing himself that the fissure in the Roman Forum might be closed has been used by statesman and orator to inspire the young to deeds of valor. Has one word ever been written in condemnation of the spirit that prompted his act?

A regiment of Austrian soldiers were guilty of mutiny, and each man of them, by the laws of war, had forfeited his right to live. The court-martial decided that only **THE AUSTRIAN SOLDIER** every tenth man should be shot, and the victims were chosen by lot. The lot fell upon an old soldier whose son pushed him aside, and stepping into his place died in his stead. The soldiers of Austria to this day praise him for the deed.

Dr. Guthrie is responsible for the story that in a "ragged" school a pale, half-invalid boy had violated a rule of the school, which demanded that he should be **THE BOY HERO** punished by receiving on his back a certain number of stripes; and when he came up for punishment, a rough, healthy little fellow stepped up beside him and offered to take chastisement for him. The teacher administered the chastisement to the strong boy, that honor of the law in his school might be maintained, and the brave little fellow who bore it became the hero of the school and of every home where the story was told. Who will deny that he had a right thus willingly and lovingly to suffer for another? No one had a right to compel him to do it, but no one could deny him the right to follow the promptings of his loving and sympathetic heart.

Ethics of the Atonement

It is well known that Bronson Alcott, the Concord philosopher, maintained discipline in his school by requiring disobedient students to punish him for their disobedience.

In many a European prison is the record "Fine paid by John Howard;" "Debt paid by John Howard." John Howard chose to set prisoners free by paying their

JOHN
HOWARD'S
WAY fines and debts, and I have not heard of a magistrate who denied him the right to do so.

Now, shall men have the right to do what we deny to Jesus Christ? Shall the mother suffer for her child, shall friend suffer for friend, shall the patriot suffer for his country, shall the soldier suffer for his comrade, shall the student suffer for his classmate and receive the praise of all, while we deny to Jesus the right to suffer for those he loves more than mother ever loved her children, or friend his friend, or patriot his country, or soldier his comrade, or student his classmate?

Second. IS IT RIGHT FOR A PERSON TO RECEIVE BENEFIT FROM THE SUFFERING OF ANOTHER? Shall the child refuse to be benefitted by the mother's suffering?

THE
HUMAN
SIDE by the suffering of its patriot soldiers? If it be true that soldiers do wrong in dying for others, and

that those for whom they die ought not to be benefitted by their sufferings, let us go to Bunker Hill and tear down that monument; let us go to Washington and raze to the ground that white marble pyramid which commemorates the man who suffered the pangs of hunger and cold at Valley Forge. To adopt the claim of Theosophy that one should not receive benefit from the sufferings of another is to turn mankind, sooner or later, into leeches and hyenas, for if I should not be benefitted by the suffering of another, I, of course, should

Ethics of the Atonement

not suffer for another. My business, then, is to look after myself, and all the sweet ministries of loving sacrifice for others give place to greedy self-seeking. There is but one step from this to heartless cruelty.

On the other hand, the spirit of sacrificing love as seen in Christ on the Cross, if universally incarnate, would make earth a paradise of peace and joy. War

**HOW TO
MAKE EARTH
A HEAVEN** would then cease; for if men loved well enough to die for one another, they certainly would not kill one another. It would close every divorce court; for if husband and wife loved well enough to die for each other, such a thing as unfaithfulness, or even unkindness, would be impossible. It would solve the problem of labor and capital; for if the laborer and the capitalist loved well enough to die for each other, they certainly would not oppress, or make unreasonable demands. It would run every business enterprise according to the Golden Rule; for if all men loved well enough to die for one another, there would be no lying or cheating to make money. It would be easy then to "do unto others as you would have them do unto you." And if everybody really believed that Jesus died on the cross to bear the chastisement of their sins, character would be transformed and this world would be heaven.

Let us look into Bronson Alcott's school, and see how it worked there. "One day," says Mr. Alcott, "I called up before me a pupil eight or ten years of age,

**BRONSON
ALCOTT'S
SCHOOL** who had violated an important regulation of the school. All the pupils were looking on, and they knew what the rule of the school was. I put the ruler into the hand of that offending pupil; I extended my hand and told him to strike. The instant the boy saw my extended hand and heard

Ethics of the Atonement

my command to strike, I saw a struggle begin in his face. A new light sprang up in his countenance, a new set of shuttles seemed to be weaving a new nature within him. I kept my hand extended, and the school was in tears. The boy struck once, and he himself burst into tears. I constantly watched his face, and he seemed in a bath of fire which was giving him a new nature. He had a different mood toward the school and toward the violated law. The boy seemed transformed by the idea that I should take chastisement in place of his punishment. He went back to his seat, and ever after was one of the most docile of all the pupils in that school, though he had been at first one of the rudest."

I have heard of a father whose little son was given to lying, and he could not be cured of the vice by counsel, reward or punishment. One day, the father said, "My **IN THE** dear boy, you have sinned again to-day by telling **HOME** a lie, and do you think that ten strokes on the hand with this rule would be excessive punishment for such a lie?" The hardened little fellow was used to such punishment, and he admitted that it would not. "Well, then," said the father, "I have decided to take the punishment for you, and now take this rod and strike my hand with all your might." The astonished boy was loth to do it, but as the father insisted, he began to strike. "Strike harder," said the father, "for so great a sin as lying deserves more punishment than that." When the boy saw the great blue welts begin to appear in the hand, he dropped the rule, and rushing into his father's arms, exclaimed, "Father, I will never tell another lie." And he didn't.

I know a widowed mother who adopted this principle of Calvary in dealing with her children, and whenever she willingly suffered for her children's disobedience

Ethics of the Atonement

they were so overwhelmed with the sense of guilt that they refrained from transgressing again. Punishment for one's own sin often hardens the nature, and this fact makes hell a poor reformatory. But suffering for another's sin, prompted by willing love, develops the noblest that is in us and makes the strongest possible appeal to the sinner.

“A friend of mine,” says Dr. Mackay, “had been told that the Word of Life was contained in the Bible. He went quietly home, and he said, ‘If it is there I’ll find it.’ He began with Genesis. He could not see anything about salvation in the first chapter. He went to the second chapter, and the third, and all through Genesis, and then got into Exodus, but he could not understand it a bit. Then when he came to Leviticus and all the beasts of sacrifice, he thought ‘I cannot see what is meant by this.’ But he was not to be beaten, he was wanting salvation, and he was told it was there. He went on from there until, in due course of time, he reached that good evangelical chapter, Isaiah liii. He read carefully until he came to the words, ‘By his stripes we are healed.’ ‘That is it,’ said he, ‘I have it now; we are healed; I am healed. There is no hoping or wishing, or perhaps—we are healed.’ And then he began to rejoice in the complete salvation through Jesus Christ.”

A dying man said to me last night, “Jesus Christ on the Cross is the only one that can do me any good now.” Living or dying we need forgiveness and cleansing, which are ours only through the atonement which Christ made on Calvary.

A soldier stood on a street of Vienna sawing the strings of an old violin that he might earn a little money for himself and those dependent upon him. The crowd

Ethics of the Atonement

passed by with but little notice of him or his futile attempt at music. One day a stranger took from him his violin and began at once to make such exquisite music that the crowd gathered and poured their money into the old soldier's box. "Empty it into your pockets," said the stranger, "and let them fill it again," while he continued to fill the air with sweetest melody. The box was filled again, and then the stranger, returning the violin, disappeared in the crowd. "Who was that? Who was that?" was asked, and the reply came from one of the bystanders: "That was Bucher, the most famous violinist of the realm," and his name was applauded by the crowd.

Now, had Bucher the right to take this poor soldier's place, and by his own musical merit relieve him of his poverty? Who will deny it? Had the old soldier the right to let Bucher take his place, while he thanked him for his sympathetic and loving deed? Would you blame the soldier for being extravagant in his praise of the man who, without invitation or promise of reward, took his place and supplied his need?

Something like that, but more, Jesus did for us. He took our place, and by the keynote of his own sacrificing love he brought the justice of God into harmony with his mercy, while at the same time he awakens in our souls the music of gratitude, and makes the discord of sin give way to the harmony of righteousness. Let us yield without resistance to the magnetic charm of the music of God's love that comes to us through Christ on the Cross, and it will not only draw us to Him for salvation, but every day it will make it easy to "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith."

Ethics of the Doctrine of Heaven and Hell

“These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.” MATT. xxv : 46.

“Now he is comforted, but thou art tormented. LUKE xvi : 25.

“**G**ONE FOREVER,” says Dr. Hillis, “is Dante’s Inferno and Michael Angelo’s Last Judgment.” And yet within less than a mile of the pulpit from which these words were spoken infernos fearful as Dante’s were in full blast, and judgments upon sin and sinners more terrible than Michael Angelo’s were being executed. S-I-N spells “hell” in this world and the next. It is no nightmare of mediæval darkness. It is not the hallucination of a disordered brain. It is a fact which anyone with open eyes must see. The smoke of torment ascends here from the brothel, the dive, the saloon, the drunkard’s home, the divorce court, the prison, the electric chair, the gallows, the madhouse, the gambling den, and the lives of men and women who are burning in the furnace of their own lusts. It may not suit our æsthetic tastes, but our dislike of the situation does not affect the fact. “I hate the very thought of hell,” exclaimed a cultured lady. So do I. And I hate the very thought of murders, adulteries, thefts, jails and electric chairs, but my hatred does not destroy the facts. I hate snakes, but in spite of my hatred they continue to crawl and hiss and bite.

The first text implies not only the existence but the **RIGHTNESS** of hell. “These shall go away into

The Doctrine of Heaven and Hell

everlasting punishment." They are not driven. No high sheriff of the universe is needed to arrest them and by force cast them into hell. When the wicked, in the flashlight of the Judgment Day, shall see themselves and their sins as they are, they will accept everlasting punishment as just retribution. Their sense of justice will approve it. It would appear to them an incongruous thing for God to take them to heaven, as incongruous indeed as it would appear to a guilty, impenitent criminal if the President of the United States, instead of sending him to the penitentiary, as he deserves, should take him into the White House as an associate for his wife and children.

And, sad to say, the wicked, if they act then as many of them do now, will choose hell rather than heaven. I know men who prefer hell to heaven. A heaven on earth is open to them every day, but they turn from it into the hell of sinful indulgence. I could take you to a home in a great city which is an embryonic heaven, in which are love, and purity, and beauty, and music, and all the happiness which these things can bring. But a son born in that home cares not for it. One evening, as he starts out for a night of debauch, his gray-haired mother stands in the door with outstretched arms, gently obstructing the way and begging him to remain with her. "My dear boy," she says, "stay with us and do not go to that gambling den to-night." Two sisters come out and add their loving entreaties. "Please stay with us, brother. We will read to you, play with you, do anything you wish, if you will only stay with us to-night." But he pushes aside his mother, and jerking away from the loving clasp of a sister's hand he goes into the hell of sin, where he remains of his own accord and burns in a

The Doctrine of Heaven and Hell

furnace of lust for more than a week. When the police find him he is well-nigh consumed in body, mind and soul. The hell of sinful indulgence, with all its horrors of darkness, is more attractive to him than a heaven of purity, light and love. And the man with rebellion against God and love of sin in his heart would choose to go away into everlasting punishment rather than enter into heaven with its holiness and service. And one can hardly blame him. Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people, and if unprepared for heaven it would be to him a hell.

Now, is it right that there should be a hell for the wicked and a heaven for the righteous? Can the hell of the Bible be defended on ethical grounds? I believe it can be, and for the following reasons :

First. IT IS RIGHT TO SEPARATE THE BAD FROM THE GOOD. It is well known that three Greek words in the New Testament are translated **THREE WORDS FOR HELL** "hell." One of them is "Hades," which means simply the world of the dead, including both bad and good. Another word is the Greek "Tartarus," which meant in ancient mythology the under-world of darkness. And by using this word the Holy Spirit would have us understand that, however mistaken were the pagans in many things, they were right in believing that the bad would at death go to an under-world of darkness. And this is merely the stamp of God's approval upon the universal consciousness of mankind. All people, savage and civilized, believe that what they regard as wrong should be punished. They differ as to their standards, but they agree that the bad, as they know it, deserves punishment, and the good, as they know it, deserves reward.

The third word translated "hell" is "Gehenna," which

The Doctrine of Heaven and Hell

was the name given to the valley of Hinnom, near Jerusalem, into which the garbage of the city was cast and there burned. At any time of day or night the fires, with their ascending smoke, could be seen in this valley. Jesus makes it the symbol of hell, "where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched."

Now, is it right for a city to have a valley of Hinnom into which the refuse shall be cast? or should the city leave its refuse to decay in its streets and in the cellars
THE GARBAGE IDEA of its houses, filling the air with contagion and death? There are no two opinions on this subject among civilized people. Every garbage barrel, therefore, is an argument for hell. Those who refuse life in God become "refuse" in character sooner or later, and in the nature of things must be removed to a place apart.

A cemetery is a necessity. The bodies of the dead must not be left in the homes of the living. A little child died in the family of a former parish, and the poor mother, crazed with grief, would not consent to its burial. She stood like Rizpah over its little lifeless body, and would not allow undertaker or husband to touch it. After a week of such heart-rending experience, the husband was compelled to remove her by force to another room, while some friends went with the little form to the cemetery. To have kept the dead with the living would have been unkindness to the living and have done the dead no good. And thus every cemetery is an argument for hell. The spiritually dead soul is like a dead body, in that it is in a state of moral putrefaction and carries with it the deadly contagion of sin. If it refuses to receive life it must of necessity be placed apart with its spiritually dead companions.

Second. IT IS RIGHT TO PUNISH SIN. This,

The Doctrine of Heaven and Hell

as we have seen, is universally accepted. There is a natural and a positive punishment. Sin brings its own punishment, while a government has a right to punish **RIGHT TO** sin when it develops into crime. A man kills **PUNISH** another, and as a natural result suffers terrible remorse of conscience. But remorse of conscience does not satisfy the demands of the law, for there has been not only sin against his own soul, but crime against the commonwealth. Sin is its own Nemesis, and yet there is the wrath of God revealed against unrighteousness. It is the wrath of the Lamb, more terrible, indeed, than the wrath of the lion — the wrath of gentleness against brutality, of kindness against cruelty, of chastity against unchastity, of truth against falsehood, of love against hatred, of holiness against sin, of light against darkness, of health against disease. Such is the wrath of the Lamb. It needs to be restated that there is something in God for sinners to fear. He is no moral weakling who, prompted by soft sentimentalism, permits criminals to destroy His righteous government. The preaching of this God of putty has been long enough filling hell, here and hereafter, with victims.

And yet God need not interfere otherwise than to protect the interests of His loyal subjects and obedient children. Sin left to itself makes hell. "Wickedness," says Isaiah, "burneth as a fire." It is sin that heats

"The dungeon horrible on all sides round,
As one great furnace flame, yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible."

Take the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, and you will see that the fires of torment have flames of Memory, Reason, Imagination and Conscience. "Son, remember." Memory is immortal and will pass into the future freighted with its burden of neglected duties and

The Doctrine of Heaven and Hell

privileges. The rich man uses the word "therefore," which shows that Reason is immortal and lives to appreciate the facts of memory. This man in Hades requests **WHAT MAKES THE FLAMES** Abraham to startle his five brethren by the return of Lazarus from the dead, and this shows that Imagination is also immortal to fan the flames of memory and reason. And every line of the parable bears witness to the fact that Conscience is immortal, with its sting of remorse.

Eliminate, if you please, all thought of literal fire, but there is no mitigation of suffering. I verily believe that there are persons in this world who suffer so **WORSE THAN LITERAL FIRE** intensely from an evil conscience, in the flames of memory, reason and imagination, that to thrust their hand into a furnace of fire and burn it off would be a temporary relief. The fires which burn the soul are hotter than the fires which consume the body. Pollok's description of hell in his "Course of Time" makes one shudder, and yet if you will divest his words of coarse literalism and give them the symbolic meaning he intended, you are compelled to acknowledge their truth. He says :

"Through all that dungeon of unfading fire,
I saw most miserable beings walk,
Burning continually, yet unconsumed ;
Forever wasting, yet enduring still ;
Dying perpetually, yet never dead.
Some wandered lonely in the desert flames,
And some in fell encounter fiercely met,
With curses loud, and blasphemies that made
The cheek of Darkness pale."

I know that such a hell exists, for I have been there. I have seen men and women on this earth "burning continually, yet unconsumed ; forever wasting, yet enduring still ; dying perpetually, yet never dead." It is, but another way of expressing what the Bible means by

The Doctrine of Heaven and Hell

the "bottomless pit"—forever falling without striking bottom, forever sinking in the moral scale, forever growing worse and yet not becoming so bad that you cannot grow worse still—everlasting degeneration! The soul, with infinite capacity for good or evil, chooses the evil and develops downward through eternity. Terrible thought! And yet the fact is in progress before our eyes. Men and women in this city are to-day away down the sides of the bottomless pit, and growing worse and worse every hour. Death will not retard, but in the worse environment of a place apart will accelerate the downward course.

A coarse wit asked an old preacher where he would get all the brimstone for the making of an orthodox hell, and his wise reply was "Every man will furnish his own brimstone."

Third. IT IS RIGHT TO HAVE DEGREES OF PUNISHMENT. This principle is admitted by every court of justice in every civilized land. "That **DEGREES OF PUNISHMENT** servant which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes." Luke xii: 47, 48. "Everlasting" does not mean "equal" or "infinite." Everlasting punishment will certainly follow everlasting sinning, the degree of punishment being in proportion to the sin. It is reasonable to conclude that if a man will not repent in this world, with an environment of good and evil, he will not repent in the next world, where there is environment of only evil. No father would try to reform a wayward boy by sending him to the vilest part of a city, where he would associate only with degenerates. Sensible people do not try to wash themselves

The Doctrine of Heaven and Hell

by wallowing in filth. God does for every person in this world all that infinite love, wisdom and power can do for a free moral agent. If a man chooses sin rather than righteousness, infinite love, wisdom and power cannot keep hell out of him or him out of hell. If he chooses death instead of life, he must submit to the process of moral putrefaction and abide by the law of necessity that the dead and the living must, in the final adjustment of affairs, be kept apart.

As to heaven, it is not difficult to convince men that there is a heaven, though I verily believe that there is more proof outside of the Bible that there is a hell than that there is a heaven. Sin is more in evidence than righteousness. Count the words in any large dictionary, and you will see that those defining the bad are more numerous than those defining the good. Read the daily papers, and most of the big headlines are proof that there is a hell on earth. And yet men are willing to delude themselves into the fancy that a little virtue deserves heaven. Why, then, deny the very existence of hell? They even demand of God that because He created them He should take them to heaven, though they carry with them a hell of iniquity. Forgetting that heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people, they would compel God to do the impossible—of making them happy in a place for which they are not prepared. They refuse life, and then demand that they shall enjoy life. They refuse holiness, and demand that they shall receive the reward of holiness. They refuse reconciliation with God, and demand that they shall live in harmony with Him. They refuse to let heaven come into them, and demand that God shall take them into heaven. Their demand really is that God shall make no difference between light and dark-

EASY TO
BELIEVE IN
HEAVEN

The Doctrine of Heaven and Hell

ness, disease and health, death and life, anarchy and law, the cemetery and the home, the garbage heap and the garden. And yet they must acknowledge :

(1) That it is right to separate the good from the bad. Every home is built on that idea. It is a garden enclosed. It is a sacred place of purity and peace, **GOOD SEPARATE FROM BAD** separated from the vice and turmoil of the outside world. It is a holy-of-holies, with a veil between it and even the gaze of outsiders. It is a fountain of pure water protected from contamination by the laws of every civilized land. The English adage, "A man's home is his castle," which he has a right to defend against all intruders, is based on equity. To open the home to the inflow of evil is to destroy it. Jesus calls heaven "my Father's house," and He promises to take us to it by and by. Now, will our Father destroy this home by opening it to the evil of the universe? The home idea demands that heaven shall be a place apart from contaminating evil, and all the symbols of Scripture which describe it confirm this idea. "The Lamb is the light thereof," and there is no evil in that light. The "streets of gold," the "gates of pearl," the "walls of jasper," the "foundation of precious stones," all suggest the exclusion of evil. "Without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters." "There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth."

(2) It is right to reward faithfulness. It is not right to reward gifts, but the improvement of gifts; not capacity, but the use and development of capacity. The **RIGHT TO REWARD** parable of the talents teaches that there is no reward for having talents, but only for increasing them. The man with two talents received the same reward as the man with five, because the improvement

The Doctrine of Heaven and Hell

was the same; and the man with one talent would have received as great reward as the man with two if he had made the same improvement. Why should God reward a man for capacity or opportunity which He gave without asking the man's permission? But it is right that He should reward for improvement of capacity or opportunity. Everyone is responsible, not for what God has given, but for the use he makes of the gifts. Heaven, here and hereafter, is the result of faithfulness. Bigness does not count with God. Two-fifths of a cent given by a poor widow is more than all the abundance of the rich, because behind it was a faithful, self-sacrificing spirit.

Memory, Reason, Imagination, Conscience, these immortal faculties of the soul, cleansed by the blood and mastered by the life of Christ, will carry a heaven with them into the future, and this heaven will continue because faithfulness will continue. If one has been faithful in a world of evil and good, it is reasonable to infer that he will remain faithful in the "Father's house," where there is only good. Everlasting faithfulness means everlasting reward. And yet we should remember that our faithfulness from first to last depends upon the faithfulness of God. "I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." "Underneath are the everlasting arms." Salvation is altogether of grace, while reward is altogether of works. God gives us life through Christ, but we must gain the crown of life through faithfulness.

(3) It is right that there should be degrees of reward, though there are no degrees of salvation. Every man is saved completely or not saved at all. Life makes the difference between a corpse and a man, though in men there are degrees of life. We go to heaven on

The Doctrine of Heaven and Hell

the merit of Jesus Christ, but the measure of happiness in heaven will depend upon the faithfulness here which will develop our capacity for joy. “Every cup will be **DEGREES OF** full, but not of the same size.” Each one **REWARD** will be as happy as he can be, though some will be absolutely happier than others. In the description of heaven, which we have in the book of Revelation, the martyrs who were faithful unto death have the highest place. “Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.” These words describe the process which makes heaven in us while on earth. The affliction to which he refers was the result of faithfulness to Christ, and such affliction is never an enemy fighting against us, but always a servant working for us a weight of character. We are light-weights until the pressure of affliction for Christ’s sake has given us stamina and solidity, and this weight of glory is eternal. Character thus formed lasts forever. It has capacity for great enjoyment. Suffering for Christ digs in the soul deep channels of capacity through which the waters of joy forever flow. “Enter thou into the joy of thy lord” is the welcome of Jesus to everyone who has welcomed the Lord of Joy into his soul and thus received capacity for the enjoyment and the employment of heaven.

This biblical doctrine of heaven and hell has great ethical value. The fact that sin brings punishment is a deterrent to coarse and selfish natures. It is not the **ETHICAL** highest motive, but it is the only one that can **VALUE** influence the coarse and selfish. It is better for a man criminally inclined to be kept from crime by fear of prison or the electric chair than for him to go on in

The Doctrine of Heaven and Hell

crime, heedless of consequences. Paul says, "Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." He knew that some men can be influenced only by such terror. Jesus uses the doctrine of hell as a motive to repentance.

If you have a sin as much a part of you and as dear to you as your eye or your hand, you had better give it up, for "it is better for thee to enter into life with one A MOTIVE TO REPENTANCE eye or one hand than having two eyes or two hands to be cast into hell fire." I am aware that this motive is to a large extent absent from our pulpits, and this may account for the fact that so few pulpits are influencing the masses of the people. If there were more preaching of hell in the pulpit there would be less of hell in the community. We are not saved by fear of punishment. It is the magnetic power of the uplifted Christ which draws all men, but the terrible results of sin have shocked many a soul into reflection which led to Christ. A sight of future fires makes men seek to quench the present fires of sin that may be consuming them in soul and body. To suppress these severe truths in deference to the soft sentimentalism of liberal minds who reject the Bible and the facts of sin about them is not only unfaithfulness to God but unkindness to the multitude, who need the restraining influence of fear.

It is not difficult to prove that the hope of heaven makes men better. If there is reward for faithfulness, one can afford to practice self-denial, and even suffer persecution, rather than prove unfaithful. Paul said, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." If these sufferings, borne patiently, make character that will shine to the glory of

The Doctrine of Heaven and Hell

God through eternity, I can afford to bear them, that the glory may be greater. The patriotic soldier endures the march, the bivouac, the hunger, the cold, the wound and the sickness, cheered by the hope that all this will end in victory. Even the perfect Christ "for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame." Only ignoble minds have contempt for the rewards of righteous endurance. One should do right because it is right, and refuse to do wrong because it is wrong; but even so noble a motive as that will be inspired to enthusiasm in doing right by the consciousness that right-doing is rewarded by the approval of God and lives beyond the act in the character it makes. There is a heaven in the hope of heaven.

It is a stupendous fact that God leaves us to choose between heaven and hell. "I set before you this day the way of life and the way of death." In choosing sin **WE MAY** we choose hell. In choosing righteousness we **CHOOSE** choose heaven. Sin needs no helper in making a hell; for "sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." The gravitation will be downward until we find our own place. Jesus Christ is the Saviour from sin to righteousness, and when we accept Him there comes into us a life that gravitates upward until we reach His plane of character. With the hell of the Bible before us, the death of Christ on the cross has new meaning, for it shows from what we are saved; and with the heaven of the Bible before us it has new meaning still, for it shows to what we are saved. The meaning of Calvary is measured by the distance between the bottomless pit and the topless height.

"Choose I must, and soon must choose
Holiness or heaven lose;
While what heaven loves I hate,
Shut for me is heaven's gate.

The Doctrine of Heaven and Hell

“ Endless sin means endless woe ;
Into endless sin I go,
If my soul from reason rent
Takes from sin its final bent.

“ As the stream its channel grooves,
And within that channel moves,
So doth habit's deepest tide
Groove its bed, and there abide.

“ Light obeyed increaseth light,
Light resisted bringeth night ;
Who shall give me will to choose
If the love of light I lose ?

“ Speed my soul ; this instant yield ;
Let the Light its sceptre wield ;
While thy God prolongeth grace,
Haste thee toward His holy face !”

Ethics of Business

"Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." ROM. xii: 11.

BUSINESS may be defined in a loose way as whatever one does for the purpose of making money. An Italian knife-grinder whom I met on the street corner informed me that he had been in the knife-grinding business about twenty years; and he was as truly a business man as the princely merchant or millionaire steel manufacturer. Some organ grinders, arrested for vagrancy, proved to the satisfaction of a New York court that they were in legitimate business which required close attention and hard work. The fruit-dealer on the sidewalk, the peddler with the pack on his back, trudging through the country, the stone-breaker who uses his hammer on the street, the hod-carrier who climbs the ladder, the lawyer preparing his brief, the architect drawing his plans, the carpenter plying his trade, the banker investing his money, and the merchant buying and selling his goods are business men, each one using his own mental, physical and financial capital.

There are some vocations which cannot be defined as business in this sense, because their purpose is not to make money. Agassiz declared that he did not have time to make money; he was too intent upon scientific discovery. A preacher, though he receives money for his support, if he be a true prophet of God, does not allow the desire for money to influence his utterances or his life-work. Think of Moses, Elijah or Paul using

Ethics of Business

their positions for the purpose of accumulating money and trimming their utterances and policy with a view to increasing their bank accounts! It is unthinkable. Not

THE PREACHER'S that the desire to make money is ignoble ;
TEMPTATION the ignobility consists in subjecting the higher to the lower, in allowing the incidental to control the essential, in being mastered by a selfish motive where unselfishness should be the law of life. The preacher's business is to speak and live the word of God, whether it costs or pays; to make it pay when it ought to cost is to prostitute his calling. It is better, therefore, it seems to me, that all ministers should keep themselves untrammelled by money-making schemes. The temptation is sometimes hard to resist. Money is needed for so many things, and the minister's popularity has a money value. Insurance companies bidding for popular favor, stock companies seeking investors, and real estate speculators have learned that the name of a preacher on a board of managers is worth money, and they are willing to pay him for it. He need not give his time; all they want is the influence of his name, and he will thus be helping a good business, while at the same time he is receiving a neat little income. The temptation is subtle, but he had better not yield if he prizes his vocation as a minister of Christ. I heard D. L. Moody say that more preachers had been ruined by entering into money-making schemes than by any other one cause, and he had opportunities for very wide observation. Many pastors and evangelists seem to have lost their hold upon God and man through financial transactions. Let men endowed of God with capacity for making money give their time and strength to it, realizing that they may thus be laborers together with God, but let us who are called into the ministry of reconciliation give ourselves wholly to it,

Ethics of Business

suffering, if need be, the limitations of poverty rather than risk the more serious limitations of an unsavory reputation. Some eagles of the pulpit have had their wings clipped by the money-getting spirit; and some who are not eagles have become so weighted by it that they cannot run with success the ministerial race.

Our subject this morning deals with business in the narrow sense of making money by labor, physical and mental. In this kind of business labor and capital are **CAPITAL** always friendly. Capitalists may be hostile **AND LABOR** to laborers, and laborers may be hostile to capitalists; but capital is always and everywhere the friend of labor, as labor is the friend of capital. The railroad corporation may despise the laborers who build its roads, but its money is the friend of these laborers. The laborers may hate the railroad corporation, but their labor is the friend of the corporation. While laborers and capitalists engage in war, capital and labor face each other pleading for peace, and ready to begin their friendly work together as soon as the selfishness and anger of men will permit them. Capital needs labor and labor needs capital. One cannot do without the other. To injure one is to injure the other; to help one is to help the other.

In considering the ethics of business we need to settle three things: (1) What kind of business may one engage in? (2) What methods of business are right? (3) What motives should control in business life?

I. THE NATURE OF BUSINESS. This may be determined by the Scripture "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." A business that enriches us while it works harm to our neighbor cannot be right. A business, therefore, that depends for success upon pure chance cannot be defended upon ethical grounds. Gambling

Ethics of Business

bears the relation to robbery that dueling does to murder. One man meets another on the street and shoots him down; that is murder. Two men agree to meet, with their seconds, in the early morning, and shoot at each other until one or both are killed; that also is murder. The difference is that in the first case there was one murderer; in the second case there were two.

One man meets another in a dark alley, and compels him to give up his purse; that is robbery, the essence of which is getting something for nothing. Two men sit around a table, and agree on the shuffling of cards or the throwing of dice to rob each other. In the first case there was one robber, in the second case there are two. The essence of robbery and gambling is the desire to get something for nothing, and whatever depends upon pure chance is gambling.

There is in all business an element of risk, but when its success depends upon industry, intelligence and skill, the risk is not measured by chance. Success or failure then depends upon the wise use of means. When means are eliminated and success depends upon luck, the gambler's feverish unrest takes the place of the toiler's patient work. This desire to get money without earning it is the ruin of many a man. The lucky individual is in the long run the most unlucky. Men who made their millions in stock gambling have died in poverty. A man who at one time could draw his check in Chicago for twenty millions was in his old age proprietor of a junk-shop in New York City. If he had begun life in the junk-shop and refrained from gambling, he would, doubtless, have had a competency for old age. And his poverty of purse was not the saddest thing about the old junk-shop keeper. It was plain that he had lost all stamina of character, and in disposition

Ethics of Business

was a sour, carping misanthrope. Such is the end of the gambler. Let the sight of the moral carcasses at the foot of this precipice keep us from venturing too near its edge.

A business like the liquor traffic, which makes money out of the misery and degradation of others, cannot be defended on moral grounds. The plea that others will engage in it and make money if I do not **THE LIQUOR TRAFFIC** would justify theft and murder. The fact that the State licenses this iniquity and receives revenue from it is the blackest blot on christian civilization. The State cannot afford to legitimize a business which is outlawed by reason and the conscience of good men. To continue to do so will be to change glorious destiny into fearful doom.

And those who are protected by the State in this iniquitous business have begun an aggressive campaign of education and advertising. A speaker before a brewers' convention some time ago urged the saloon-keepers to cultivate appetite by giving drink to boys, saying that nickels spent in that way will return dollars in the future. The advertising columns of our dailies, the pages of our magazines, the bulletin boards of our streets and the placards in our trolley cars are now proclaiming the merits of alcohol, after science has labelled it a poison and philanthropy has pronounced it the scourge of christendom. Men who have heretofore been at least decent enough to be ashamed of their business, while apologizing for it on the ground of necessity, are now glorying in their shame. Satan is at his old work of transforming himself into an angel of light. We must now do more than keep our boys out of the saloon. We must defend them against the encroachment of the saloon, which would thrust its painted face before them at every turn.

Ethics of Business

This state of affairs has in it some encouragement. The active propagandism of the liquor traffic will wake up drowsy christians to a sense of their duty at the ballot-box. The bravado of the giant will invite the stone from David's sling, and we hope to see his prostrate form a lifeless corpse on the evening of some election day.

No conscientious man can make money out of a business which works harm to his neighbor. The man who has invested money in the purchase of brewery bonds, **PARTNERS** and draws his big dividends, is about as bad **IN CRIME** as the brewer or saloon-keeper. He is one of the pillars of this temple of Bacchus, and the knowledge of this fact makes him a caterpillar in the temple of God. The church member who rents his property for saloon or prostitution purposes is a worse enemy of the cause of Christ than the avowed infidel. The "whited sepulchre" of his profession does not conceal the "rottenness and dead men's bones" of his inner life. To those who know his double life his presence in the church of God is malodorous and ghastly. If some one should take his name from the church roll and write it over the door of the saloon and the house of ill-fame, from which he gets his rent, it would serve him right. The money he places in the collection-box on Sunday is so foul that it pollutes every clean dollar it touches. To have it go with the widow's mite or the rich man's honest dollar, baptized in prayer, is like herding together sheep and swine, doves and vultures, demons and angels. The church that knowingly uses the devil's money in doing the Lord's work will have to pay interest to the devil in some way, and it is better not to be under such obligation to the Prince of Darkness. The interest will sooner or later amount to a mortgage, which the Old Fiend will be glad to foreclose.

Ethics of Business

The investment in theatre stock is about as bad, for the theatre as an institution, despite the occasional clean play and player, is in the business of polluting morals.

To sum it all up in a word, the business of every christian man should be able to stand the test of the Ten Commandments and the higher law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

II. METHODS OF BUSINESS. The law which rules the nature of one's business should also apply to its methods, and under this head let us consider four things.

(1) *Honesty*. Paul wrote to the Romans, who lived in an atmosphere of diplomatic intrigue, "Provide things honest in the sight of all men." There is a universal concensus of opinion as to honesty. It means truth in word and action. It is the opposite of sham and deception. The honest merchant will tell the truth about his goods. The honest manufacturer will not put a first-class label on a second-class article. A man in a Boston inquiry meeting said, "I cannot become a christian, because I sell second-class goods with first-class labels." And he was right. The poor fellow had sold his immortal soul at a paltry price, but he was wise enough not to try and hide the transaction from God. He refused to put his dishonesty under the cloak of religion.

Honesty also tells the whole truth. A man once said to Mr. Moody, "If I become a christian it will bankrupt my business. I am a soap manufacturer, and every good thing I say about my soap is true; but there is one thing I do not say: it rots the clothes. If I should tell all the truth about it nobody would buy it." Let us hope that he did not persist in bartering his soul for soap; but he had the true conception of honesty, which demands that we shall not act a lie by refusing to tell the whole truth.

A story with a moral is told of A. T. Stewart's first

Ethics of Business

day in business. A clerk told a lady that the colors in the calico he sold her would not fade. When she left Mr. Stewart said to the clerk, "That woman will find **A. T. STEWART'S** that you misrepresented those goods, and **POLICY** after a few days she will return and want her money back, and she will be right. I do not want my customers deceived as to the quality of goods." "Well, Mr. Stewart," replied the clerk, "if that is to be your way of doing business, I will seek employment elsewhere; you will not last long." But A. T. Stewart did last. However, I have not since heard from that clerk.

Honesty is the best policy, always and everywhere. The man who is honest for the sake of policy is not an honest man, but he is a shrewd one. He knows what is **AN HONEST** for his best interests. The man who is honest **CLERK** because he is conscientious cannot afford to refuse present gain in the hope of larger gain in the future. If he seems to fail because he is conscientious, his seeming failure will be the stepping-stone to success. No financial gain can atone for moral loss when a dishonest act is committed or condoned. Better fail in purse and succeed in character than succeed in purse and fail in character. A big bank account cannot make amends for poverty of manhood, and the dishonest man cannot have the consciousness of manliness. The sense of meanness will always mar his enjoyment of riches. There is more happiness in clean poverty than in polluted wealth. A young man in a New York jewelry store was asked by a lady for a gold ring of eighteen carats. He informed her that the best rings they had on hand at present were only sixteen carats, and the proprietor, after the customer had gone, reprimanded him, saying, "That woman does not know the difference

Ethics of Business

between sixteen carats and eighteen carats, and you should have sold her a ring." "But," answered the young man, "I cannot deceive anybody." The proprietor replied, "Little misrepresentations like that are legitimate in business." I presume that the clerk fell into the ways of business suggested by his employer, and if he became a robber by taking money from the till, that proprietor was to blame, for he gave him his first lessons in dishonesty.

Dr. Thain Davidson tells of another young man who, in measuring off some silk, noticed a flaw, and frankly told the lady customer that the silk would not suit her because of the flaw. **AN HONEST FATHER** An old farmer in the country, two days afterward, received a note which had in it this sentence: "Your son is not sharp enough for business. He will never make a merchant." The next train brought the farmer to the great city, and he hastened to the store to see what was the matter with his boy. When he was informed by the merchant of his boy's foolish act in telling the customer of the flaw in the silk and thus failing to make a sale, the farmer said, "I wish you to know, sir, that I am proud of my boy, and would not have wished him to act otherwise than he has done. God will provide another opening for him." Happy the father who has such a son, and happy the son who has been blest with such a father. Conscientiousness like that has even a higher money value than a willingness to lie, by word or silence, to make a few dollars. A cashier in a bank was discharged by the president because he refused to do what his conscience did not approve, and within a few days that same president recommended the discharged cashier for a position with a much larger salary. "You can depend upon him," he said, "for he will not go against his conscience."

Ethics of Business

A business man in Boston said to me the other day, "I am bothered with rogues and liars amongst my employees. Business would be a delight if I could secure only honest men." He was willing to pay for honesty. The superintendent of the Assaying Office in New York City told me that most of his employees were christian men, some of whom had been with him thirty years, and their wages were increased because they were known to be perfectly reliable. Men who handle gold dust, to be worth anything at all, must be honest and reliable.

Young Adam Clark was discharged because he refused to stretch a piece of cloth, that he might make it measure the required length, and as a result we have "Adam Clark's Commentaries on the Bible," a monument of learning. If Adam had consented to stretch the cloth, he would, doubtless, have remained a clerk, provided he had not found his way into the penitentiary. I do not even know the name of the merchant who discharged him. People are not careful to preserve the names of such men.

(2) *Industry*. Some one has said, "Man is an animal as lazy as circumstances will permit," and I fear that there is too much truth in the saying. Few of us are born strenuous. We like our ease. Sleep is popular.

Laziness is the worst enemy of business life. Thomas Edison, when asked for the secret of his success in life, replied, "I never look at the clock." Most of us like to **WHY SHORT HOURS?** have a clock in full view, so that we may see just when to stop work. We forget that work is in itself a blessing. Adam, in his purity, was placed in a garden, not that he might enjoy flowers and fruits, but that he might tend it. The restored Eden, which we call heaven, is a place of service. Out of work, even here, means out of heaven. A heaven of everlasting lounging, for which some orientals sigh, has no place in

Ethics of Business

the Scriptures. If the workman wants short hours, that he have a change of work from the manual to the mental or the spiritual, he deserves the enactment of an eight-hour law; but if he wants short hours that he may lounge in the saloon, or even at home, lazily wasting time, he would turn a blessing into a curse. A lazy fellow was asked why he slept so late in the morning, and he replied, "I am employed hearing counsel. Industry advises me to get up, and sloth insists that I lie still. There are so many reasons, pro and con, that it takes a long time to argue the case, and dinner-time may arrive before it is settled." Listening to the arguments of sloth has wrecked many a life. It is the man who regards the case as settled on the side of industry who does anything in this world.

I know that the ability to rest is as important as the ability to work. Doing nothing as a business is very wearisome. The honest toiler is the sound sleeper, and **NEED OF REST** to the man of strenuous exertion the vacation is relaxation and strength; but, in order to relax, there must be something to relax. Rest implies industry, and industry, more than ability, is the secret of success. Sir Isaac Newton insisted that he was not a genius, but he did the work of a genius because he had learned the secret of persistent application. "My sword is too short," said a Spartan soldier to his mother, as he started to battle. "Add a step to it" was the reply; and if one will add to the short sword of mediocre ability the step of patient industry, he will conquer the difficulties that confront him in making life a success. "Seest thou a man diligent in business; he shall stand before kings, he shall not stand before mean men."

(3) *Altruism*. Try your business by the Golden Rule, which means to live, let live, and help live. The rich

Ethics of Business

merchant who would crush the shop-keeper on the opposite corner by selling his wares at less than cost, deserves the malediction of mankind. The trust that would destroy a man's business because he will not come into their combination is a devil-fish whose slimy tentacles should be cut off by law. The trades-union that would compel a man to join it, or starve him and his family, is a diabolical tyranny. The trust and the trades-union have a right to organize for the promotion of their own interests, but they have no right to compel others, on penalty of death or starvation, to come into their ranks. To do so is to adopt the methods of the Spanish Inquisition.

When the rule of gold displaces the Golden Rule there is always loss. No amount of financial gain will atone for a greedy, grasping disposition, and one need **GOLDEN RULE vs. RULE OF GOLD** not resist the sense of satisfaction which he feels when now and then it is made apparent that greed has overreached itself and suffers loss in the attempt to rob its neighbors. Several years ago, in the oil regions of Pennsylvania, a pastor invested his savings in a well which yielded some oil and much salt water. A greedy neighbor bought the land adjoining his and sank a well, hoping that he would drain off the oil from the pastor's well; but the result was the opposite of what he expected, for he drained off the salt water into his own well, and left the pastor's well to flow freely with a good quality of oil. And this is a parable which grasping greed needs everywhere to remember. The man who would impoverish his neighbor for his own enrichment is certain to impoverish himself. Even if he should succeed in getting his neighbor's money he will impoverish his own soul, and soul poverty is the worst of pauperism.

(4) *Morality.* The truly altruistic man is moral. He

Ethics of Business

lives in right relation with his fellows. And yet it is so important that christian men should conduct their business in accordance with sound moral principles that I **A RUINED** venture to make a separate division and label **LIFE** it "Morality." Let no moral taint be in the nature or method of your business. Professor Drummond was right when he said that the primary purpose of a factory is not to make things but men. The factory which makes good shoes and bad men is worse than a failure, though it may pay fifty per cent. annual dividend. The factory that makes good cloth and bad character is a curse to the world. A young man in Philadelphia, who was discharged on account of drunkenness and other dissolute habits, wrote the following letter to his employer: "Sir, I came into your service uncorrupt in principles and in morals, but the rules of your house required me to spend my evenings at places of public entertainment and amusement in search of customers. To accomplish my work in your service I was obliged to drink with them and join with them in their pursuit of pleasure. I went with them to the theatre and the billiard table, but it was not my choice. I went in your service; your interest required it. I have added thousands of dollars to the profits of your trade, but at what expense you now see and I know too well. You have become wealthy, but I am poor indeed, and now this cruel dismissal from your employ is the recompense I receive for a character ruined and prospects blasted in helping to make you a rich man." This rich man deserves that the furies of a lashing conscience shall follow him through time and eternity, if he does not repent and make amends for the wrong he did that young man. The young men who are reared in christian families, when informed that they are expected to do this dirty sort of work, revolt against it,

Ethics of Business

but sometimes make the plea of necessity and submit. Their finer instincts are like an ivy vine I saw the other day which a barber had planted in his large window and **THE REVOLT OF CONSCIENCE** was trying to make it grow away from the light into the darkness of his room. He had fastened it down along the wall, and when I saw it the stem and every leaf was turned toward the light. The whole vine was in revolt against such treatment. Many a young man with christian instincts does revolt against the efforts of his employers to train him into familiarity with the dark ways of sin and shame, but seems as helpless as this vine to stop the process. Only God can help him. May he yield to this gravitation toward the light, and ever refuse to be trained toward the dark, where there is only withering and death.

III. MOTIVES IN BUSINESS. Some men make money just for the sake of making money. Business is what Ruskin calls it, "a great game." They make a dollar that they may make another dollar. It is like gaining runs in baseball. A run is good for nothing but to count, and the game is to make more runs.

Others make money just to gratify the flesh. They want what money can buy: a luxurious home, sumptuous fare, fine clothes, carriages and automobiles. Trips to Europe are to them the *summum bonum* of life. Still others make money that those they love may have the necessities and luxuries of life. And others desire to do good. They would like to leave the world better than they found it.

But the highest of all motives is that we may serve God in serving our fellow-man. "To do good and communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." This Scripture unites philanthropy with spirituality. It urges us to please God by helping

Ethics of Business

man. Such a motive uplifts and inspires. It keeps us on the earth while we look up to heaven, and this looking up lifts up. The sense of partnership with God ennobles; the honor of it cannot be surpassed.

THE HIGHEST MOTIVE The thought of stewardship which recognizes God as proprietor, while we do business on His capital, carries with it a sense of dependence upon Him as well as responsibility in using His gifts that cannot fail to make noble character. Business men assure us that it is difficult for them to foster their religious experiences and to keep up their religious duties while absorbed in the secular. Observatories built in great cities are almost useless, for the jar of the rumbling wheels of commerce shakes the telescope so that the astronomer cannot make delicate observation of the heavens; and the christian business man, in the rush and turmoil of business life, finds that his religious duties are interfered with. It is hard to pray in the midst of so much confusion.

The difficulty arises from a too clear-cut distinction between business and religion. Let him wipe out the word "secular" from his vocabulary. He is God's **BUSINESS AND RELIGION** steward, and now his office becomes sacred as a church; his ledger is as holy as his Bible, for both are God's books. He can now pray without ceasing, for he realizes the need of God as much in his counting-room as in his prayer meeting. The whole world has become a temple, God's house, where God is worshipped in consecrated service through the week, as in public song and prayer on the Sabbath. Every spot is holy ground, and every day a holy day, every garment a vestment, and every meal a sacrament. The Sabbath he hallows by closing his store for the worship of God in the sanctuary; Monday he hallows by

Ethics of Business

opening his store for God's presence and help, so that it, too, becomes a sanctuary of service. He goes to the Lord's supper, to memorialize his death, and when he goes to breakfast, dinner or supper he recognizes the living Lord as his guest and thanks him for His presence. The middle wall of partition between the secular and the religious has been broken down. The veil of the temple is rent in twain, and all God's house in which we live is turned into a Holy of Holies. He still delights to hear the music of organ and choir in the church, while the melody in his heart is a choir singing unto the Lord all through the week.

Queen Elizabeth asked a rich English merchant to go on a mission for the crown. The merchant remonstrated, saying that such long absence would be fatal to his business. "You take care of my business," replied the queen, "and I will take care of yours." When he returned he found that his business, through the patronage and care of the queen, had increased in volume, and he was richer than when he left. So every business man can afford to place the interests of Christ's kingdom first, for the promise is clear and unmistakable, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Make money for Christ, and He will make money for you. Supply His needs, and He will supply yours. Keep His laws, and He will keep you. Do His will, and He will look after your welfare. If losses come, He will see that they are ultimate gains. Link your destiny in time and eternity with Jesus Christ, and bankruptcy will be impossible. Prize the spiritual above the material. Transmute the seen and temporal into the unseen and eternal. Lay up treasures in heaven, so that death, which impoverishes the rich worldling, will be your enrichment. Ever seek Christ's "Well done" here and you will receive it hereafter.

**THE
SUPREME
TEST**

Èthics of Marriage and Home Life

“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children, lest they be discouraged. Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God.”—COL. iii: 18-22.

ON THE COAST of England there is a gushing fresh-water fountain which twice every twenty-four hours is covered by the incoming tide, but no salt water ever enters it. It purifies the surrounding elements without receiving any contamination. This fountain is a good symbol of the ideal christian home, which sends out into society its purifying influences, while it receives into itself nothing of evil.

Marriage is, of course, the basis of the home. Unmarried people may establish a house, and it is home by sacred association, for they carry with them into it the memories of their childhood; but without marriage the ideal home cannot be realized. Paul refused to marry because of the “present distress,” but he claimed that he had the right to do so and lead about a wife as the Apostle Peter did. And there are those to-day who deny themselves the pleasure of home life because they are married to duty. I knew a christian man who for twenty years was married to his mother. He lived for her happiness, he ministered to all her needs; but when she died he chose a wife and now lives in a happy home. I knew another man who in early life was married to nine sisters. He shared with them his in-

Ethics of Marriage and Home Life

come until they were educated and became self-sustaining, then he married a christian woman and is now happy in the midst of his family. There are men and women who are married to Christ and the church, and yet, if they so desire, they have the right of marriage and the happiness of home life. There is no biblical authority for forbidding to marry. It is a matter of choice. There is no ecclesiastical position in which marriage may not be helpful. Motherhood is as holy as maidenhood, and fatherhood as bachelorhood. Nothing on earth exceeds in sacredness the sanctity of the home life and the relation between the members of the family. Of course there are some who, on account of physical infirmity or hereditary disease, should not marry, "but marriage is honorable in all."

As to when one should marry, each case must be decided on its own merits. The Pagan custom of child marriages, however, should not be tolerated in christian countries. There should be maturity of body and mind.

As to how one should marry, that is also an open question. It may be in the home or the church or the grove, as taste may dictate; it may be private or public, but ought never to be secret. The fashionable fad of marrying in secret, and after months have intervened informing friends of the marriage, has in it the seeds of future sorrow.

The reasons for marrying are various. It is sometimes a purely commercial transaction. People marry for what they can get, and such a marriage is almost certain to result in unhappiness. And if we marry with the selfish hope of securing a husband or a wife who will make us happier in life, we are apt to be disappointed. But if it is our purpose in marriage to make another happy, we cannot fail to be happy ourselves.

Ethics of Marriage and Home Life

Selfishness always carries with it the conditions of misery.

Let it be understood that marriage is for life and fewer mistakes will be made. Easy divorce leads people to enter into marriage without due consideration, and **A LIFE CONTRACT** this prepares the way for the wreck of happiness. "The wife is bound by the law so long as her husband liveth," not so long as he keeps sober or remains congenial. "What God hath joined together let not man put asunder." There is only one sin that is equal to death, and even when the awful crime of adultery has broken the marriage tie there may be no obligation to remarry, and in most cases it is best to remain unmarried. Certainly there is no other condition in which remarriage has biblical sanction.

This does not mean that there may not be separation for other reasons. The wife is not called upon to live with a drunken husband and endure brutal treatment. Even incompatibility of temperament may make it desirable to live apart, though if there be children it is better for their sakes to suffer than to separate. But separation for other reasons than adultery does not give even the innocent party liberty to marry again while both are living. To do so, according to the teaching of Jesus, is to commit adultery. It has been asserted that there are more polygamists in New England than in Utah, and I fear that there is truth in the assertion, for I have been requested to marry more divorced people during my two years' residence in Boston than during any twenty years of my previous ministry. And a pastor of a large and influential Boston church informs me that he is called upon to marry divorced people, on an average, about once a week. One man, who looked like a well-to-do man of business, confessed to me that

Ethics of Marriage and Home Life

he already had two living wives. My surprise prompted me to say that the third woman was taking great risks and he ought to be more considerate. But he could see

**MORMONS
COMPEL
SUPPORT** no harm in marrying three living women, simply because the law of the State permitted it.

The proper place for him is Salt Lake City, for the Mormons compel such a fellow to support his concubines, and New England, by its loose divorce laws, relieves him of that burden. On another occasion a large envelope was handed me while I was standing in front of a couple ready to begin the ceremony. Opening it, that I might see the license and learn their names, I was rather startled to find divorce papers with the license, and the only cause was drunkenness. Confessing my embarrassment, I informed them that I could not marry them. "It is legal and all right," answered the man. "Yes," I replied, "but my lawgiver is Jesus Christ and He plainly teaches that only one cause of divorce makes remarriage permissible." So as cheerfully as I could I shook hands all round and bade them good-bye. All of which goes to prove that pastors should instruct their people in the teaching of the New Testament concerning marriage, that the young may grow up with biblical views on this vital subject.

There are six codes of ethics which have to do with marriage and the home. The first is the wife's code, and we have it in the text, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord." This is an echo of the words in Ephesians v: 22, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord; for the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church." Every home must have a head, and a two-headed creature is a monster. The Bible plainly teaches that the husband is the normal

Ethics of Marriage and Home Life

head of the household. Of course, if the head is diseased, the other members of the body must get along the best they can; and there is as much fact as wit in the saying that, while the husband is the head, the wife is the neck that turns the head in any direction she may choose. Certainly, there is no conflict between head and neck and hand when the body is in a thoroughly healthy condition. But the head is the seat of authority when authority is needed. "Likewise, wives, be in subjection to your own husbands." (I Peter iii : 1.) The woman who is unwilling that a man should be at the head of her household should not get married, and every woman ought to be careful to select such a man as she will be proud to have at the head of the family. It also behoves the husband to be such a man that a self-respecting woman may feel honored in giving to him the leadership of the household.

Next in order, if not in importance, is the husband's code, which we have in the words: "Husbands, love your wives and be not bitter against them." And this, also, is an echo of the words in Ephesians v : 25, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it." As we compare this with the injunctions to the wife we see that mutuality is the law of the family. It is the nature of love to serve and obey. If the husband loves the wife as he should and the wife loves the husband as she should there can be no clash of authority. Each will delight to serve the other, and there will be mutual obedience in the ministry of love. "As the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything." That is a high standard for the wife, but the standard for the husband is even higher when he is told to "love his wife even as Christ also loved the church and gave

Ethics of Marriage and Home Life

himself for it." His is the mission of love, which gives itself and does not demand servile subjection. With such love in his heart it is easy for the husband to obey the second command: "Dwell with your wives according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel." Remember that weakness does not imply inferiority. The weaker may be the finer in texture. The vessel of porcelain or gold may not be so strong as the vessel of iron or brass, but its quality is superior. So the husband in his strength is to give honor to the wife in the weakness which may carry with it superiority. In this age of club life it may be well to emphasize the word "dwell." The husband is admonished to "dwell" with his wife. His business may carry him away from home, and sometimes the missionary is prompted by conscientious reasons to separate himself from his wife, with an ocean between them. The evangelist may be compelled to leave the wife at home as he goes out into the destitute sections to preach the gospel. But the heart of the true husband dwells with the wife at home, and when duty does not otherwise demand he will be there in body also. Certain it is that the attractions of the club and the secret society should not take the husband away from the company of his wife and children in the home.

It may be well to remember that marriage does not at once produce perfection in character. If you thought that you were marrying a prince, you found afterwards **DEMANDING** that he was a man. If the man thought that **TOO MUCH** he was marrying an angel, he also discovered that she was a woman. But, after all, it is more to be a man than a prince, or a woman than an angel. There will be room for patience and sympathy in the adjustments of life. A good wife said that she and her husband were

Ethics of Marriage and Home Life

always happy because they kept in their home two animals which she named "Bear" and "Forbear." Now and then a man is found who is charitable toward the faults of friends and very critical of his wife. He demands of her more than imperfect human nature can give, and she may make the same demands of him. The ancient legend declares that Pygmalion conceived an ideal of a perfect woman, and the gods created Galatea, who was the realization of his ideal, and gave her to him. But the legend of Pygmalion is not often realized in actual life. A book which I read years ago, "How to be Happy though Married," had some useful suggestions. The mutuality of grace will supply every defect and make the home what it ought to be. The apostle says that husband and wife are "heirs together of the grace of life." If this grace of life dwell richly in the heart of each, harmony and happiness cannot fail to result, and the home will be like the rose of Jericho, of which I recently read. It flourishes in the desert and can grow even upon the rock, and it comes nearer being independent of environment than any other plant with which I am acquainted. Let love rule in the home, and it will be a rose of Jericho even in a desert of destitution.

Charles Wesley beautifully expresses the ideal relation of husband and wife :

"Not from his head was woman took,
As made her husband to overlook ;
Not from his feet, as one designed
The footstool of the stronger kind ;
But fashioned for himself a bride,
An equal, taken from his side :
Her place intended to maintain
The mate and glory of the man,
To rest as still beneath his arm,
Protected by her lord from harm,
And never from his heart removed
As only less than God beloved."

Ethics of Marriage and Home Life

The next code of ethics which makes the home what it ought to be has to do with the parents, and in this code there are two clauses, one negative, the other positive.

THE PARENTS' CODE We are commanded not to provoke our children. The phrase "to anger" is not in the original.

The word "provoke" has in it the idea of overstimulation. We are not to press our children to the point of breaking. The strenuous life is not the best for childhood. The public school teacher who crams the child's mind and would crush every personality into the same mould may learn a useful lesson from this principle. Let individualism have fair play, while the rights of others are respected. An unwise attempt to hasten the growth of the child may result in injury. A naturalist, very fond of the "Emperor Moth," which is beautiful of wing and form, gathered a number of cocoons and watched their development. A very large one attracted his attention, and when the moth began to appear he was anxious to liberate it from its prison. Taking his sharp knife he cut the cocoon, thinking that he would help the insect into liberty. But his unwise haste was its death; it fell to the ground unable to fly. Its body needed the slow process of extrication. And so, in seeking to develop our children too rapidly in mind or body we may inflict permanent injury.

The positive clause of the parents' code is in Ephesians vi: 4, "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." This implies the new birth and is an echo of the words of Solomon in Proverbs xxii: 6, "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it." These words might be translated "train up a child according to his bent." If you cultivate him along the line of the trend of his nature, he will become fixed in that trend when he

Ethics of Marriage and Home Life

reaches mature life and will not depart from it. The new birth gives the spiritual trend, and if we train up our children according to this new nature they will never depart from it. Even some professing christians are willing that their children should grow up as worldlings and enjoy for a while what they call the pleasures of life before they become earnest christians. Such parents have not tasted the joy of real spiritual service or they would wish their children to share such joy with them. It is a Mohammedan custom to speak into the ear of the new-born child some words from the Koran, and in this expression "train up" there is the thought of infancy. The original means "rub the gullet," referring to an ancient custom of rubbing the throat of infancy with oil and blood. Whatever else it may mean, it certainly enforces the obligation to begin the christian training of our children in their earliest years. Jesus said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not." The child that is old enough to love and obey the parent is old enough to love and obey God. Christ is worthy not only that the soul of the child should be given him, but the life as well, and the conversion of a child means the soul and life for time and eternity.

A man in Connecticut who had been saved at sixty years of age, while he was dying exclaimed, "Lost, lost, forever lost!" and when the pastor, rushing to his bedside, expressed his surprise at such an exclamation, **A LOST LIFE** for he had just given assurance that he was trusting in Christ for salvation, the man replied, "Oh, yes, my soul is saved, but fifty years of life are lost forever." Every parent should strive to give to his child a better experience than that. If he is won to the Saviour in childhood, when he comes to die he can look back

Ethics of Marriage and Home Life

upon a life worthily spent while he looks forward to a blissful eternity.

Now comes the child's code, which has in it the two great words "obey" and "honor." The text says, "Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing unto the Lord." And this word "obey" is the same that is used in Acts when Rhoda went to the door and listened for the voice of Peter on the outside. It means that you are not only to submit to the authority of parents, but look and listen for their slightest wish. Strive to please them. Do their will so far as you know it unless it contradicts the will of God, whose authority alone is superior to that of the parent. And the word "honor" carries with it even more than this word "obey." "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the earth." The first command with a promise. Your parents may not be in their tastes and grammar just what you are. They gave you a better education than they received, but you need not be ashamed of their quaint ways and ungrammatical expressions. Give them the place of honor in your heart and home. And this does not refer to the period of childhood only, but in relation to our parents we are to be children all our lives.

In many homes there is need of the servant's code, and in this, as revealed in the New Testament, two words express its meaning — "obey" and "please." "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance, for ye serve the Lord Christ." This obedience is not to be with eye-service, striving only to please

Ethics of Marriage and Home Life

men, but "in singleness of heart, fearing God." The slave without liberty of body may have great liberty of soul. He is a free man in Christ Jesus. His daily service is ennobled by the thought that in faithfully performing it he is pleasing Christ and receiving His "Well done!" And the servant who faithfully ministers in the home, doing heartily and cheerfully the duties of the day, will receive a greater reward than the millionaire who seeks the promotion of some great enterprise, prompted by selfish motives. The reward will come from the Lord. Indeed, God does not count the bigness of the sphere, but the faithfulness with which we fill it.

Linked with this is the master's code, which has in it three emphatic words — "do," "forbear" "give." "And ye, masters, do the same things unto them." Which means that as servants are to obey their masters, performing their duties in singleness of heart, as unto Christ, serving the Lord in serving men, so masters are to obey the higher law of humanity in serving their servants, doing good unto them, and thus pleasing God while they uplift humanity. Masters are to "forbear threatening, knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with Him." Self-restraint and patience are needed by the master as much as by the servant. And the final injunction is, "Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven." Deal justly and fairly with all; remember that they are human beings with sensitive spirits and immortal souls. Be unto them just what you think the Lord Jesus would be, if he were in your place, and in serving your servants in the higher sense you are faithfully serving the Master in heaven.

We cannot receive from this subject the best that is

Ethics of Marriage and Home Life

in it unless we apply its principles to God and ourselves. God is our husband. We who trust in Christ are His bride. He gives us His name. He supplies our needs.

THE HIGHER REALM We share with him His dignity and glory, and we are to be careful that we bring not reproach upon His name. God is our father, and we may depend upon His wisdom for guidance and helpfulness. During the battle of Crecy the "Black Prince" led the charge, while his father stood on an adjacent hilltop and watched the conflict. The father had told the prince that he would send to him reinforcements whenever he saw that they were needed. And in the thick of the fight the prince felt more than once that the time for reinforcements had arrived, but they never came. The father general, in his superior wisdom, knew that they were not needed, and left his son to fight the battle that he might have the honor of the more glorious victory. Many times in life's conflict we feel our limitations, and we wonder that our Father does not give us immediate relief; but He knows what is best. He gives us just what is needed for our full development and complete victory.

The Lord is our Master, and His approval is our joy. When Rudolph of Vienna gave his great Symphony we are told that the people pressed around him at the close, offering their congratulations, but he received them coldly. There seemed to be something weighing upon his mind. When, however, the master musician who had trained him approached and said that the symphony was a great success, the face of Rudolph lighted up and the smile indicated that he was pleased. The approval of the master was more to him than the applause of the multitude. And so when we hear in our inner consciousness the voice of God—"Well done!"—we have a foretaste of heaven.

Ethics of Marriage and Home Life

The blessings of the home life, however, are not without their dangers. One may become satisfied with the love of wife and child without the love of God. It is sometimes said of a prosperous business man that he loves his home, but he never goes to church. He is enjoying the gift of God without thanking the giver. All that home, with wife and mother and child, means to-day we owe to Christ, and the man who enjoys the home life without the recognition of Jesus is, to say the least, ungrateful. It is just possible for us, like Adam, to hide ourselves from the Lord of the garden in the luxuriance of the garden of the Lord. We allow the very blessings He gives us to separate us from himself. A wealthy man built a beautiful home on the side of a mountain in Colorado. He selected the spot because of the magnificent landscape which spread out before him. The golden sunsets were glorious. But he planted around his house many trees, with vines, and after a few years the trees and vines had shut out the landscape and the golden sunsets. His improvement of the home took away from him the larger view. And thus it is possible for us to shut ourselves within the shady nook of home life and allow it to cut off the view of our eternal home.

That which gives us great pleasure may also bring unutterable pain. The joys of home make possible its deepest sorrows. The happy home is many a time broken up by death or calamity. And yet the home is never destroyed; it goes with us in our hearts wherever we may wander. He may allow the earthly home to be darkened or broken up that He may bring in view the home on which shadows never fall. A farmer noticed that two robins were building their nests in a pile of brush which he knew was to be burned in a few days. The robins seemed to think that it was very cruel in

Ethics of Marriage and Home Life

him to tear away the nest they had built, but it was real kindness on his part.

And yet, whatever calamity may come, the christian home is really immortal. The Indians of a certain tribe had a beautiful legend which declared that when the **INDIAN LEGEND** flowers of the field began to fade their colors were caught up into the rainbow on the cloud, so that when they gazed at the rainbow they saw the flowers that had disappeared. So in the Father's house, which Christ has gone to prepare, we can see by faith all the beauties of the earthly home, and when death comes it will be simply a home-going. No wonder the christian now and then becomes home-sick for heaven. The loved ones who made the home happy here are now over there, and I would appeal to everyone who has not this home feeling toward heaven that they seek it through Jesus Christ.

It is said that John Howard Payne, who wrote "Home, Sweet Home," never knew what it was to have a home — he was a homeless wanderer over the earth. **"HOME, SWEET HOME"** One night, sitting on the steps of a home in a great city, he saw a light through a window and heard merry laughter and sweet music. As he sat there the words of "Home, Sweet Home" came to his mind, and he penned them that very night. Years afterward Mr. Payne visited the same city, and as he walked down the street after dark, remembering the writing of his hymn, he went over and sat upon the same steps, meditating upon the past. While he sat there the same window was lighted. He heard the notes of the piano, and out into the night came floating his own words with the familiar melody, "Home, Sweet Home." He put his face in his hands and wept as he thought how he had made other homes

Ethics of Marriage and Home Life

happy while not permitted to enjoy the happiness of a home himself.

Now suppose the owner of that beautiful home had come to the door and said, "Mr. Payne, come in and enjoy with us this home, with all its beauty and music. You may have it if you will." Would he refuse the offer and go out again to wander through the earth? Certainly he would express his appreciation and gratitude.

Something like this God does through Jesus Christ. He stands in the door of heaven and invites us to come in and enjoy its purity, its service, its music, its love. You will not refuse to accept! I plead with you in the name of Jesus, whose death on the cross purchased this home and whose righteousness makes it glorious, that you will accept the invitation, and make the preparation that will fit you for its enjoyment.

The Ethics of Amusements

“ I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth ; therefore enjoy pleasure ; and, behold, this also is vanity.” Eccl. ii : 1.

SEEKING PLEASURE does not bring pleasure. Solomon tried this, and gives us the results in the book of Ecclesiastes. He had power, wealth and leisure, and could therefore make a fair test of the pleasure-seeking life. He drank moderately, he gratified his PLEASURE æsthetic tastes in building great public works, SEEKING fine houses, and in planting vineyards, gardens vs. PLEASURE and orchards, adorned with pools of water and flowing fountains. To them he added music, vocal and instrumental, the best that wealth and kingly patronage could secure. He says : “ I withheld not my heart from any joy. Whatever mine eyes desired, I kept not from them.” And after such an experience of pleasure-seeking, he exclaimed in disgust, “ All is vanity and vexation of Spirit, and there is no profit under the sun.” Then he turned himself to madness and folly. He plunged into excesses of drink and lust, which soon turned him into a misanthrope, so that he says : “ I hated life, yea, I hated all my labor because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me.” His verdict upon life’s pleasure and labor is that it is all vanity and striving after wind. These experiences of Solomon prove five things :

First. That the pleasure-seeking spirit does not, in the long run, bring pleasure.

Ethics of Amusements

Second. That the pleasure-seeking spirit fosters selfishness, and thus makes ugly character.

Third. That a pleasure-seeking spirit degenerates into a life of debauchery.

Fourth. That a pleasure-seeking spirit ends in hatred of all life, and in a sense of failure, which is positive pain.

Fifth. That a pleasure-seeking spirit, therefore, is certain, sooner or later, to banish all pleasure and fill life with disappointment and sorrow.

In a word, Solomon's verdict is that the pleasure-seeking spirit is immoral.

Beau Brummel, after he had spent his life in rounds of pleasure, dancing with the princesses of the land, pointed to a dog as he lay asleep in the sun and said: "I wish I were that dog."

This experience of Solomon is confirmed by the testimony of Christ and the Apostles. "Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth," says James, "and been wanton.

TESTIMONY OF NEW TESTAMENT Ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter." That is, those who live in pleasure will soon become wanton. They will have pleasure at the expense of virtue, and revel in their abandonment to vice. Such persons are treating themselves as the butcher treats the calves of the stall. They are simply fattening their hearts for a day of slaughter. They are heart-murderers. The finer feelings of the soul are slaughtered by the pleasure-seeking spirit. The apostle therefore declares, "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." The pleasure-seeking spirit really kills the soul to all that is noble. The body of the pleasure-seeker is a walking sepulchre. The soul within has become dead to high aspirations and holy motives. Like Bunyan's man with the muckrake, he keeps his eyes on the trash and dirt

Ethics of Amusements

of earth, with no regard for the crown above his head. The royalty of true manhood is sacrificed for the muck of passing sensation. The smoking pottage of present indulgence causes the pleasure-seeker to despise the birthright of his soul.

A mother and father in Boston are to-day mourning for a daughter whose condition is worse than physical death. She walks the streets and plies her trade of evil. A friend **THE GREAT ROBBER** met her the other day and asked why she did not go home. Her reply was: "It is too dull; I cannot have enough fun there." The pleasure-seeking spirit has murdered in that young woman all love of mother and virtue. She is dead while she liveth. But the results with her have been just as Jesus said, "The pleasures of life choke the word and make it unfruitful." That word "choke" is very suggestive. As the robber chokes his victim into insensibility that he may rob him with ease, so the pleasure-seeking spirit chokes truth and robs it of its power to save and help. This pleasure-seeking spirit is the bandit on the earth's highway, awaiting its opportunity to choke every influence that would make us better men and women. This bandit entered the dwelling of the rich man of the parable, and, muffling his hand in the sumptuous daily fare, choked conscience and all holy aspirations, so that the beggar at the gate with his dog companions, alive to the voice of God and duty, was the happier of the two in this world and the next.

It is the pleasure-seeking spirit that produces the kind of people described in Phil. iii: 18, "Whose god is their belly; whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things."

"Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God" are classed among the "covetous, blasphemers, unfaithful,

Ethics of Amusements

unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, and despisers of those that are good, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." Every pastor knows that those who **IN BAD COMPANY** are dominated by the pleasure-seeking spirit, though they may be punctilious about the form of godliness on the Sabbath, are void of the power of godliness during the week. They may be moral in their outward lives, and religious in external observances, but they lack power to make others either moral or religious. The best that can be said of them is that they are negatively good, in that they do not break the ten commandments, but they lack positive power for holiness. Theirs is a religion of form without force. In Titus iii : 3 we have a picture of those who served divers lusts and pleasures, while they live in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. In this picture the pleasure-seeking spirit is the master, and the pleasure-seeker is the slave.

Moses was a wise man in choosing "even to suffer affliction with the people of God," rather than to be the slave of this pleasure-seeking spirit for a season. (Hebrews xi : 25.) Pleasure-seekers are deceived into the illusion that they are free to do as they please, but really they are slaves. "Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings . . . while they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption." (II Peter ii : 13.)

In the light of these principles let us take a bird's-eye view of the dance, the theatre, and the card table, the three popular amusements born of the pleasure-seeking spirit, while we reserve for future sermons a fuller treatment of each.

Dancing is not now an expression of joy, as it was in primitive times. Its purpose is to give pleasure, rather

Ethics of Amusements

than express pleasure; and the pleasure it gives is, according to the most competent witnesses, the silent enjoyment of sex. The modern dance is a contrivance for the mingling of sensuous music and sexual excitement. The physical response to music has little to do with it. If it did, the square dance, without the embrace, would be popular, but we know that it has become so obsolete that some young people have never heard of it. The pleasure-seeking spirit, based upon sex, is the swirling current that runs with incredible swiftness towards the maelstrom of ruin.

The theatre, through the eye and ear, does for the audience what the dance does through the sense of touch. The average modern play is full of suggestion and innuendo for both eye and ear. Undress that would not be tolerated in any respectable home, even among brothers and sisters, is common on the stage. Conversation, which off the stage would mark a woman as unfit for decent company, and postures from which the face of modest virtue would turn in disgust in any other place, are not only tolerated, but are known by theatre managers to be the popular features of a play.

I received last week from a gentleman in Washington, D. C., the following letter :

MY DEAR SIR: I was interested in your sermon on theatres, as reported in the *Boston Globe* last Monday. I believe it to be the imperative duty of the pulpit to speak out clearly on this money-eating, soul-destroying evil. Last New Year's night I was asked to go to the theatre by a person who makes a practice of going at least twice a week. We went to the Lafayette Theatre, which stands directly opposite the White House. I thought, truly we shall see nothing questionable there. But, sir, from beginning to end the play was suggestive of evil. Lies were told from beginning to end. In one part there was a young woman alone on the stage with a young man. After a

Ethics of Amusements

while they occupied one chair; then, to be more comfortable, she must needs sit on his knee. After a time the suggestion was made that her papa would object to them burning so much gas. Out went the lights. The theatre was dark as could be for at least five minutes. Another of the women sang the most suggestive song that I ever listened to, entitled "Just One Touch," and to wind up the song she jumped into the man's arms and was carried off the stage drawling out "Just One Touch." Lights out again. There were many other things which I could describe, but I suppose you know them; but the surprising thing to me was the fact that the woman I was with saw nothing wrong in the play. She thought it was really pretty. She is a church member, and I believe pure, but how a person can be so blinded to the evil passes my comprehension. I believe truly, as you say, of all the institutions in the world which receive public recognition, the theatre is the most immoral and corrupting.

I have recently been informed that most of the great theatres in the large cities of America are owned by two Jewish men of wealth, and their policy is simply to make money. Actresses, who at first desire to be respectable, have been compelled against their protest to take parts repulsive to every instinct of a virtuous woman, and this will account for the horrible degradation of the American stage, as acknowledged even by its friends, during the past few years. Shylocks who care more for ducats than for personal virtue or public morals have control of an institution which, under the best of management, is bad in its influence upon all who act a part, but which, under the control of insatiable money sharks, may become simply insufferable in its diabolical work of debasing character on both sides of the foot-lights.

The card table does not, like the dance and the theatre, strike at the chastity of men and women. It is with the dance in that it is a waste of time, and adds nothing

Ethics of Amusements

to the intellectual store. The few phases of cards and the technique of the ballroom may be properly defined as mental vacuity. The card table strikes directly at the ten **THE CARD TABLE** commandments, and its tendency is to make men and women dishonest. Doctor Savage, of New York, who does not stand for a very high type of spirituality, said some time ago that a friend of his had decided to quit playing cards because he had noticed that card players did not hesitate to cheat. Now, in games of pure chance, the only way to excel as a player is to cheat. It fosters a spirit of dishonesty. The mania for winning stakes, which means getting something for nothing, becomes a consuming passion which soon burns up in its flame all integrity and honesty.

From all this it is fair to infer that no conscientious person can have a good time indulging in amusements which destroy the virtue and integrity of men and **CONSCIENTIOUSNESS** women. He may have stamina of **NECESSARY** character to resist this evil influence, but a conscientious man cannot be happy with the consciousness that by his presence and patronage he is assisting institutions which degrade more than they uplift. And it is only with the conscientious men and women that I deal in these sermons. If one confesses that he has no conscience, that he is as willing to do wrong as to do right, that he is as happy doing harm as doing good, there is no need of arguing with him. He belongs to the immoral brute beasts, of whom Peter in his epistle speaks; indeed, he is not far removed from the dog, the goat and the pig, which satisfy their present appetites, unrestrained by moral considerations. He certainly is not a christian, and we will have to leave him to wallow in the mire until a merciful God shall reach him with a power from above and give him the new birth of a higher character.

Ethics of Amusements

Conscientiousness, made by the best public sentiment in favor of chaste, clean minds and lives, cannot have a good time patronizing the dance and the theatre, which are known as institutions that work against chastity and purity of mind and life. And conscientiousness, made by the standard of common honesty, cannot have a good time playing cards, when it knows that as an institution the card table is the implement of the gambler the world over and the foster mother of dishonesty.

One can be happy without dancing, card-playing or theatre-going by adopting the following principles and rules :

First. Cultivate a noble motive. If your motive has been simply to seek pleasure, discard that as unworthy of an intelligent moral being. Aspire first to do right, and then to do good. Cultivate conscientiousness with a standard as high as the law of God. Seek to do good unto all men. Make others happy by making them better. Build character in yourself and others. Remember you are living for eternity. Take not for a model the butterfly that flits from flower to flower, caring only to sip the honey that gratifies the present need. We are not insects of the day. We bear the marks of immortality. The "this worldliness" of Benjamin Franklin should be modified by the "other worldliness" of Jesus and the Apostles.

Second. Indulge only in such amusements as are clean and not associated with evil institutions. It is evident from the Scriptures that God is not opposed to play.

PLAY Indeed, I think He is pleased to see his children at play; and play, you know, is what one does for the pleasure it gives. It has its dangers, for when we pursue a thing just for the pleasure it imparts we are apt to follow it until it ceases to give pleasure, and, it

Ethics of Amusements

may be, turns to nausea. One may love his work until it becomes play; and change of work is for him a change of play, just because he works for the pleasure of it.

There are amusements that are clean and not associated with evil institutions. Golf, lawn tennis, croquet, bicycle riding, the row on the river, the ramble through the woods, coasting and sleighing, and many other outdoor pastimes furnish amusement which fills the lungs with fresh air, and do not smirch the morals by evil associations. For indoors, there are chess and checkers, which are not games of chance; ping pong, which requires skill and gives good exercise; cards which entertain while they instruct, and games without number which furnish rollicking fun and merry laughter. I omit billiards because of its evil associations. Discard all kissing games on the ground of good taste, as well as for sanitary reasons. Books are published, some of them under religious auspices, which furnish hundreds of merry, innocent games, which, with a little use of the brains, will give immensely more enjoyment to an evening party than dancing, cards, or the theatre.

And is it not time, in this century of boasted civilization, that we should cultivate again the art of conversation, and make an occasional evening happy with the flow of thought and the sparkle of wit and humor?

CONVERSATION The Christian homes that allow the world to furnish their amusements with the dance and the card table do not have so good a time as the homes that entertain their guests with pleasant surprises that show thought and personality. And there is a world of music which may be enjoyed without countenancing the obscene undress of the opera and the moral nastiness of the theatre. A wholesome taste for reading, which theatre-going is more apt to vitiate than to culti-

Ethics of Amusements

vate, is an ever-flowing fountain of pleasure. An evening spent with a masterpiece of literature, while it makes character, will give more pleasure to a healthy mind than cards, the dance or the theatre, while it leaves no sting of evil association in its trail.

Third. Take Christ into your heart and life. Let Him be the umpire of pleasure and duty. Heed the words of Mary, when she said to the servants at the feast

THE SECRET OF HAPPINESS in Canaan: "Whatsoever He says unto you, do it." Always live to please Him. Always ask, what would Jesus do? And do that thing regardless of consequences. If you have become acquainted with Christ by a living faith, and a careful study of His life in the four gospels, you can tell just about what He would do if in your place; and when you have received by grace the Spirit, and formed the habit of pleasing Him, you will begin to know what it is to have a truly good time. You will then learn that even self-denial with His approval gives more pleasure than any sort of indulgence without His approval. You will then have the secret of joy even in sorrow, of peace in the midst of confusion, of having a good time in the midst of evil times. The Christian who is separated unto Christ, and from the indulgence of all that contaminates, is the one truly happy person in this world. Others have the glitter, he has the gold. His abstinence brings more joy than their indulgence; and his indulgence in that which is good multiplies the joy of his self-denial.

Ethics of the Theatre

“Abstain from every form of evil.” I THESS. v : 22.

THERE IS A DISTINCTION between the stage as an institution and an occasional performance. As an institution the stage may be vicious, while the occasional performance may be moral. The question, therefore, for us to answer is not, Shall I read dramatic literature? for all will acknowledge that such literature may be wholesome. The question is not, May I go to see and hear a certain moral play? but, Shall I patronize the institution known as the theatre, of which that moral play is only a part?

The stage has a history which is not to its credit. “Dramatic representation,” says Dr. Herrick Johnson, “had its origin among the Greeks with a troupe of **HISTORY OF THE STAGE** bacchanalians in rude and boisterous songs, interspersed with dances, conducted with a high degree of licentiousness both in language and action. Then came Thespis, introducing tragedy. The stage is said to have been a cart, the chorus a troupe of itinerant singers, and the actor a sort of mimic. Subsequently Æschylus appeared, who carried the Greek drama at once to nearly its highest perfection. He was followed by Sophocles, who introduced a third, and even a fourth, actor into his plays. Then came decline under Euripides, exhibiting degenerate taste and loose morality. The transition to comedy was easy, originating in the licentious sports of the villages, and popular in proportion as it was personal, abusive and low. The

Ethics of the Theatre

comedies of Aristophanes are an illustration at once of the depravity of the poet and the libertinism of the spectators. His wit was coarse and vile, a mixture of buffoonery and positive filth.

“Theatrical exhibitions became popular amusements among the Romans just as they lost their stern love of virtue, yielded to luxury, and grew weak and effeminate.

“The European stage is no exception. This grew out of the ‘Mysteries’ of the Middle Ages—a sort of sacred drama performed by monks, in which the Devil also played a conspicuous part. This was the foundation of the modern British and American stage, which has risen only to degenerate, until now many of its exhibitions outrival in licentiousness and filth the darkest days of the drama, even on the confession of its friends.

“In China theatrical entertainments are popular, but neither there nor in Japan are women allowed to perform. It is a question whether women were ever present in the ancient theatre. It is undeniable that the actors were invariably men, and few in number; and yet these theatrical entertainments contributed to the downfall of the Grecian state. They had their origin in a corrupt state of morals, and they tended to deterioration.”

Not long after the Declaration of Independence our American Congress passed the following resolution:

“Whereas true religion and good morals are the only solid foundation of public liberty and happiness; Resolved, that it be and is hereby earnestly recommended
ACTION OF
CONGRESS to the several States to take the most effectual measures for the discouragement and suppression of theatrical entertainments, horse racing, gaming, and such other diversions as are productive of idleness,

Ethics of the Theatre

dissipation, and a general depravity of principles and manners."

Now, were our forefathers fanatics and fools? or did they have good reasons for passing such resolutions? The best Greek and Roman writers, such as Xenophon, Plato, Socrates and Tacitus, denounced the theatre of their times as antagonistic to good morals. Athens suppressed the theatre by law. In Rome "gross exhibitions and licentious buffoonery became the common rule of the play." "The Roman theatre," says Dr. Schaff, "became more and more the nursery of vice, and deserved to be abhorred by all men of decent feeling and refinement." Mr. Lecky declares that the "Moral and Mystery plays of the Middle Ages brought about the degradation of the church and all religion." Of England Macaulay writes: "From the time that the theatres were opened they became the seminaries of vice." And Sir Walter Scott says of the theatre in his day: "It was abandoned to the vicious. The best portions of the house were set apart for the abandoned characters." The playhouses of England were suppressed by Cromwell.

It is evident, therefore, that our fathers in Congress knew history and acted according to the light they had. But has not the theatre improved? Is not the institution very much better now than it was then? **HAS STAGE IMPROVED?** Efforts have been made to reform it. Edwin Booth declared that he would have a moral theatre in New York, but he failed to establish it on a paying basis. Henry Irving made the attempt in London, and as signally failed. Hannah More wrote moral plays, but the theatrical managers did not want them, because they would not pay. All who know the facts are compelled to admit that the theatre is still bad. One need

Ethics of the Theatre

not go to it to learn this; he has only to look at the billboards. Its bill of fare is for the most part moral filth. To be found standing before the average theatrical poster is a reflection on one's purity of mind. Modesty must turn away its face for self-protection.

Now and then a pure play is placed before the public with great parade, and the preachers are invited to come and see. Then look out for more filth the following week! The pure play has been used as a sort of opiate for the consciences of the guardians of public morals. They are not expected to denounce what appears in the same building where they sat and enjoyed a moral play. The theatrical manager knows how to manage the public so as to fill his coffers.

The fact that the theatre as an institution is still bad is proved by the testimony of those who are most familiar with its workings. "None of my children," said **ACTORS AS WITNESSES** Macready, the actor, "shall ever with my consent, on any pretence, enter a theatre or have any visiting connection with actors or actresses." Edwin Booth said: "I never permit my wife and daughter to witness a play without previously ascertaining its character." This is an admission that the theatre as an institution is bad, though some plays may be good. Mr. Dumas, the play-writer, wrote to a friend: "You do not take your daughter to see my play. You are right. Let me say, once for all, you must not take your daughter to the theatre. It is not mainly the work that is immoral; it is the place." Mr. Sothern, in a newspaper article over his own name, says: "I have known some of our best performers who have found it necessary to first attend and see a play before they would allow their wives and daughters to go. Why was this necessary? Why, because they knew there was very

Ethics of the Theatre

little cleanness in those places, and who better than they should know?" John Gilbert, the veteran actor, wrote in the *North American Review*, "I believe the present condition of the drama, both from a moral and artistic point of view, to be a subject for regret. Many of the plays that have been adopted from the French are open to the severest criticism on the ground of immorality." An actor, in passing a theatre, said to a friend of Dr. Cuyler, "Behind those doors lies Sodom." Edwin Forrest, hearing Rev. Dr. Brantley denounce the theatre as an immoral institution, lingered long enough to assure the preacher that he agreed with what he said, only he would make it stronger.

Mr. William Winter, a dramatic critic, asserts that christian ethics on the stage would be inappropriate. Mr. A. M. Palmer, the Nestor of theatre managers, says FRIENDS AS WITNESSES in a *Review* article: "The chief themes of the theatre are now, as they ever have been, the passions of men — ambition and jealousy, leading to murder; lust, leading to adultery and to death; anger, leading to madness." Mr. Clement Scott, a distinguished theatrical critic of the London press, was asked to give his views as to the effect of the stage upon a pure-minded girl who might enter the profession to make a livelihood and to pursue dramatic art. And here are his words: "A woman may take a header into a whirlpool and be miraculously saved; but then she may be drowned. I should be sorry to expose modesty to the shock of that worst kind of temptation, a frivolous disregard of womanly purity. One out of a hundred may be safe; but then she must hear things that she had better not listen to and witness things she had better not see. Stage life, according to my experience, has a tendency to disorder the finer feelings, to crush

Ethics of the Theatre

the inner nature of men and women out, and to substitute artificiality and hollowness for sincerity and truth; and, mind you, I speak from an intimate experience of the stage extending over thirty-seven years. It is nearly impossible for a woman to remain pure who adopts the stage as a profession. Everything is against her, and what is more to be deplored is that a woman who endeavors to keep her purity is almost of necessity doomed to failure in her career. It is an awful thing to say, and it is still more terrible that it is true, but none who know the life of the green-room will deny it." And let me add that the stage is the only profession in which a black spot against a woman's character adds to her popularity. Mr. Scott admits that in spite of all the difficulties in the way there are men and women on the stage who live pure lives, and all the more honor to them for it; yet he insists that the stage, as it is to-day, is an institution which is a menace to the virtue of all who enter the theatrical profession.

With the friends of the theatre as witnesses, its actors and play-writers and critics, the case is established that the stage as an institution is bad. So far as I know, **A BAD INSTITUTION** there is not a theatre in the world which does not pander to depraved tastes in order to make money. The plea of the managers is that the public are to blame because they demand such plays. If this be true, the public taste is depraved. It is plain, however, that the theatre has done much to create the depraved taste which it feels called upon to gratify. The flood of moral filth which it pours upon a community cannot fail to degrade the people. "There is scarcely an evil," said Henry Ward Beecher, "incident to human life which may not be fully learned at the theatre. There one learns how pleasant a thing is vice.

Ethics of the Theatre

Amours are consecrated, license is prospered, and the young come away alive to the glorious liberty of conquest and lust."

The philosophy of all this is found in the nature of the actor's profession. Acting is injurious to character. The best acting is the worst acting. To act a part anywhere is to weaken character. Every actor

THE
EXPLANATION is a hypocrite while on the stage; that is, he must pretend to be what he is not. He must feign emotions and passions good and bad. Dr. H. Clay Trumbull, in his book on "Border Lines in the Field of Doubtful Practices," gives a chapter to the theatre which I wish I could read to you in full, but I must be content with a few paragraphs. "The chief and all-prevailing objection to the theatre," he says, "is that the profession of an actor is in and of itself unnatural, baleful, and radically and universally wrong; and, because this is so, no change of controlling influences can make the institution which depends on and represents that profession an agency of substantial good or worthy of christian countenance and support. On the face of it, the profession of an actor stands all by itself in demanding of its votary that his main purpose and endeavor shall be to seem what he is not, to appear something else than his real self; and herein lies the essential and irremediable evil of this profession.

"That which might have been a power for good in creation, or in original performance, is given wholly to imitation or simulation, and this, too, more commonly

ACTING
A PART in the sphere of the lower nature rather than of the higher, or, at all events, in the lower as well as the higher; for the essential requirements of dramatic action call for the portrayal of the more violent and unworthy passions, rather than the gentler and worthier

Ethics of the Theatre

virtues. A man who is perhaps at heart a good and true man, and who has exceptional capabilities of good, devotes himself to seeming a bad man and to exhibiting the semblance of the vilest passions or of the most abhorrent crimes. How can such a course fail of injury to a noble nature? Even if it in no degree lowers the tone of the nature, it inevitably restrains it within limitations all unworthy of its powers and destiny.

“In his merging of his personality in simulation, as a very essential of his profession, the art of the actor differs from that of any other. There is nothing like it in the true mission or in the best work of any honest or reputable profession. There is nothing akin to it in any other approved sphere of art. A man may describe evil or portray it in literature, in poetry, in music, in sculpture, without putting himself into the exhibit of evil, without merging his personality in another personality; but in the art of the actor he who would portray the murderer, the adulterer, the seducer, or the betrayer of a sacred trust, must, in order to be the best actor, strive to think, and feel, and speak, and act as if he were himself this very evil doer.

“An English writer, some time since, computed that Mr. (now Sir) Henry Irving had committed at least fifteen thousand murders on the stage, while Mr. Barry ACTED Sullivan had added at least two thousand more CRIME stage murders than this to his list, and Mr. Charles Wyndham had been divorced from twenty-eight hundred wives on the stage; that Mrs. Bancroft had in the same public place been ‘fouly betrayed or abducted’ thirty-two hundred times; that Miss Ada Cavendish had been ‘betrayed, deserted or abducted’ fifty-six hundred times; and so on along the list of popular actors.

“Can any intelligent person, any person of refined

Ethics of the Theatre

sensibilities or with a fair knowledge of psychological laws and influences, believe for one moment that the deliberate and purposed indulgence in simulated evil to any such extent has had no effect in deadening the moral nature of the actor to the enormity of the offences simulated or dallied with? ”

THERE IS A WIDE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND THE STAGE. The purpose of the stage, as we have seen, is to teach men how to act a part. The purpose of the Church of Christ is to teach men how to be real. The purpose of the stage is to amuse; the purpose of the church is to save. The symbol of the Church of Christ is the Cross; the symbol of the stage ought to be a baby's rattle. The purpose of the stage is to make money, and managers are not slow to do so even at the expense of good morals; the purpose of the Church of Christ is to make character, and good morals are not for sale at any price. The stage gives what the people want, and, sad to say, the worst plays draw the biggest crowds; the purpose of the Church of Christ is to give what the people need, regardless of its popularity. The stage ministers to “the lust of the flesh, to the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, which is not of the Father”; the purpose of the Church of Christ is to crucify these things. The stage is a caterer; the Church of Christ is a prophet. The stage panders; the church rebukes. The stage in its tragedies glorifies revenge, which leads to murder; the Church of Christ teaches forgiveness of enemies and the patient endurance of wrong. The tendency of the stage is to make people childish in their feverish desire for diversion; the work of the church is to make people child-like in their faith and love and simplicity of character. The tendency of

Ethics of the Theatre

the stage is to keep the race in its childhood of self-gratifying amusement; the work of the church is to lead the race into the manhood of self-sacrificing achievement. The foot-lights are suggestive of the fact that the lower tendencies of human nature are there brought into prominence; the Church of Christ would magnify the head-light and heart-light that reveal and develop the higher attributes of our being. In a word, the real church is the incarnation of the spirit of Christ — pure, humble, self-sacrificing and forgiving. The stage is the incarnation of the spirit of the world — lustful, proud, selfish and revengeful. And what God hath put asunder no man can join together.

The charge made by several yellowish journals that my sermons on the "Ethics of Amusements" have been
ANSWERS TO CRITICS sensational is true only to the extent that the utterance of unvarnished truth is apt to make a sensation, especially when it strikes popular errors and sins.

The charge that I do not attend the theatre, and therefore have no right to have an opinion, is not reasonable. One need not get drunk or tell a lie to know what drunkenness and lying are. I have never seen leprosy or small-pox, but I have a fair idea as to what they are. I have read bill-boards, theatrical notices, and some of the plays. I have gathered the testimony of actors, theatre-goers, managers and stage-fixers, who are competent witnesses. Indeed, people who do not go to the theatre may be better qualified to judge of its ethics than those who have habituated themselves to its atmosphere. One can live in a lazaretto until its sights, sounds and odors cease to be repulsive. The habitual theatre-goer is apt to become blunted in his finer sensibilities.

One critic declares that the theatre is intended only

Ethics of the Theatre

to amuse, and should not, therefore, be expected to teach morals and religion; let people go to church for these. And herein is its viciousness. It was proved, I believe, last Sunday evening, that the pleasure-seeking spirit in the individual does not give pleasure in the long run, and ends in degeneracy. As with the individual, so with an institution. If its one purpose is to amuse, regardless of morals or religion, it cannot fail to degenerate.

Another critic insists that we must draw a distinction between bad plays and good plays, bad actors and good actors. I have conceded that there may be good actors, **THE GOOD** so far as one can be good whose business is **AND THE BAD** dissimulation; but it is never good to pretend to be good. Prayer on the stage is rank blasphemy. Even if the actor really prays, he has no right to do it to be seen of men. Playing at religion is debasing to actors and beholders. The modern stage had its birth at a time during the dark ages when men were playing at religion in their daily lives, and they would not, of course, refuse to play at it for the entertainment of an audience. Lecky is right when he says that the "Mystery Plays" led to the degeneration of religion, and it is equally true that the degeneration of religion led to the "Mystery Plays." Playing at marriage and divorce on the stage weakens, if it does not destroy, the sanctity of marriage and keeps the divorce courts busy. Playing at vice cannot fail, sooner or later, to make an actor vicious, while playing at virtue makes virtue unreal and opens the way for vice. It is one of the discouraging signs of the times to-day that religious plays are becoming popular. It proves that the religious instinct in theatre-going people is a thing to play with; and, while faith, prayer and praise are feigned, it is evident that real faith, prayer and praise are lacking.

Ethics of the Theatre

The Passion Play, though performed by a simple country people with deep religious feeling, has not improved the state of true religion at Oberammergau; and I can think of nothing that would go farther toward breaking down real christianity than the presentation of this farcical crucifixion of our Lord in the theatres of the world. Portraying the sacred and holy feelings of the soul for the entertainment of an audience is an incongruous proceeding; and feigning sacred and holy feelings is cant, which, on or off the stage, weakens religious character. The fact that one is paid a hundred dollars a night for such dissimulation does not help the case.

We are told that there are bad christians and wicked preachers. Yes, and I fear that the theatre, with the atmosphere of sham and pretense which it has created and fostered, is largely to blame for the bad types of christianity seen in many pulpits and pews. The reality of religion is in perpetual conflict with the unreality of the stage; and when the stage succeeds in making the pulpit "stagey" it has destroyed its power for good.

There are fallen preachers, but all the critics admit that such is the exception. The rule is that preachers are good men, and if they are bad it is in spite of the church, which, as an institution, is expected to make them good. When a preacher falls into sin it creates surprise, and he must at once surrender his pulpit; but not so with the actor. Good actors and actresses are the exception. If one is known to be moral and religious the fact attracts attention, and when one falls into sin neither he nor she is compelled to leave the stage. When the theatre-going public hear of it their morbid curiosity prompts them to crowd the house and increase the receipts. Managers are aware of this, and hence

Ethics of the Theatre

are not careful to conceal any scandal which will call an actor or actress more prominently before the public.

All this goes to prove that the church, as an institution, is good, and that the immoral christian and preacher is the exception, while the theatre, as an institution, is bad, and the moral actor or actress is the exception. To say that there are bad bakers and candlestick-makers is wide of the mark, because everyone knows that baking bread and making candles are not immoral institutions. If they are bad it is in spite of their business. If a preacher or church member is bad it is in spite of the church, which would make him good; but if an actor is good it is in spite of the theatre, which, as an institution, tends to make him bad.

Several critics contend that the theatre of to-day is better than it was in former years, but the facts are against them. The theatre which Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, Cato and Tertullian denounced had **A MISTAKE** no women on its stage. Women were not allowed on the stage until about the seventeenth century. The entrance of women into almost any department of life means an infusion of virtue; but not so with the stage, which uses woman to-day for the display of her shame more than of her virtues. Those who insist on being only good women on the stage do not grow rich. In the lowest theatres woman is most in evidence. For this reason I do not believe that the theatre in China and Japan is as bad as it is in America. Prominent pagans, on their first visits to our country, have been shocked by the indecencies they have been compelled to see in theatres to which they had been taken by their wealthy friends. Some theatres are, of course, worse than others. They differ not so much in degrees of goodness as of badness. During the past few weeks a play has

Ethics of the Theatre

been running in Boston with large audiences, the immoralities of which shocked even Chicago and led reputable citizens in Springfield to protest against its production in that city. I never heard any protest in Boston. And this play is not the exception. The foul play, with its foulness more or less veiled, is the rule. The managers of theatres are in it for money, and they know that such plays draw the big crowds. The plays in which the simulation of virtue predominates over that of vice, I repeat, are not the most profitable. They are used with rare skill as decoys for good people.

The plea that christians should ally themselves with the good on the stage is more specious than convincing. You cannot ally yourself with the good without also

A MISLEADING PLEA being allied with the evil, for on the stage the good and the evil are in close alliance.

Admiral Cervera of the Spanish Navy seems to have been a good man. Would it have been possible for me during the war with Spain to have allied myself with Admiral Cervera without becoming the ally of Spain? Certainly not, for Admiral Cervera was a part of a great institution known as the Spanish Government, and every ally of his was also an ally of Spain. So one cannot ally himself with the good in the theatre without being also an ally of the bad. The good in it is a small part of a great evil institution. An ally with Cervera would have been claimed by Spain, and an ally of the good in the theatre is claimed by the friends of this evil institution. It would be amusing, if it were not so pitiable, to see good men in alliance with the theatre spending so much time apologizing for the company they are in. They admit that some plays and players are very bad, and that the theatre, as an institution, is not good; but they hope that their presence with them will be salutary.

Ethics of the Theatre

I verily believe they are mistaken. A drop of pure water will not make much impression upon a goblet of ink, but a drop of ink can ruin a goblet of pure water. Unless pure water wants to be converted into ink it had better keep separate from the ink.

The only way to win people of the world to the true christian life is to show them that we have something better than they have. People will not eat God's **MANNA AND ONIONS** manna, which we recommend, while they see us turning from it and gorging ourselves with the onions of Egypt. And the only way to reform the theatre is to convert it into something else. As long as it remains a theatre it carries with it the elements of degeneracy. The playhouse, if run to make money, becomes the moral pest-house by a process of natural law. Solon denounced the actor's profession as "tending, by its simulation of evil character, and by its expression of sentiment not genuine or sincere, to corrupt the integrity of human dealings." Rousseau says of the stage: "It is the art of dissimulation, of assuming a foreign character and of appearing different from what a man really is, of falling into a passion without a cause, and of saying what he does not think as naturally as if he did." Archbishop Tillotson, Sir Matthew Hale, William Wilberforce and Dr. Rush join with Solon and Rousseau in condemnation of the theatre on the ground that it is a "nursery of licentiousness and vice."

One of my critics denounces Macready and Fanny Kemble as cranks for turning against the stage, which had enriched them. If cranks, they are certainly in good company. The actress, Mrs. Siddons, said that play-acting is a business "unworthy of a woman." Montague Stanley, a young actor of note, called it a most ungodly profession. Madame Janauschek said:

Ethics of the Theatre

“I am glad when fortune gives me the opportunity by my advice to keep any good girl out of a life which, nine times out of ten, is one of misery or aimless selfishness. The best thing for a young girl to do, no matter how great she expects to become, is to keep away from the theatre and do anything but go upon the stage. This is what I tell them all.” The brief career of Adoniram Judson on the stage confirmed the claim that the theatre behind the foot-lights is bad. John B. Gough, in his youth, became stage-struck; but when he got a glimpse of the sham and the hollowness, the coarseness and profanity which prevail behind the scenes, he tells us that he felt “perfectly satisfied with a three-weeks’ experience.” What a loss to the world if Adoniram Judson and John B. Gough had chosen acting as their profession and persisted in it.

The police of our great cities bear testimony to the fact that the theatre is a foster-mother of crime among the youth. The director of the city prison in Paris says :
POLICE TESTIMONY “If a noted play of a vicious character has been put on the boards, I very soon find it out by the number of young fellows who come into my custody.” Thirteen out of fifteen young men from the country employed in a New York publishing house were led to destruction within a few years by the theatre.

The moral quality of theatre-going does not depend upon the play. That play is a part of a great institution. If you go to the theatre you will very properly be judged, not by the play you see, but by the institution that you patronize. The plays which are better than the institution do not lift it up, but rather the institution drags down the play to its level. The whole is stronger than any part, and the whole gives moral quality to

Ethics of the Theatre

every part. For a person who desires both safety and usefulness the wise course is to refrain from theatre-going. If you care not for safety you have not that stamina of character which has a wholesome fear of evil. If you care not for usefulness you certainly have not the spirit of Him who went about doing good, nor of him who said, "If eating meat make my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh while the world stands." Let us give ourselves only to the things that are "pure, lovely and of good report." If such a course be self-denial, remember the words of Him "whose we are and whom we serve," "If any man would be my disciple, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." Your self-denial will bring greater joy than indulgence.

THE
SAFE WAY

Ethics of the Dance

“A time to dance.” ECCLESIASTES iii : 4.

“Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” I COR. x : 31.

MAY I DANCE? Yes, when you are so happy that you cannot help it. Children often dance with joy when mother is seen returning from a long journey. And, gray head that you are, if you are so filled with ecstatic delight that it runs from your heart into your hands and feet, why clap your hands and shuffle your feet. No harm will be done.

Such joy may be religious. Miriam, when she saw that God had delivered her people and destroyed their enemies in the Red Sea, was so filled and thrilled with **RELIGIOUS** joy that it was natural for her to take her **DANCE** timbrel and go forth in dances with her maidens who shared her joy. When David saw the ark returning from its captivity he was so happy that he danced before the Lord with all his might. His wife despised him for it, not because it was unmanly for him to do it, but because she did not share his joy. When the daughter of Jephtha looked down the road and saw her father returning with the trophies of victory she expressed her joy by going forth to meet him with timbrels and dances. After David's brilliant victories over the Philistines the women became so enthusiastic that they could express their joy only in songs and dances. As the elder brother of the parable approached the house he heard music and dancing, for all the household was thrown into a delirium of delight by the return of the prodigal. He complained because he was not grateful. Gratitude never grumbles. The Psalmist exhorts us to praise God with the timbrel and

Ethics of the Dance

dance. In his prediction of the happy time when Israel shall be restored "and they shall not sorrow any more at all," Jeremiah said, "then shall the virgins rejoice in the dance."

If, therefore, there ever comes a time in your life when in grateful joy for some blessing from God you become so happy that you cannot refrain from dancing, why dance with all your might. Some cold, ungrateful daughter of Saul may complain that you have laid aside your dignity if you have not lost your senses, but you need not fear such criticism as much as you fear the phlegmatic state of heart that prompts it. In revivals of the old times men and women became so happy that they danced for joy even in church, and no one, except the spiritual icicles that hung around, was unduly shocked. A religion that makes a man dance for joy is better than a religion that freezes him to his seat with a frigid conventionalism.

The dances of the Bible which are commended were expressions of religious gratitude and joy. Of this biblical dance Dr. Lyman Beecher says : (1) "Dancing was **BIBLICAL** a religious act, both of the true and also of idol **DANCES** worship. (2) It was practiced exclusively on joyous occasions, such as festivals or great victories. (3) It was performed by maidens only. (4) It was performed only in day-time in the open air, in highways, fields or groves. (5) Men who perverted dancing from a sacred use to purposes of amusement were deemed infamous. (6) No instances of dancing are found upon record in the Bible in which two sexes united in the exercises, either in or out of worship or as an amusement. (7) There is no instance upon record of social dancing for amusement except that of the vain fellows devoid of shame; of the irreligious families described by Job,

Ethics of the Dance

which produced increased impiety and ended in destruction; of Herodias, which terminated in the rash vow of Herod and the murder of John the Baptist."

We see that the Bible "time to dance" was when dancing really expressed great joy, when the sexes danced apart and when the surroundings were such as to promote health.

But there are some very objectionable dances in the Bible. When Moses came down from the mount, as he approached the camp he heard music and dancing. The

OTHER people were worshipping, men and women together, before the calf which Aaron had made.
BIBLICAL
DANCES

The record says, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." Eminent commentators agree with Adam Clark in declaring that the word "play" carries with it loathsome lewdness and abominable practices. The Israelites had not only turned to idols, but had adopted the unspeakable horrors which went with promiscuous dancing in the calf worship of Egypt, which made the sacred groves of Greece the plague spot of the world, and which still exist in some of the temples of India. In Pagan religions the dance has been the promoter of debauchery. The patriarch Job gives us a picture of the wicked, worldly classes of his day in the words, "They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance. They take the timbrel and harp and rejoice at the sound of the organ. They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment they go down to the grave. Therefore they say unto God, 'Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty that we should serve him, and what profit should we have if we pray unto him?'" (Job xxi: 11-15.) The teaching of this Scripture is that a dancing, dissipating life leads men to

Ethics of the Dance

rebel against God because they desire not the knowledge of His ways, to despise the Almighty and refuse to serve Him, and to give up praying because they see no profit in it. Such a life to-day, as in the time of Job, goes easily with rebellion, blasphemy and prayerlessness.

The scene in the palace of Herod, when the daughter of Herodias danced for the amusement of the company, gives an instance of the use of dancing which is common to-day. The woman danced, not because she enjoyed dancing, but because the guests enjoyed it; and they enjoyed it because it appealed to their lewd, sensual natures. When a man of wealth wishes to please a company of his sensual companions he adds to the wine of the banquet a vaudeville entertainment, which means that women, whom the dancing master has taught to conquer shame, will appear and make a vulgar display of themselves in the dance. And it is a sign of relapse into Pompeian shamelessness when such entertainments are furnished after Sunday dinners in high-class hotels, in the presence of women as well as men. The dance for the entertainment of others is of Pagan origin and is apt to bring with it Pagan morals.

The modern social dance, however, is not akin to the religious, joyful dance of the Bible, nor to the Pagan dance for the enjoyment of beholders. No one now **MODERN DANCES** pretends to dance, except a small religious sect, because he wishes to give expression to exuberance of religious feeling. Nor is the dance intended to express happiness, but rather to produce happiness. People do not dance because they are happy so much as because they want to be happy. They go to the ball for a good time.

And it ought to be said that dancing is practiced very little for the sake of physical exercise. The gymnasium.

Ethics of the Dance

croquet, lawn-tennis, golf and the bicycle are recognized as better for exercise than the dance. The claim that dancing is good exercise should have no weight, for it is not usually done for that purpose. It is simply an indulgence and a dissipation. Dancing exhausts and debilitates more than it builds up.

The plea that one acquires grace of manners by dancing has been overworked. The grace of the dance is apt to be artificial and less pleasing than the natural ease of manner which comes from conscious rectitude and high aims in life. Says Dr. Brooks: "Compare the natural grace of a pure girl, taught by a pure mother and by a native grace of delicacy, with the disgusting affectation and brazen effrontery of a pert miss who has been trained by a foreign dancing-master not to blush, and you can judge for yourself whether there is any force in the oft-repeated plea that children should be sent to a dancing-school to learn manners."

Not with the religious, joyful dance of the Hebrews, nor with the minuet and square dance of our fathers and mothers, nor with dancing as an exercise or as a cultivator of good manners, but with the dance as
AS AN INSTITUTION an institution have we to deal. There is no moral harm in the square dance, provided you can keep it square. But I learn that it is next to impossible to confine dancing to the square dance, even in the most select company. The modern dance is the round dance, with all that it means of indelicacy, dissipation and debauchery. Its home is the dance-hall, where the lowest disreputables congregate; the variety theatre, where it makes its display of spectacular obscenity; the public ball-room, where women, good and bad, swirl in the arms of men; the select company in the house, where liberties are taken under the spell of music which would be shocking

Ethics of the Dance

without the musical accompaniment. This round dance, born in the low dance-houses of Paris, taught by French dancing-masters in all countries, popular because people of high position with low moral tone indulge in it, is finding recognition at college commencements, on excursions and picnics, and even in the homes of some christian people.

Against this modern dance Perry Wayland Sinks, in a book recently published, entitled, "Popular Amusements and the Christian Life," brings the following seven indictments :

(1) The modern dance violates the universally recognized laws of health. He says, "The dance was not originated for the promotion of health. It was never **LAWS OF HEALTH** designed to be, and in fact never has been, pro-motive of health. Viewed as an exercise, as at present conducted, it is in violation of the soundest hygienic laws. The exercise of dancing, under limiting conditions of time, place, scope and participants, might be eminently healthful. Such it might be as an element of the gymnasium curriculum. But the dance of to-day is not conducted for the purpose of promoting health and longevity. Viewed as an exercise, leaving out of account moral considerations, the dance as an institution of society violates the laws of health." And he further says, "We will dismiss this indictment with a quotation from the valuable treatise of Dr. H. C. Haydn: 'Proverbially, the dance seeks the cover of the night. Dancing assemblies are seldom well under way till it is time they were dispersed, and often do not end till the small hours of the morning. The simple fact that dancing assemblies seek not recreation with a due regard to freshness and vigor the next day, but satiety, ignoring the laws of health and rest ordained for us by the Crea-

Ethics of the Dance

tor, ranks dancing as ordinarily pursued among the dissipations which both the moralist and the physician are bound to proscribe. They have no choice in the premises. They are bound to do so.' ”

(2) “The modern dance has contributed greatly to the emptiness, aimlessness and selfishness of the social life of the times.” Conversation is not in demand.

VS. CONVERSATION The cultivation of the foot has displaced to a large extent the cultivation of the head. If you ever tried to entertain a young lady at a ball for five minutes after the music began, I am sure you felt that the head had been swallowed by the feet and that the only response she was then capable of was the physical response to music.

(3) “The modern dance thus assails the highest intellectual improvement of its votaries and of society when given rein.” Time and taste for mental improve-

VS. MENTAL IMPROVEMENT ment are crowded out. If the use of members increase their size, and if things continue as they are in some quarters, there is coming a generation with very small heads and very big feet. It takes little intellectual effort to dance well. Dogs, cats and monkeys are man's rivals in this accomplishment.

(4) “The modern dance exerts a positive influence in withstanding the Spirit of God calling the human soul to a christian life.” All evangelistic workers know that the love of the dance and the conviction which godless people have that the modern dance is not a proper amusement for christians is a common obstacle in the way of young people, who but for this objection would enter upon the christian life. From a christian point of view this fact is a terrible indictment of the dance.

(5) “The modern dance operates, both in the individual and in the church, in retarding the growth and

Ethics of the Dance

stabilization of christian character and in hindering the greatest efficiency and success of christian effort." The

VS. CHRISTIAN CHARACTER restrictions placed upon the Lenten season prove this, and the observation of every pastor teaches him that the dance hinders the growth and usefulness of christians who indulge in it.

(6) "The modern dance is inimical to the highest enlightened christian consciousness, as voiced by a consensus of opinion from the christian church, including the Roman Catholic, and from earliest times."

Several years ago the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church put itself on record in these words: "We regard the promiscuous round dancing by members of the church as a mournful inconsistency, and the giving of parties for such dancing on the part of the heads of families as tending to compromise their religious profession, and the sending of children of christian parents to the dancing-school as a sad error in family discipline."

Among the "General Rules" of the Methodist-Episcopal Church, its members are called upon to abstain from "all such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus," and this has always been interpreted as including dancing. The vow that every Episcopalian takes at confirmation, if conscientiously kept, would keep every member of that church from the ball-room and lead them to censure the modern dance. Eminent bishops of that church have spoken on the subject in the strongest terms. Bishop Hopkins of Vermont said: "In the period of youthful education I have shown that dancing is chargeable with waste of time, the interruption of useful study, the indulgence of personal vanity and display, and the premature excitement of the passions. No argument can make it consistent with baptism."

Ethics of the Dance

Bishop Meade of Virginia said: "Social dancing is not among the neutral things which, within certain limits, we may do at pleasure among the things lawful but not expedient; but it is in itself wrong, improper, and of bad effect."

Bishop McIlvain of Ohio said: "The only line I would draw is entire exclusion." He declared that "it is renounced in baptism, its renunciation is ratified in confirmation and professed in every participation of the Lord's Supper."

Bishop Coxe of Western New York, in a Lenten pastoral said: "The enormities of theatrical exhibitions and the lasciviousness of dances are so disgraceful to the age and so irreconcilable with the gospel of Christ that I feel it my duty to the souls of my flock to warn those who run with the world 'to the same excess of riot' in these things that they presume not to come to the holy table. Classes preparing for confirmation are informed that I will not lay hands knowingly on any one who is not prepared to renounce such things, with other abominations of the world, the flesh and the devil."

The Plenary Council of the Roman Catholic Church, which met in Baltimore a few years ago, sent out the following: "We consider it to be our duty to warn our **CATHOLIC** people against those amusements which may easily become to them an occasion of sin, and especially against the fashionable dances which, as at present carried on, are revolting to every feeling of delicacy and propriety and are fraught with the greatest danger to morals."

It will be seen that the Episcopal Church, which worldly Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians sometimes join because they imagine that in its fellowship they can be as worldly as they please while they keep up

Ethics of the Dance

the forms of religion, is really very strict in its requirements. The rector who advocates the modern dance, and the Episcopalian who indulges in it, violate their baptism and confirmation vows. The old historic church is true to good morals and a high standard of spirituality, however recreant some of her sons and daughters may be. The stigma should not rest upon the church, but upon the faithless members who break their solemn vow.

(7) “The modern dance, in its nature, in its tendencies and in its results, is dangerous to social purity. In **VS. SOCIAL PURITY** other words, for we cannot evade the issue, it is, as at present indulged in, fundamentally and necessarily immoral.”

We dislike to tell the truth about the dance under this head, but for the sake of the young men and women whose danger is that they think no evil, it ought to be told.

Dr. Horace Bushnell was led to say of the modern forms of the dance: “They are the contrived possibilities of license which belong to high life when it runs low.”

Gail Hamilton wrote: “The very pose of the parties suggests impurity.” The central source of the attraction of the modern dance is sex, and an amusement that depends upon sex for popularity is dangerous. **WITNESSES** Says Dr. Wilkinson: “It mingles the sexes in such closeness of personal approach and contact as, outside of the dance, is nowhere tolerable in reputable society.” The track of the ball-room is strewn with wrecks of character and lives. Said Dr. Howard Crosby: “The foundation of a large amount of domestic misery and domestic crime, which startles us after its public outcropping, was laid when parents allowed the sacredness

Ethics of the Dance

of their daughters' persons and the purity of their maidenly instincts to be rudely shocked in the waltz." Mr. T. A. Faulkner, at one time proprietor of the Los Angeles Dancing Academy and ex-president of the Dancing Masters' Association of the Pacific Coast, has given it as his deliberate opinion that "two-thirds of the girls who are ruined fall through the influence of the dance." The matron of a home for fallen women in Los Angeles declares that "seven-tenths of the women who go there have fallen through the dance and its influence." Archbishop Spaulding of New York is reported to have said that nineteen out of twenty of the fallen women who come to the confessional have ascribed their fall from virtue to the influence of the dance.

With all these facts before us can a christian minister remain silent while this juggernaut of evil destroys the virtue and wrecks the lives of so many?

No christian can afford to indulge in a pastime that links him with a great immoral institution like the modern dance. If he should have stamina of character to resist its evil tendency, he, nevertheless, will lose his influence as a spiritual force, and his example may lead others who are weaker to the wreck of their morals. There is danger in indulgence, and there is safety, joy and usefulness in whatever self-denial your refusal to indulge may mean.

Let everyone take Christ into his heart and life and He will be guide and protector. Do what pleases Him and you will always be on the safe side. In His strength take for a motto and live up to it: "Whether ye eat or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Ethics of the Card Table

“Redeeming the time.” EPH. v: 16.

CARD PLAYING is a game of chance. “That whist and euchre and other games of cards are games of chance,” says Dr. Trumbull, “cannot be properly denied. That a measure of skill can be shown in these is sure, and that there are good players and poor players is unmistakable. Yet, in the long run, the element of chance is the chief factor in these games, and this it is that gives zest in their playing. The question as to the element of chance in such games has been again and again tested by experiment, and practically with the same result. A while ago the experiment on an extended scale was made in this way: Skilled players were pitted against unskilled players in a large series of games, say a thousand in number; it was found that the percentage won in the one case and in the other did not materially differ. Chance rather than skill was the determining factor.”

A game of chance always has its dangers. The first danger is that it will create and cultivate a dependence upon luck in life. It is a calamity when a young man begins to imagine that he is a lucky individual, for he will then begin to depend upon his luck rather than upon honest, patient labor. This illusion tears up the foundation of character and leaves little upon which to build. Dr. Trumbull gives a striking illustration of this fact: “A young man who was an active member of a prominent church, and who had recently married a lovely,

Ethics of the Card Table

christian young woman, took a ticket at a church fair and won first prize. He was delighted. Many of his friends envied him. His mother, however, told him that his success would lead him to value luck rather than skill. He laughed at her fears and thought himself in no danger. He tried in other raffles. He won prize after prize. He was called a wonderfully lucky fellow. He finally won a prize of a fine horse. No one knew, however, of the many blanks he had drawn in the meantime. He seemed at the time to be a prosperous business man. But one day his place of business was closed. It was found that in order to obtain ready money for tickets in raffles he had mortgaged his entire stock of goods, and then had forged the name of his father-in-law to promissory notes, and now was a fugitive from justice, deserting his home and family."

As an incidental result of a lottery by which, years ago, a fine public library was built in a western State, there were five suicides. When the victims discovered that they were not lucky and their money was gone without any equivalent, they killed themselves. This fatal dependence upon luck is ruining thousands of our young men and women.

The gambling spirit is rife. The daily press fosters it by giving tips on the races. The public officials pass it unnoticed, because, as some of them declare, it is a necessity in large cities. Periodicals are published in its interest. There are to-day in the United States forty weeklies devoted to sports in which gambling is a prominent feature. The result is seen in the increase of defaultings and forgeries. Chauncey M. Depew says, "Ninety per cent. of the defalcations and thefts and ruin of youth among people who are employed in places of trust are due directly to gambling."

Ethics of the Card Table

The card table is the instrument of gambling the world over. There are many other ways of gambling, but nowhere do they displace the card table. This gives to the card table a malodor of evil association. A game of cards suggests to the beholder suicides, embezzlements, defalcations, quarrels, wrecked lives and ruined homes. The single game of cards cannot be separated from these evil associations.

Can anyone, much less a christian, afford to become suggestive of all this abomination every time he plays a game of cards? Can anyone afford to fill his home with such unholy associations? The plea that children should be allowed to play cards in the home, so that they will not play in objectionable places, is not well founded. They are the more apt to play elsewhere after they have been taught to play at home, and it is a sad fact that many professional gamblers of New York were first taught games of chance by their mothers and sisters in the home. There is often an intimate relation between the card party in the home and the life of reckless gambling in the pool-room and at the race-track. John Phillip Quinn, who kept a gambling-house for twenty-five years, declared, after his conversion, that card playing in the house was "a kindergarten for the gambling saloon." Many a criminal has confessed that the taste for gambling which led to his ruin began in the parlor while he was playing cards with sisters and friends. Is it safe to sport with eddies above the rapids which flow so swiftly toward the Niagara of ruin? Even if we should be strong enough to keep out of the rapids, our example may entice our weaker brother to his destruction, and there is, to be sure, no one before me who will ask with Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper?" The Cainism which asks that question is a

Ethics of the Card Table

bird of darkness which cannot live in the light of the nineteenth century. "No man lives unto himself." Every one of us is responsible for our influence, and to say that you care not whether you help or hinder your neighbor in his struggles after a better life is to reveal a barbarism alien not only to the Bible, but even to the best sentiments of worldly people.

The card table, if it does not lead to gambling, becomes a fascination which leads its votaries to consume time that might be spent so as to bring greater happiness in the long run. There is no mental improvement at the card table, and you learn nothing of importance. Games of skill like chess, checkers, tennis, croquet, baseball and such like are not apt to throw an evil spell over us which will cause us to spend hours, days, weeks, months and years, every spare moment in their indulgence. They require some intellectual exercise, and are apt to weary us before they ruin us. But not so with cards. There are few who have the will power to play cards only as a recreation and keep themselves to rational hours. But many are so interested by the game that they forget the flight of time and are ready at any time of day or night to waste hours trying their luck. Take a young man who spends ten hours a day as clerk in a store. A good book or magazine would refresh him and impart knowledge useful to him in the future. An hour or two given to music would be a complete change and an exhilaration. After a few years he would have a store of knowledge, the mental training in getting which has fitted him for high position in church or state. But suppose he spends his evenings in playing cards,—at the end of ten years he will be weaker intellectually and less fitted to fill positions of trust. Time is capital which we should invest

Ethics of the Card Table

as wisely as we invest our money. To squander time means more waste than squandering money. We contend that card playing simply burns up time and leaves in the character only cinders and ashes.

The card table, when stakes or prizes are offered to the best players does not lead to gambling, it *is* gambling, and is a violation of the laws of several States. It fosters the desire to get something for nothing, which is the essence of robbery. It furnishes the excitement which throws its spell over young men and women and leads them rapidly to ruin. In principle it savors of the bucket-shop, the pool-room and the race-track. It is the foster-mother of dishonesty. It is the Louisiana lottery with painted cheeks and adorned in good clothes. It is high society's contribution to the forces which carry men and women to the penitentiary. It is a hindrance to the growth of manly, honest character, because it shows to young men a way of getting money without working for it. Whatever may be said of a game of cards simply for the pleasure of winning, there is no argument in defense of card playing for any kind of stakes which will not justify with equal force any other form of gambling. We frequently see boys throwing pennies "for keeps" on the sidewalks, and the police have to break up such groups of embryonic robbers. We can see at a glance that the law is right, if we are to raise honest citizens whose industry and character will be an honor to the nation. But the police must keep out of the private preserves called a parlor, where the spirit of gambling is being fostered as really as among the tough boys of the streets. The progressive euchre in which the stakes are called prizes is gambling. The players in the parlor may be better people than the players in the dives, but they are doing the same thing with the same motive.

Ethics of the Card Table

The card table is the enemy of a deeply spiritual and active christian life. Card parties are sapping the spiritual life of some churches. It is a well-known fact that the churches whose leaders approve of the card table are spiritually lifeless. They may be active in ritualistic observances and in charitable work, but as soul-saving institutions they do not remind one of the churches of apostolic times. It may be that some christians can bear the influence and atmosphere of the card table without degenerating into merely nominal church members. In my observation of more than twenty-five years I have found one man who seemed to be an exception, but his wife was not an exception. I have known many young men who at their baptism gave bright promise of usefulness, but soon fell away from the prayer-meeting, the Young People's Society, and finally the Sunday church service. On investigation I found in not a few instances that the card table was the beginning of the apostacy. When the card player's habit has been formed the duties of the christian life are nearly always neglected, if not totally abandoned. A church which has no desire for spiritual life, but is simply a gathering of congenial people for mutual enjoyment, can, of course, thrive on card-playing and build up its membership. But such a church is no church at all. It is a club founded on the worldly principle of self-gratification. Its success is the failure of christianity. The world looks on and sneers. A man in Boston bought a new piano and in a few weeks complained to the manufacturer that it was not only out of tune, but full of grating, discordant noises that puzzled him. A tuner was sent and found that a mouse had gained entrance and built its nest. Card playing is a mouse nest in christian life. The music of

Ethics of the Card Table

a consecrated life in former days has been marred. The remedy is to remove the nest.

Real christians who play cards may, by the grace of God, be saved as by fire, and all their work burned up, but I hope that all of us desire a more abundant salvation. In an English town the garbage is burned up and makes a motive power which is used in lighting the streets. A great need of the church is the utilization of the waste in christian lives. If the time, talent and money wasted in card-playing were consumed in work for God, the result would be the lighting of many a dark spot on earth.

The first order given to the land forces at Santiago was, "Advance by rushes." That meant rush forward a few steps and fall down on the ground. Little progress was made. When the order for the "long charge" rang out the soldiers sprang to their feet and rushed forward to victory. The church of Jesus has advanced by rushes long enough. The life of ups and downs is too common. Our commander orders the "long charge" of a daily-persistent, consecrated life. When all the soldiers hear the order, victory will be near.

The Ethics of Novel Reading

“The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee and the books, but especially the parchments.” II Timothy iv: 13.

THIS TEXT is an index to the poverty of Paul. He could not afford to buy a new cloak to keep him warm in the damp, chilly atmosphere of his Roman prison. It is an index also to his love of literature. The books and the parchments may include many kinds of books, sacred and profane.

Every one knows that Paul was a diligent student of the Scriptures, but it is evident that he also read other books. In his sermon at Athens, recorded in Acts xvii, he quotes from the poet Aratus: “For we are also his offspring.” Aratus was a native of Silicia, Paul’s native country, and he doubtless became familiar with his writings before his conversion. Aratus flourished about 270 B. C. He was poet and astronomer. The poem which has come down to us is entitled “Phenomena,” and was so esteemed by the Romans that Cicero himself translated it into Latin. Aratus became the court physician of the king of Macedonia, and was very popular.

**THE BOOKS
PAUL READ** In Titus i: 12 Paul quotes from Epimenides: “The Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.” Epimenides, born about 600 B. C., was poet, pagan prophet, and writer on political subjects. He was the Rip Van Winkle of his time, and it is possible that Washington Irving borrowed his quaint fancy from a tradition which says that, while Epimenides was keeping sheep, he went into a cave and, falling asleep, did not awake until after fifty-seven years, when he came forth from his slumber with a large increase of wisdom and inspiration. He wrote a poem on “The Voyage of the Argonauts.” He was invited by Solon to Athens, that he might give the

Rev. A. C. Dixon's Sermons

sanction of his sacred presence to the purification of the city, just before Solon published his code of laws. The Athenians offered him great wealth, but he refused it, and accepted only a branch of the sacred olive. A legend states that he lived to be nearly three hundred years old.

In I Corinthians xv : 33 Paul quotes from Menander : "Evil communications corrupt good manners." Menander was a Greek dramatist who flourished about 342 B. C. He was a friend of Epicurus, and lived in true epicurean style, surrounded by great wealth. He wrote about one hundred comedies, some of which still survive. In these comedies married ladies are represented as the plague and bore of their husbands' lives. Some of his sayings are pithy and pointed : "Poverty is the most easily cured of all evils ; any friend can do it by merely putting his hand in his pocket." "People who have no merit of their own generally boast of their ancestors, but every living man has ancestors or he would not be a living man." "Many a young lady says a great deal in her favor by saying nothing at all."

But Menander, with all his learning and wit, was a pagan infidel. He did not believe that the gods had anything to do with human affairs. Everything, according to his creed, was determined by inexorable law.

It will be seen from these quotations that Paul had read the pagan poets, philosophers, and even an infidel writer, that he might inform himself as to the beliefs of the people and be able to meet their errors.

Books are living things. They have heads, and hearts, and arteries, through which courses intellectual and moral blood, good or bad. They make and unmake character. In some of them are galleries with pictures rivalling the masterpieces of Raphael and Angelo, while in others there is an inferno of misshapen, distorted monsters. Some charm you with exquisite music, while others try your nerves by their harsh discords. In some you see the clash of armies and hear the crash of falling empires ; in others there is the quiet of life forces at work building in peace the family, the church and the nation. Some

Ethics of Novel Reading

books bring you manna from heaven, while others offer only the leeks and garlic and onions of Egypt. Some carry with them an atmosphere of health-giving ozone, while others bring only death-dealing miasma. Some uplift and purify, while others degrade and pollute. Some are ministering angels, while others are wrecking demons.

The establishment of a library may call for congratulation or commiseration. It all depends upon the kind of books that fill its shelves. Mr. Carnegie had better establish in every ward of our cities a pest house, full of contagious diseases, than a library of books unwisely chosen and freely circulated. Every revolution of our great printing presses means an uplifting toward heaven or a push toward hell.

John Angell James declares that he has never recovered from the effect of reading a bad book for fifteen minutes.

Nicholas Farrar taught a useful lesson in a unique way

WHAT BOOKS HAVE DONE

when, while he was dying, he ordered a friend to go and select a spot for his grave, and then commanded him to gather from his library all the worthless books, that they might be burned upon this spot before he was buried. When William Wilberforce and Isaac Milner were starting on a journey to Scotland it was suggested that they take with them and read together Dodridge's "Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul." The reading of this book led Wilberforce to Christ, and through him gave freedom to the slaves of the British empire. A glance into Dr. Watts' hymn-book for children saved Walter Scott from suicide. Captain Cook's "Voyages" made William Carey a foreign missionary, and gave the Bible, in their own tongues, to over two hundred millions of the human race. Carey's published letters sent Henry Martin to India. Buchanan's "Star in the East" led Adoniram Judson from New England to Burmah, and gave to the church one of the greatest missionaries in its history. It was the reading of Dr. Dick's "Philosophy of the Future State" which sent David Livingstone as the evangel of Christ into the Dark Continent.

No wonder that a man who knows the value of books

Rev. A. C. Dixon's Sermons

delights in their company. Petrarch refused to die anywhere else than in the midst of his books. While Walter Scott was dying he had his attendants wheel him into his library at Abbotsford. The ebbing strength of Southey was used in stroking and fondling the books which he was not then strong enough to read. Paxton Hood tells of a young man whose only regret at dying was that in heaven he would not have any books to read. His old pastor assured him that he would there meet the souls of books—the spirits of the men who wrote them. Yes, and I have little doubt that there will be real books in heaven. Certainly the Book of Life is there, and the book with the seven seals; and why not other books for the delectation of the saved?

All this is preparatory to saying that one needs to be very careful as to what kind of books he reads or permits those under his guardianship to read. No one can read a book without being helped or hurt.

The best novels are biographies of common people. The characters in Dickens we have met. They were men, women and children whom Dickens knew and whose lives he wrote. He delighted in giving to the world “The Simple Annals of the Poor.” Novels which give imaginary characters and situations that are unnatural and impossible are freaks of literature, and those of the French variety, which revel in realistic portrayal of uncleanness, can be purified only by fire. Open the furnace door and put them in; then shut the door, lest the polluted smoke should fill the house and scatter contagion. Books written by men and women known to be vicious in life had better be avoided. A clean thing cannot come out of an unclean.

Some one has said that history is simply “his story.” It is the personal coloring which the historian gives to facts. Magnify that thought and you have the historical novel. The books which novelists write may give a better picture of the times than the cold, matter-of-fact historian. When, however, the novel reading spirit becomes a passion to the extent that it ignores other books—reading and revelling in novel after novel—it is pernicious. It is apt to intoxicate the imagination, keep

Ethics of Novel Reading

reason in abeyance, foster feverish excitement, dull conscience, and in the end bring collapse of nerves if not of character. The novel should be to our mental diet what the desert is to dinner. A moderate quantity may aid digestion and health ; but, if tempted by the rich flavoring, we make our dinner of desert, bad health will be the result.

It is safe to observe three rules in selecting books :

First. Read, first of all, the books which are already classic and known to be good. The literary firmament is full of these stars of the first magnitude.

RULES FOR READING

Second. Avoid books which you know are immoral or anti-christian. You would not read a book derogatory to the character of your wife or mother, whom you know to be true and good ; neither will I read a book derogatory to Christ and His religion, which I have tested and know to be true. The character of Jesus is no longer an open question. It has been settled by the concensus of the ages, and we cannot in justice to truth listen to inuendos against Him and His religion.

Third. Do not read a book just because it is new and suddenly popular. Wait a year, and you may be saved the trouble.

The Athenian taste, which wants the new rather than the true, is not a healthy intellectual state, and should not be fostered.

Read the Book of Books. The Bible is the sun in the heavens, around which all other good books are but planets. Read it for its history, its biography, its laws, its prophecies, and, above all, for its gospel, which it gives us in the revelation of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. “Hand me the Book,” said the dying Walter Scott. “What book?” replied his secretary. “There is only one book,” he answered, as he pointed to the Bible on the table. There are times in life when there is only one book in the world. This book gives light in darkness, guidance in perplexity, strength in weakness, wisdom in ignorance, and hope in despair. Study and cherish it as the richest literary heritage of God to man.

THE BOOK TO READ

The Ethics of Secretism

“ A tale-bearer revealeth secrets, but he that is of a faithful spirit
concealeth the matter.” PROVERBS xi: 13.

“ Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick,
and it giveth light to all that are in the house. Thus let your light shine
before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your
Father which is in heaven.” MATTHEW v: 15-16.

OUR first text gives the basis for a secret society, the purpose of which would be to suppress scandal-mongering and gossiping. Some young women in Brooklyn organized such a society. It did not last long, but it did some good while it lasted. There are other kinds of secrecy which the Bible commands: “ When thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth, that thine alms may be in secret; and thy Father, which seeth in secret himself, shall reward thee openly.” Sounding the trumpet in praise of one’s own gifts is not Christian.

We are also commanded to pray in secret, and the Father, who heareth in secret, will reward us openly. We may also fast in secret. Jesus declared that our fasting should not be for men, but for God. We are not to disfigure our faces, as the hypocrites do, that they may be seen of men, but we are to deny ourselves of those things which God disapproves.

The Psalmist tells us that the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him. Christians have secrets which they could not tell to others if they would, for only those with spiritual discernment can understand them. There is a “ secret place of the Most High ” in which we

The Ethics of Secretism

are invited to dwell. And yet if we should try to organize a society for secret giving, praying or fasting, we **A GOOD KIND OF SECRECY** would make these things public by the very act of organization. The word "secret" here is used in the sense of private. The giving, praying and fasting is to be a transaction between the individual and God, but he is not commanded to deny the fact that he gives, prays or fasts.

The home is a private place, but not secret in the sense that what goes on in the home must be of such a nature that you feel constrained to deny its existence. A home may have great privacy without secrecy. Neither husband, wife or child is sworn not to divulge what is said or done within the sacred home circle.

A secret society is an organization that not only holds private meetings, but swears its members not to divulge anything that is revealed to them. And without designating any special society, I am constrained to say :

(1) Any society which keeps from the world that which would bless mankind if it were revealed is not a good institution. Christ said, "Ye are the light of the **MAKE THE GOOD PUBLIC** world," and it is the nature of light to reveal. Every Christian is a lamp on the lamp-stand, giving out light into his sphere of influence. He must not put his lamp under a bushel of secrecy. If he knows truth which has done him good, he is under pressing obligation to pass that truth on to others. He has no right to place it under lock and key or to sell it to the highest bidder. If he knows things which the world would be holier and happier for knowing, he must, if he would do his duty, proclaim it so far as possible to all mankind.

(2) The society that displaces and opposes the church of Jesus Christ is not to be commended. A gentleman

The Ethics of Secretism

some time ago asked me to preach a sermon under the auspices of a secret society which he represented. I learned from him that twenty-five years ago he was a member of a Christian church, but now **SOME OPPOSED TO THE CHURCH** he had nothing but criticism for the church. He insisted that secret societies were doing the work of the church, and doing it better. I attempted to impress upon him the fact that he was trying to use the Ruggles Street Church as an advertising pole for the society, which, according to his own claim, displaced and opposed the church. He was asking for the privilege of stabbing us in our own home. Jesus Christ said: "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." And the church of Christ is the most important organization in this world. Jesus built it himself, and He means that it shall stand. The individual or the society that opposes and would displace the church of Jesus is doing the work of the devil.

Another friend in Boston informed me that she belonged to seven secret societies, while her husband was a member of nine. They were not wealthy, though helping to support, between them, sixteen secret societies. She would not even admit that the church occupied a place of equal importance with these secret societies. She quoted from an orator who said that the church was not needed because the society was doing its work. Now, I am sure that there are members of secret societies who believe in the church of Christ, but they need to watch the trend of things and protest against any sentiment which would displace the church of the Living God.

The society that places itself before the church is an evil. I have known church members who, when there was a conflict between the meeting of the lodge and of

The Ethics of Secretism

the church, always went to the lodge. They believed in the church, but they gave the society the preference. This sort of thing is honeycombing the church of Jesus.

(3) The society that administers murderous or disloyal oaths is an evil institution. I have read that certain secret societies swear their members to stand by each other in **MURDEROUS** everything, "murder and treason excepted," **OATHS** and in one degree they are sworn to protect each other, "murder and treason not excepted." If that is true, such a society is a menace to government and to the community. Its oath conflicts with the oath of the court, and makes it impossible to administer justice. I have also read the oath of a secret society which swears its members not to divulge its secrets on pain of having the offender's tongue torn out by the roots and his body buried in the sands of the sea at low-water mark. Another society makes its members swear that, if they divulge its secrets, they will submit to the penalty of having their breasts torn open, their hearts plucked out and exposed to be devoured by vultures of the air. Now, if these oaths are serious things, some one must execute the penalty. Some one must cut the heart out and expose the body, as the oath requires, and that is a savage proceeding which the civilization, much less the Christianity, of this day will not tolerate. If, as some claim, the oaths are meaningless and the penalties are never to be executed, then the taking of such an oath is a blasphemous proceeding. Whether the oaths are to be executed or not, such swearing is anti-christian and immoral.

(4) The society that sends men to heaven just because they are members of it, regardless of character, is a power for evil in this world. I learn that some secret societies teach that every one of their members will go

The Ethics of Secretism

to heaven. Their funeral services certainly assert this. I remember that, when a boy, a secret society, including about one-half the men in my native village, was presided over by the most notorious drunkard in the community; and when a funeral occurred he read the prayers and went through the ceremonies in a most pious sort of way. My boyish impression was that such a society must be evil in its influence, and for it to make the impression that bad men who died in its membership would go straight to the heavenly lodge could do only harm.

(5) The society that claims to be a philanthropic institution, when it really receives more from dues than it expends on charity, deceives the public. So far as I have been able to gather statistics, all secret societies receive more from initiation fees and regular dues than they expend in philanthropic work. It is all right for them to do this as a matter of insurance, but it should not be claimed as charity. The church of Jesus Christ helps its members, whether they are able to contribute or not, but the secret society expects that its members pay into its treasury all that is to be expended upon them. We have no objection to this as a business arrangement, but we do contend that a society of this kind has no right to label itself charitable.

(6) The society that has coarse and brutal methods of initiation should not be encouraged. More than one man has been killed while being initiated into a secret order, and, if half that we hear is true, men submit to shameful indignities while being initiated into certain secret societies. Such coarseness and brutality do not tend to elevate the moral tone of a community. Indeed, I can see nothing but debasement as the result.

The Ethics of Secretism

(7) The society that gives limitations to the Ten Commandments is not of God. Is it true that certain secret orders swear their members not to steal from or commit adultery with the members of their order or those related to them? This implies that such sins may be committed outside the circle of the secret society; such an implication does not tend to good morals.

LAW APPLIES TO ALL

(8) That society is bad which indulges in things under cover of secrecy which the members are ashamed to bring into the light. While in Brooklyn I joined a mutual insurance society which I did not know was **THE BAD UNDER COVER** a secret order, and after an initiation which was more elaborate and nonsensical than instructive, I learned that entertainments were being held which a Christian man could not conscientiously attend. Among the first things I received was an invitation to a progressive euchre party which was held for the benefit of the order. Then came an invitation to what they were pleased to call a "stag party," and I learned that it was nothing more or less than a vaudeville entertainment. Women in undress danced and sang for the delectation of husbands who had left their wives at home. I felt compelled to withdraw, that I might not be associated with such abominations.

(9) The society, secret or public, which expels Jesus Christ, no Christian can afford to join. I learn that in some secret orders Christ is excluded from certain degrees in order that Jews and infidels may become **MUST NOT EXPEL JESUS** members. "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." It seems to me that this is a flat denial of our Lord. "We would see Jesus" is the desire of every Christian, and we should keep out of any organization that refuses to entertain him in all of its departments.

The Ethics of Secretism

Every secret society that has a worthy purpose would be more useful without the feature of secrecy. Truth and virtue need no secrecy, while the evils which secrecy engenders are numerous. Let the members of every secret society resolve to begin an agitation for the elimination of the feature of secrecy, make it private but not secret. Begin with the secret oaths. If the society is worthy it will live on its own merit and be more useful through the publicity of its good features. And if it is so worthless or evil that it can be sustained only by the bond of horrible secret oaths, for the sake of its members and the world about them let it be dissolved. Jesus said "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds be made manifest that they are wrought in God."

HOW TO MAKE
SECRET SOCIETIES
MORE USEFUL









FEB 6 1905

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: April 2006

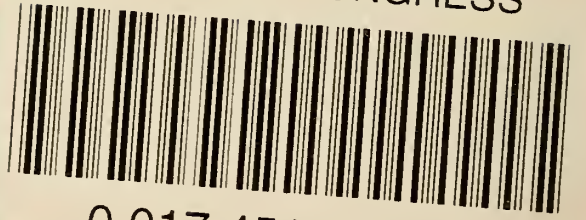
PreservationTechnologies

A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

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

BK
6332
D

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 017 451 969 9

