

Bobbili (1879).

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The saying, true though trite, that Providence has wisely withheld from men, knowledge of the future, is as applicable to missionaries as to others.

Could we foresee the trials and shortcomings before us, we should most likely enter upon our year's work, if not altogether discouraged, at least with much less of energy and hope than we require.

While the work at Bobbili has come far short of what was hoped at the beginning of the year, still something has been gained.

In August a trip was taken to Bimlipatam, and thence in company with Bro. Sanford, to Chicacole to attend to business connected with the mission property at the latter place.

On the way I was taken ill and was detained at Chicacole for a week, instead of making a short tour in the neighborhood as I had hoped.

As soon as health permitted, I returned to Bobbili. Three days after my return, our dear boy, Willie was removed from our home at Bobbili, to our home above.

A few days after his death, our ayah, who had been with us three years, died at Chittavalah and as we trust, joined the great multitude of those redeemed from every tribe, tongue and nation.

She was baptized in June, at this place, (Bobbili), upon a profession of faith in Christ, which we have good evidence to believe was a true and saving one.

Through the kind disinterested efforts of Bro. Timpany, a young man who was formerly one of his students at Ramapatam and afterwards connected with the mission at Kurnool, was induced to join our mission at Bobbili.

He arrived here August 1st, accompanied by his wife and wife's brother.

The brother has spent part of the time in the school and part in going out to sell books and talk to the people.

On the last Sabbath in October he applied for admission to the church, which was organized that day, was accepted and baptized.

Near the end of December, a tour of nine days was made among the villages to the East of Bobbili, of which twenty-one were visited.

With two or three exceptions, the people in the villages visited, had never heard of Christ.

Even within the limits of the short tour made, there are many villages we did not visit, and to visit all within a radius of twenty miles of Bobbili, even once, will require much time and travel.

Sunday Reading.

Freshness.

A NEW SERMON BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

"My glory was fresh in me, and my bow was renewed in my hand." Job xxix. 20. "I shall be anointed with fresh oil."—Psalm xcii. 10.

The first text tells us of the renown of Job, and of the way in which the providence of God continued to maintain the glory of his estate, his bodily health and his prosperity.

He was for many days, months, years continuously prospered of God. Everything to which he set his hand succeeded.

God had set a hedge about him and all that he had, so that none broke through to molest him.

However, this did not last always, Job in this chapter is telling us of something that used to be—something that was—something the loss of which he very sorrowfully deplored—"my glory was fresh in me."

He found himself suddenly stripped of riches and of honor, and put last in the list instead of first, while his purposes and aims seemed all to miss their way, and he had no strength and no glory left in him.

Now, brothers and sisters, this reads us a lesson that we put not our trust in the stability of earthly things.

be nothing of the kind; you may be fresh as the dew even unto the end.

The subject to-night will run in this way—First, the excellency of freshness: "My glory was fresh in me."

Secondly, the fear of its departure. And, thirdly, the hope of its continuance,

which hope is greatly encouraged by the words of our text: "I shall be anointed with fresh oil."

I. First, then, notice THE EXCELLENCY OF FRESHNESS.

David had been anointed while still a youth to be king over Israel. He was anointed yet again when he came to the kingdom;

that outward anointing with actual oil was the testimony of God's choice and the ensign of David's authorization, and oftentimes when his throne seemed precarious, God confirmed him in it,

and subdued the people under him. When his dominion waxed weak, God strengthened him and strengthened his servants, and gave them great victories;

so that as a king he was frequently anointed with fresh oil. David's royal brow was crowned with fresh laurels again and again, and his throne was settled and established by the hand of the Lord.

Not with the same old stale anointing, a repetition of that which had lost its force, but oil fresh pressed from the green olive, namely, with a new blessing and a fresh blessing from God's right hand was David often anointed, as I trust you and I may be.

Freshness is a most delightful thing if you see it in another. It is a charm in nature. But, dear friends, spiritual freshness has a double charm.

And so, dear friends, it is well to have a freshness about our feelings. I know that we do not hope to be saved by our feelings;

neither do we put feeling side by side with faith; yet I should be very sorry to be trusting and yet never feeling. Surely it would be a dead faith.

It would be a strange thing to be a living child of God and to have no feelings. I will tell you about feelings as they strike me.

Sometimes I have deplored the condition of my heart before God, and thought my feelings to be the worst that could be;

but what a foolish judge I have been, for in a week's time I have wanted to have those despised feelings over again, and thought that now at last I had fallen into a worse state than before.

I am persuaded that we are very poor judges of the value of our own inward feelings, and mayhap, when we are lowest in our own esteem we are really highest in the sight of God;

and when we feel as if we did not pray, we are praying, and the heart may be wrestling with God more when it fears that it does not pray, than when you come down complacently out of your closet and say, "I know that I have had a good time, for I feel perfectly self-satisfied."

I hate the excitement which needs to be pumped up. There is a something delightful to my mind in coming to the throne of grace weeping—a something delightful in coming to the Lord's Supper full of joy and gladness;

to come to either place cold and dead is horrible. There is something delicious in knowing that what you do feel is true, and comes up from the very bottom of your soul, and has a point and edge about it which proves how sincere it is.

Why not let the tree grow as God would have it? Do not clip yourselves round or square, but keep your freshness. There will be no two Christian men exactly alike if they do that.

FRESHNESS IN LABOR.

There should be a freshness, dear friends, about our labor. We ought to serve the Lord to-day with just as much novelty in it as there was ten years ago.

I may even venture to say thirty years ago. Oh, I recollect the seriousness with which I went out to preach the first half dozen sermons I ever preached, and what a burden it was from the Lord, and how I did go at it with all my might—very clumsily, but still with all my soul and spirit.

And do you recollect when you began to teach the class, or began to take your tract district? Did you not pray over it? It seemed almost too good to be true that you should be trusted with doing anything for your Lord and Master.

And you did it, oh, so intensely, and therefore you had God's blessing. You did it well, though you blundered a good deal; for all your heart was in it, your motive was pure, and your faith was childlike.

You blundered the right way, for you blundered with your heart, and so blundered into other men's hearts. Your heart was serving God, even in the mistakes you made.

Now perhaps, you can go round the district, and you are pretty well half asleep over it; and you can teach the class, but there is not the vigor, the force, the energy, the intense desire, the burden that there once was; perhaps not all the joy. You can stand up and preach, dear brother, and you have got pretty well accustomed to it; and the people have got accustomed to it too, and they can nearly go to sleep, and you can, too, and preach asleep.

It is an easy thing to do, if you once learn the wretched art. There is a kind of somnambulism in preachers; they can talk in their sleep in a very precise way—much more wonderful than walking.

You cannot say, "I sleep, but my heart waketh." The fact is that it is the other way up—"I wake, but my heart sleepeth," and it is a great pity when it comes to be so.

do not give the ordinance a fair opportunity to edify them. They do not fairly test the value of an ordinance which they so grossly neglect, as it seems to me. No; you may have more, and more, and more, and more of everything that Christ has instituted and ordained, especially more and more of Himself; and the more you have the more freshness there will be.

Yes, but we have had a fear sometimes that there will be a want of freshness about our-elves. Well, that fear is a very natural one. Let me tell you some points on which, I fear, we have good ground for alarm, for we do our best to rob ourselves of all life and freshness.

Christian people can lose the freshness of their own selves by imitating one another. By adopting as our model some one form of the Christian life other than that which is embodied in the person of our Lord we shall soon manufacture a set of paste gems, but the diamond flash and glory will be unknown.

Many godly people have a very deep sense of their corruption and inward sin, and this, together with a sorrowful spirit, combines to make them a rather gloomy race.

Often deeply taught in other respects, they fail to rejoice in the Lord. Certain of these have formed a school, and they have set up a standard, and they judge everybody to be a deceiver or a mere babe in grace who cannot groan as deep down as they can.

This is not wise. If you do that you will lose your freshness, for you will forever be scattering dust and ashes over all the joys of your life.

Why should the children of the bride-chamber mourn while the bridegroom is with them? Let us be happy while we may.

There is another set of brethren who are always glad and happy, for they are healthy and competently provided for, and out of the way of temptation, and so

they also set up a standard, and they cut down everybody who cannot sing right up into the alto notes as high as they can. Well, you will get stale, too, brother, whoever you may be, for self-laudation never keeps fresh long together.

Poor fools, how have they persuaded themselves to hope that self-praise will be thought to be the height of piety? It is nauseous even to those of us who are prepared to make a measure of excuse for the fervid imaginations of the brethren.

Sometimes, in this pilgrimage to the Celestial City, I join company with a brother worker who laments that he has many difficulties in dealing with poor sinners. I say to him, "I am glad that, for I have more difficulties than you; but I see that I am not alone in my anxieties."

Another I meet with says that he has been so happy in meeting with souls that he has found the Lord; and I reply, "Yes, and I am glad to see you, for I am happy too, for I have met with many who have just found the Saviour."

These changes and ups and downs are like the delicious vicissitudes of the seasons—they are not always autumn, not always spring, not always winter, not always even the plenitude of summer. So with our souls, we are never so long in one stay as to find monotony in life. No, the monotony is in death; the freshness is in life.

There is no use in preaching to the hungry.

We do not work too much, but we do pray too little for the work we do.

THEY BELIEVE THAT THEY ARE PERFECT.

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Another way of spoiling your freshness is by repression. The feebler sort of Christians dare not say, feel, or do, until they have asked their leader's leave. I have known a little village chapel in which, when the preacher had delivered a sermon, the people did not know whether he was sound or not till they had asked the principal deacon; or they waited till they got outside and consulted a little knot of good old men and women who had to act as tasters for all the others, and give a verdict as to the orthodoxy of the performance.

A few good souls thought the sermon to be very sweet; the man seemed to be preaching the Gospel, but they did not like to commit themselves to the tune till they had got the