

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

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CHAPTER XV.

PASTORATE IN AYLESFORD AND WILMOT.

(No 16.)

The year 1867 was signalized by an important event in my life. It was one that can never occur more than once in the life of any man; and the instances are rare in which it occurs at all. I refer to my *Jubilee*, that is the fiftieth anniversary of my Ordination to the Christian ministry. Comparatively few Ministers of Christ are enabled to continue their ministerial labors fifty years after they are publicly set apart to the work by the imposition of hands. I had not the most distant thought at the time of my Ordination, July 17th, 1817, that my life would be prolonged till July 17th, 1867. A good brother remarked to me, on the evening of the former day, "You were made to die of the consumption." This prediction did not surprise or startle me; for I anticipated a dissolution by the fatal disease named, in a few years at the farthest. It may yet be fulfilled; but certainly not in the early part of meridian of my life. It has pleased the all-wise Disposer of events to prolong my days far beyond my own expectations, and those of my friends. In the spring of the year 1867, brethren and sisters kindly proposed to make me a Donation Visit. At my suggestion, it was agreed to hold it on my *Jubilee*, namely, July 17th.

Providence favored us with propitious weather; as the day was fair, but slightly overcast with clouds, so that the heat was not oppressive. Though the meeting was held in a busy season of the year, a large congregation of kind friends, including persons of several different denominations, assembled at an early hour. A sumptuous tea, obligingly prepared by the good sisters, was served up in my garden in excellent order.

As a very correct account of this *Jubilee Donation* was furnished by my esteemed Bro. Isaiah Wallace, an abridgement, in substance, of his statement may be here introduced.

The mental exercises were commenced with singing and prayer, and prayer was also offered at the close. In connection with the presentation of the purse, the following statistics of the Church during the present pastorate, from July 1st, 1851, to July 1st, 1867, were read. At the former date there were 214 members of the Church. In the course of these 16 years there were added by baptism 399, by letter 182, by restoration 16. The diminutions were by dismission 115, by exclusion 74, by death 83. The number of members July 1st, 1867, was 539; consequently the net increase was 325, which is a fraction over 20 annually, as the average increase."

The amount contributed at the Jubilee Donation Visit was \$168—a large sum, considering the pressure of the times.

The Pastor, in his reply, expressive of gratitude to his numerous friends, remarked, that in view of whatever success had attended his ministry, he felt humbled under a sense of his unworthiness, was grateful to ministering Brethren for assistance, and wished all the glory to be given to God alone. When he referred to the fact, that, owing to his advanced age, a similar gathering might be reasonably expected at his residence ere long, with a different object in view, namely, to attend his funeral, many eyes were filled with tears.

The following statistics of ministerial labors to July 17th, 1867, were also read:—

"As nearly as can be ascertained, while a Licentiate, from March 24th, 1816 to July 17th, 1817,—1 year, 3 months, and 24 days—I travelled 4,000 miles, preached 350 sermons, attended 70 other religious or benevolent meetings, and made 750 family visits, usually reading the Scriptures, admonishing the families, or such as were present, and always praying with them.—During the 50 years since my Ordination according to estimation founded on extensive *Memo-randa*; carefully noted, I have travelled—nearly all on horse-back, or in a common vehicle—about 146,000 miles, preached 6,750 sermons, attended 3,430 other meetings, (almost invariably taking an active part in each), and made 11,250 family visits; making together since my entrance on the ministry, about 150,000 miles travelled, 7,000 sermons preached, 4,000 other meetings attended and 12,000 family visits made. I have also delivered funeral discourses—numbered with the others—at or after the burial of 542 individuals, and administered baptism to 552 persons."

Friendly addresses of an interesting character were delivered on this Jubilee occasion by Episcopalian, Methodist, and Baptist Ministers, all in perfect harmony, and expressive of strong attachment to the aged Pastor, and ardent affection for him.

The scene was, of course, deeply interesting and cheering to me; while, at the same time it was adapted to remind me, that my dissolution could not be far remote.

My dear wife would gladly have mingled in the society of our numerous friends; but continued illness confined her to her bed, in a retired room. She, however, enjoyed the brief calls of as many as could be prudently seen by her.

At the commencement of the month of Oct., I visited Halifax for the special purpose of aiding in the designation of our esteemed sister DeWolfe to our Foreign Mission, and also to attend the Young Men's Christian Association Convention. After interesting meetings had been attended in connection with these objects, I returned home, and found Mrs. Tupper no worse than usual.—On the 14th day of the month, however, she was suddenly and unexpectedly called to her rest, during my absence in a remote part of my field of labor. This was to me a painful stroke. Her long-continued illness by sympathy increased my attachment to her; as did also the Christian patience and fortitude with which her sufferings were endured. The firm assurance, however, that her removal terminated all her sorrows, and admitted her ransomed spirit to a state of unending bliss, tended greatly to soothe and cheer my stricken heart.

Associational Sermon.

SPIRITUAL POWER.

A Sermon preached, by appointment, before the N. S. Eastern Baptist Association, at Onslow, on Monday, July 5th, 1869.

BY REV. W. B. ROGGS.

(Published by Special Request.)

"But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you." Acts 1, 8.

The occasion upon which these words were spoken was one of deep interest. Many circumstances combined to render it so. The Redeemer's earthly mission was completed, and from the Mount of Olives, where he stood with His disciples He was about to ascend to the throne of heaven. He had accomplished God's purpose of grace, having by His obedience and sufferings obtained eternal redemption for sinners, and had firmly established in the world the religion of the New Dispensation. He had unfolded to His chosen servants the design of the heavenly enterprise and delivered to them the great commission. And now, surrounded by the feeble band of His followers, the last accents of His heavenly voice were heard as He breathed upon them a parting blessing, and gave them directions for the eventful future. Foreseeing all that awaited them and the cause which they represented, He encouraged their sad hearts by the promise that soon a Divine gift should be bestowed upon them as a complete qualification for their destined work. And he said unto them, ye shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

The gift promised in these words is one of the greatest blessings ever bestowed upon the Church of Christ, and a priceless boon to every child of God. The Lord here directs his people to the Divine armory where they are equipped for the long and terrible conflict—the exhaustless source of strength by which they press forward to the glorious consummation.

The special result of the coming of the Holy Spirit was the bestowment of a new power upon the Apostles; and this seems to have been the principal gift promised in view of their bereavement, by the ascension of Christ, and in prospect of their work in diffusing Christianity throughout the world. This leads us to the statement of our first proposition, that,

1. *The church requires power.* By this we do not mean the church of the Apostolic age, alone, nor that of any other age or country in particular, but the church of Christ in every age and under all circumstances, regarded as the agent of the world's evangelization. The truth of this proposition will be evident if we consider first the work to be done, and secondly, the opposition to be encountered.

The work to be accomplished by the church of Christ is one of inconceivable greatness. The Redeemer shortly before His ascension revealed to the disciples His vast design, saying to them "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." This then is the object placed before the church at the first, and is ever waiting for its full accomplishment. Then alone will the church's work be done, when "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the

waters cover the sea." What a vast work! to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation to the entire human race, to seek to bring every individual under the holy and elevating influence of the religion which came down from heaven. This is the grandest enterprise in which man ever shared—world wide in its object—eternal in its results. When we think of the solemn, earnest, oft-repeated declaration of the truth, and the persuasion, warning and entreaty which seem necessary to bring men to embrace the religion of Jesus, and the guidance and constant care requisite in training those who yield to the claims of God we can realize that the work is great, and so great that it required a leader no less mighty than Jehovah Jesus, for "He shall not fail nor be discouraged till He have set judgment in the earth and the Isles shall wait for His law."

1. Christianity may be considered as a Divine kingdom to be established in the earth, designed to increase in extent and power, until,

"The King who reigns in Zion, towers
Shall all the world compass."

To the sceptre of King Jesus all nations and tribes must yet bow. His legions shall occupy every land. They are commissioned by the King of Kings to invade every part of the enemy's domain, and upon every conquered spot to unfurl the Royal standard of the Heavenly Sovereign. Compared with this now insignificant do the most famous expeditions of this world appear. The conquests of Alexander and Attila, Scipio and Caesar, gigantic as they were, appear but trifles. And the work of securing this mighty conquest is committed to the church. Although the world was once in a certain sense conquered by Christianity yet it needs again and again to be reconquered and subjugated to Christ. The heathen world still unsubdued by the religion of Jesus is vast. Probably more than half of the human race is still without a knowledge of the true God, and consequently without even the nominal profession of adherence to Him. And yet "the field is the world." We are just as much encouraged by God's word to believe that Japan should at some period become a Christian land as that Britain should. It may never be so thoroughly evangelized, but with our Lord's commission we are obliged to regard the whole earth as equally the Dominion of Christ. Christianity, unlike Judaism, is for the whole world.

But not only does heathendom require to be conquered by the gospel and brought into willing allegiance to the Prince of Peace; but much of the so-called Christian world, especially the continent of Europe, is in perishing need of being overspread and renovated by a pure and spiritual religion, which for ages it has lost. It is not Christ but Antichrist that reigns there, and his empire in all its gigantic proportions must be dismembered and laid waste, and the kingdom of Christ established on its ruins.

And even in the most highly enlightened and the most thoroughly Christianized parts of the world, what a vast amount of Christian work requires to be done! Multitudes are still in rebellion. Open sin, indifference to religion, and hostility to Christ exist to an appalling extent. The Christian campaign is not yet over, and the same power is needed now that was necessary when the forces issued from the gates of Jerusalem to the conquest of a rebellious world—the same power that led them on in triumph till they reached the seven-hilled capital, and there in the name of God set up their banners. And that power will be requisite until "the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ," and the myriad legions of the saints, flushed with holy and unsullied victory, and clad in heavenly glory, shall march through the celestial portals, and celebrate forever the triumph of their Divine Leader.

2. Again, we may view the diffusion of Christianity in the world as the bringing about of a great moral reform. Its object is to change the minds of men of all classes and in every land—to overthrow their long cherished theories—to discover to them the folly of their highest wisdom—and to substitute the Divine system of religion for the multitudinous forms of error. If we remember the difficulty with which men are persuaded to leave long trodden paths—the suspicion and hostility with which new theories, especially religious ones, are regarded, and add to this the thought that true theories and doctrines are always more strenuously opposed than the false, and the Divine more than the human, then indeed, the universal establishment of a moral reform such as Christianity appears as a work of immeasurable greatness. But not only has the Christian religion to do with the human intellect, nor could its whole purpose be accomplished, even if men everywhere were brought to see and admit the reasonableness of it, and,

abandoning all other systems as unworthy of confidence, give a mental assent to it as the best of religious systems. It seeks more than that. The hearts and lives of men must be affected by its sanctifying influence, and thoroughly subjected to its laws and principles. It is the regeneration and salvation of man, and not merely a mental change that the church must seek. It is this that renders the progress of Christianity comparatively slow. It is not satisfied with anything short of a thorough and hearty reception. And while many are found willing to assent to it mentally, comparatively few are willing to embrace it with the whole soul. We know that none but God can convince the heart, but at the same time, the Christian laborer feels that his work is not done until the Gospel is truly embraced. The human effort alone necessary, by the Lord, to the accomplishment of a work like this is beyond comprehension.

The prime object then placed before the church of Christ, is the salvation of the greatest possible number of the human family, and the universal establishment of the Redeemer's kingdom; a work of inconceivable vastness, and requiring a commensurate power.

If now we turn our attention to the second thought, viz. the opposition to be encountered, we will realize still more the necessity for power.

1. *The opposition of prejudice.* Our Saviour after His resurrection declared to His disciples that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." In that city, although a few followers had identified themselves with His cause, there was still the most bitter hatred to Jesus of Nazareth, and the most determined opposition to His doctrine. The mass of the people, with their rulers, temporal and spiritual had put to death the founder of the new religion, and taken their position as the fierce and implacable opponents of His church. All that Jewish pride and prejudice could do in order to exterminate it they were ready to do. It was not a mere aversion to reform, but a violent hatred to Christianity. And yet this is the place where the followers of the Redeemer were to commence their world-wide work. And then if we look beyond the walls of Jerusalem—we behold the same jealous Judaism in many places ever ready to oppose and hinder. We see also heavy-headed systems of idolatry, so firmly blended with the traditions of ages—the national institutions—and the social life, that to all human appearance they are impregnable. Paganism was the gigantic obstacle to be met with throughout the Gentile world. Pride and prejudice characterized the heathen as well as the Jew. Greek philosophy and refinement; Roman grandeur and voluptuousness were formidable opposers of the severe morality, and humiliating doctrines of the Gospel. State religions were everywhere ready to resist the new faith with the strong arm of the civil power.

The gigantic barriers which Paganism raised before the pioneers of Christianity are still met with in heathen lands. The antiquity of their religious systems, prejudice against foreign innovations, the blinding and debasing effects of idolatry are some of the obstacles which there oppose the great work of the world's evangelization. The heralds of the cross in attacking a system such as Bhodism or Confucianism are as it were a feeble band directing their efforts against a fortress whose gigantic walls of adamant strong and solid tower to the skies. And even in nominally Christian lands what deep seated opposition exists to the plain, simple truths of God's word. False doctrines, spurious forms bearing the name of Christianity are the ever-present obstacles to the spread of true religion. Power is required to bear and to overcome the manifold prejudice.

2. *The opposition of error.* The forms of error which hinder the church's work are numerous. Passing over those of bygone ages let us look at some of those of the present. In pointing out these errors we lay aside for the time the idea of Denominations, and attribute the existence of the errors wherever found, to a lack of spirituality, and requiring to be searched out and overcome, just as much by those religious communities in which they are found as by others. Foremost among these is doubtless that vast, combined system of truth and falsehood, which might be called baptized Paganism—having a fair exterior and bearing the name of Christianity, and yet containing the idolatry, the superstition, and the ignorance of heathenism itself.

Another giant error is the doctrine of hereditary religion, and the unscriptural principle of continuing and enlarging the church by the involuntary addition of unconscious, and of course unconverted persons. This pernicious system of building up churches of material which God has not sanctified for that purpose is a monstrous error constantly opposed to the work of God. It is very effectual in building up a worldly church and is therefore tenaciously held. An overwhelming power is needed to break down such a system. God will use his church for this purpose just in proportion as she possesses his power.

Another error, which exercises a mighty influence against the cause of Christ, is the unnatural, unholy union of Church and State, a union that invariably secularizes the church and reduces her to slavery, that her influence may be used by the state. But let us rejoice that the axe is already laid to the root of this ancient tree, and that even the topmost branches begin to tremble. And let us be aroused by the thought that when the saints of the most High shall be clothed with power from heaven it must fall, and everlasting will be the fall of it.

What a mighty defensive power the church