

Sunday Reading.

Life Ventures.

I stood and watched my ships go out, Each one by one, unmooring, free, What time the quiet harbor filled With flood-tide from the sea. The first that sailed her name was Joy; She spread a smooth, white, ample sail, And eastward drove, with bending spars, Before the singing gale. The next that sailed, her name was Hope; No cargo in her hold she bore, Thinking to find in western lands Of merchandise a store. Another sailed, her name was Love; She showed a red flag at the mast, A flag as red as blood she showed, And she sped South right fast. The last that sailed her name was Faith; Slowly she took her passage forth, Tacked, and lay to; at last she steered A straight course for the North. My gallant ships, they sailed away, Over the shimmering, summer sea; I sat and watched for many a day, But only one came back to me. For Joy was caught by pirate Pain, Hope ran upon a hidden reef, And Love caught fire and floundered fast In whelming seas of grief. Faith came at last, storm beat and torn; She recompensed me all my loss; For as a cargo home she brought A crown linked to a cross.

"I have Prayed for Thee."

We often read of Christ having prayed, but we have only one of those prayers recorded. Sometimes he spent all the day in prayer and meditation; some nights when the shadows lay on the wilderness about Galilee, Jesus passed all the long hours in prayer, and no word is given us concerning these solemn petitions. But the prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John seems to give in full the outpouring of that great human-divine heart. There never was such a prayer offered before in this world, and there never will be such another heard among men. We may not know certainly the exact surroundings, but the prayer was probably made in some upper room in the outskirts of Jerusalem. There, on an uncarpeted floor, and with the bare walls about them, the Master had talked a long time with his disciples. It was his farewell meeting with them, and they knew it. It was to them an inexpressibly sad one. They were being wrecked on their own hopes, and their hearts were bowed down. More than one strong, weather-beaten face showed sorrow, and over many rough cheeks tears were falling, spite of all resistance. Read the wonderful words of Jesus; "Sorrow hath filled your hearts.—I will not leave you comfortless, I go to prepare a place for you.—Ye believe in God, believe also in me.—I will come again.—The Comforter shall abide with you." But the mob in the streets, urged on by Caiaphas, howls for the blood of the Master. John hears it, and lowers his head. Peter hears it, and frowns defiance for a moment, and with quivering lip, tries to conceal his emotions, and struggles with the tempest in his breast. The disciples are looking into each other's faces for assurance, and then at Jesus. Then the good Master prays. What a prayer it was. All the work of his life was compressed in it; all the expectation and hope and devotion to the race, and love for his disciples are there. The first part is about himself and his work. Then he holds up his disciples, and with deep emotion commends them to God. What tenderness and pathos there must have been in that divine voice! Then he prays for them "who shall believe in me through their word." And thus he sweeps down the ages, and takes us all into that wonderful petition. Who of us can ever doubt or faint or be discouraged after this? "As the Father hath sent me so have I sent you." Christ has remembered us all, from the greatest to the least, and has commissioned us and prayed for us. Can we ever fail or fall away again? Can we ever fear or follow him at a distance? "I will not leave you comfortless. I will come unto you." "O, thou afflicted, tossed with the

tempest and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and thy foundation with sapphires; and I will make thy windows agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. Fear not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee: yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."—Advance.

Train Coming.

BY REV. EDWARD A. RAND.

There it is, shooting its sharp, dazzling eye round the curve suddenly, rushing toward you with a roar, then slacking its speed, halting, catching you up and bearing you away. It was well you reached the station when you did. Perhaps you can see the train a long way off, its light at night only a spark then a ball of flame growing steadily and yet advancing slowly, coming with apparent leisure, picking you up after this long warning and taking you on your journey. At my home, the station is near a curve, and when the train appears it comes suddenly. I may be talking with a friend. I may be attending to some business. At some little distance from the train, I may be reminded of the fact that I need a ticket, and I may start to buy one. The train, though, is inexorable. I must let go my friend's hand. I must cease my business. I must give up my purpose to reach the ticket-office. I must take my seat in the train.

How suggestive of the coming of death is this! There is a little sickness—nothing special. The doctor calls, feels your pulse, and administers medicine. He comes again, several times even. Then he shakes his head, looks grave and astonishes you with the remark that it is a serious case. If you have any affairs demanding attention, you would better care for them at once! That is the train roaring round the curve in a moment, its headlight flashing suddenly.

Death may come slowly on the other hand. We may see the train a long way off. We linger, linger in pain, knowing we must go inevitably, and yet the departure is long delayed. Generally, though, the coming of the train is sudden. It quickly turns the curve, and you must go.

"I am not ready. I have not finished certain work," you cry. You must go.

"I have not given the subject the thought I desire." You must go.

"I would like to make restitution to some one far off." You must go.

You plead more earnestly: "If I could live, there is so much I might accomplish, and I might also be better prepared spiritually." There is no appeal; you must go.

There is nothing more impressive than this solemn voice from the Word of God: "Be ye therefore ready also; for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not."—Zion's Herald.

Mistakes of Life.

Somebody has condensed the mistakes of life, and arrived at the conclusion that there are fourteen of them. Most people would say, if they told the truth, that there was no limit to the mistakes of life; that they were like the drops in the ocean or sands on the shore in number; but it is well to be accurate. Here, then, are fourteen great mistakes: "It is a great mistake to set up our standard of right or wrong, and judge people accordingly; to expect uniformity of opinion in this world; to measure the enjoyment of others by our own; to look for judgment and experience in youth; to endeavor to mould all dispositions alike; not to yield to immaterial trifles; to look for perfection in our own articles; to worry ourselves and others with what cannot be remedied; not to alleviate the sufferings of all who need alleviation as far as lies in our power; not to make allowances for the infirmities of others; to consider everything impossible that we cannot perform; to believe only what our finite minds can grasp; to expect to be able to understand everything. The greatest of mistakes is to live only for time, when any moment may launch us into eternity."

A Pen Picture of Professor Dr. C. E. Luthardt.

We do not profess to adorn our pages with portraits, although we occasionally give sketches that are more impressive than a poor woodcut, or even a good photograph, as they represent the person speaking and acting. We found one such the other day in one of our exchanges, and as our readers have become somewhat acquainted with the person, and familiar with some of his great thoughts, we adopted it as a good frontispiece to precede another discourse translated by Professor Welton. After this look at the man we shall be better able to listen to this presentation of his great thoughts on the History of Revelation:

"As a preacher he is without rival among the Theological Professors of Leipzig. The church is always crowded when he is advertised as the preacher. He wears, while preaching, the usual black robe and white bands. Upon entering the pulpit he kneels in prayer. Rising, he announces the text, which is set for Palm Sunday. It is found, 'also,' he states in the second chapter of Philippians, verses 6 to 11, inclusive. The congregation stand as he reads. In his introduction he refers to the day. It brings men to another anniversary of the last week and death of our Lord. It begins the sacred week, the still week. He asks all to bow with him in silent prayer that God may bless the people in this solemn season. Not a few kneel on the bare stone floor; all bow the head. After a moment of impressive silence the text is again read, and the subject is announced: Humiliation antecedent to Christ's exaltation. The three divisions are clearly stated and repeated, 'first, second, third,' being distinctly pronounced. The sermon was about forty-five minutes long. According to the general custom, Dr. Luthardt uses no notes. For such an experienced Professor and preacher this is, doubtless, an excellent custom; but it results in compelling young theologians to write and commit their sermons. This sermon is like much that Luthardt has written. He is master of a literary style that combines strength and beauty. He can condense into one sentence a vast deal of thought, yet you listen in vain for the tangled, involved constructions so common in German theological books. He remembers that he is addressing a congregation, not a class of students, and every sentence is simple. The Professorial habits appear sometimes. He will lean his head on his hand, rest his elbows on the pulpit, and talk pleasantly down to the audience. Power as a preacher he has, however, and in no small degree. He has a commanding physical presence, a very large and handsome head, thick and well kept hair, a deep, grand voice, and the power to move a great audience till it can be swayed at his will. More than once during this service you could feel that intense quiet which only the orator can command.

After the sermon come the prayers. Finally the Lord's Prayer is repeated by the pastor, who then pronounces the benediction. Before leaving the pulpit, the preacher kneels once again in prayer. Another hymn brings the service to a close. Before leaving the seat, as upon entering, every worshipper bows the head in prayer.

Is there, then, no collection? That is by no means forgotten, for at the door a man stands, rattling into a well-burnished copper utensil the coins which he expects to receive from every passer-out. As you leave, you see how large a congregation had gathered. Professors and instructors of all grades come from the Faculty seats. The General commanding the Leipzig division of the army marches out from the State box. People of all grades of age, rank, wealth, flock out together from the main entrance. They all came at this early hour, not to hear music, not to criticise the ritual, not even to exhibit fine clothing. They came to hear the plain preaching of gospel truth.

A NEGRO'S PRAYER.—A teacher in one of the colored schools at the South was about to go away for a season, and an old negro poured out for her the following fervent petitions, which we copy from a private letter. "I give you the words," said the writer, "but they convey no idea of the pathos and earnestness of the prayer." "Go afore her as a leadin' light, an' behind her as a protectin' angel. Roughshod her feet with de preparation of de gospel o' peace. Nail her ear to de gospel pole. Gib her de eye of de eagle dat she spy out sin 'far off. Wash her hand to de gospel plow. Tie de tongue to de line ob truf. Keep her feet in de narrer way and her soul in the channel ob faith. Bow her head low beneath her knees, an' her knees way down in some lonesome valley where prayer an' supplication is much wanted to be made. Hedge an' ditch 'bout her, good Lord, an' keep her in de strait and narrer way dat leads to heaven."—N. W. Christian Advocate.

For the Christian Messenger. Fundamental Truths of Christianity.

LUTHARDT'S APOLOGETICAL DISCOURSES.

Eighth Discourse, translated from the German by Prof. D. M. Welton.

THE HISTORY OF REVELATION. HEATHENISM AND JUDAISM.

I. Revelation has a history. It was given complete at once. It underlies the law of development. For this is the controlling law of all that lives upon the earth. If revelation is a constituent part of the history of mankind and inserts itself in the development of the human mind, then it must conform to the law of the same. It has often been asked with a view of refuting the teaching of christianity, why, if the sin of the first man brought such misery upon humanity and rendered such an offering necessary as the church teaches, God did not immediately after the fall of man, put an end to the misery and again restore the lost fellowship of man with himself, instead of delaying so long with his help? The answer to this question lies in that law of development. God began immediately indeed to reveal his salvation: but it was done under the law of history. Hereby, though supernatural in its origin and nature, it became yet somewhat natural in its actuality, for it unified itself with the entire history of man and of the human mind.

Revelation has a history, for there is in general a history. There is a history, because there is a goal; and there is a goal because there is a God and an eternal love and a Providence which rules over the history of mankind and conducts it to the goal of divine love. If there were no goal, the life of man would be the saddest and most wearisome that could be. We are all convinced that history is not simply a theatre of error or of changes which continually repeat themselves, but a progress. Nothing is so assured to modern thought and so demanded by the same as progress. But there is only progress where there is a goal which is approached. This goal we have not set up ourselves, but it is the thought of an eternal love which rules over us. And only this love can bring us near it. With the strongest expression we designate it the Kingdom of God: the realization of the highest moral and religious task and destiny of the human race, the realization of the moral and religious ideal. We carry such an ideal in us, we hope, we long for it—and it will be realized, it must be. That is the secret of history, and the elevating thing in its consideration;—to pursue or at least to anticipate the ways of God which conduct us to this goal. That gives also to our individual life and to our smallest activity its highest significance and worth, that we can say to ourselves that our action also, be it what it may, if it is only generally worthy, serves the highest moral purpose to mankind and is taken up by God into the general web of history, whose final result is the Kingdom of God the great kingdom of truth and righteousness and of the perfect life.

For this God employs the means of the natural life, the manifold fullness which he has placed in it. To this pertain especially the peculiar character and the peculiar vocation of individual nations. Each nation has its particular problem in the total history of mankind. Only with certain nations their problem is seen to be more important and to exert a more decisive influence in the course of history. The natural vocation of mankind is the progress of civilization. There are nations of culture, particularly endowed nations, who are bearers of the great culture-lessons of mankind. Thus the Greek nation was the nation of culture, of artistic and scientific culture, Rome the nation of law, &c. But the soul and living source of all culture is religion. Consequently there was also a nation of religion, namely, Israel. As now, culture, so also must religion become an affair of the race. Greece and Rome were bearers of culture, that this culture might subserve the interests of mankind. So religion had its place in a particular nation, that it might pass over from thence to the ground of humanity. In this religious nation, then, revelation has its home and history. The history of revelation stands

in manifold relation to the history of culture, yet without amalgamating with the same. But this relation prepared the way for the future transition of religion to the soil of culture. To accomplish this transition was the work of Christianity. Christianity has made religion and revelation matters of the world of civilization. Thus the two great spheres which formerly were separate are joined: the non-revelation-history of the world of culture and the revelation-history in Israel. The blending of the two spheres is the problem of the christian time. It would therefore be the greatest interruption of the progress of history and a heavy misfortune to the entire life of mankind, if a breach should take place between these two spheres, the spheres of culture and religion.

The nations of heathenism are not without religion; but they are not the guardians of religion for the future. The religions of the heathen world are the "wild religions," as Schelling has designated them, using the Pauline comparison of the wild olive in Rom xi; they are not the religions of revelation. But they are not on this account without divine direction. Even the religions of heathenism go the course which God has marked out for them, and serve to "educate the human race" for revelation, for they show more and more the need of revelation. Has revelation a history in Israel for mankind, so has mankind a history in the heathen world for revelation. By the very religions of heathenism should mankind be led forth from them and so become prepared for accepting revelation. This would not have been possible had not those religions contained elements of truth which positively served as a preparation for its complete manifestation.

The apostle Paul says indeed of the heathen, that they were without God in the world (Eph. ii. 12). They had not God himself, and this is the deepest ground of the lament which sounds unintelligibly through the whole heathen world. Still they were not without some connection with God. A tie bound God to them and a tie bound them to God. The former consisted of the truths which lay at the bottom of their religion, the latter of the religious sense which is here also and during long centuries ruled the life of the old world. But both sides of religion, that objective side and this subjective one, accomplished one history, and this history is a process of progressive self-dissolution, which led on the one hand into the slough of ungodliness or superstition, but produced at the same time on the other hand a noble spirit of yearning or at least of dissatisfaction, in which the exclusiveness of the old world opened the door to the spirit of the new time.

Let us briefly consider those two sides and their historical development.

Elements of truth lie at the bottom of all religions. Even their aberrations are only disfigurements of a hidden truth. Without these the religions of heathenism would not have continued so long nor existed at the present time. For it is not the absolute lie that wins and satisfies the human mind; man may sink ever so low—the sense of truth he will never completely lose. Individual men may go so far as to deaden the sense of truth in them, but nations will never be able completely to stifle it. The truths which lie hidden in heathen religions, have their origin in very old revelations, which were the joint property of universal humanity, before humanity broke up into a diversity of nations. They are the hereditary portion which the nations took with them as they went forth from their common paternal habitation, that they might live on them after their separation therefrom.

Everywhere there is a consciousness of God which expresses itself in worship, everywhere a certain feeling of sin and guilt, and a need of atonement and reconciliation which find expression in sacrifices and prayers, in purifications and expiations, and among many nations we meet also with the idea of a mediator. And the further we go back in history the purer do we find the form of these religions. It is a fact preserved in the tradition of the heathen, and established by historical research, that the original conceptions of God were purer than those of the later national religions, so that the apostle Paul is

right when he (Rom. i. 18, sq.) represents the history of the conception of God as a history of the progressive perversion of the truth. Yet this consciousness of God was long maintained. Among the Romans, for example, Varo informs us that for more than 170 years they had no images of the gods, and that those who introduced this usage committed an error that was not previously known. But the national religions became more and more corrupted with age. What caused their decline was the might of falsehood which lay in them from the beginning, which lies in the principle of heathenism itself, and determines its character. For it is its character that it locates God in the world.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Prohibition of the Liquor Traffic.

It is said by eminent men that every great reform passes through three stages before it is accepted by the people. In the first stage no notice is taken of it, in the second it is denounced as being unworthy of public notice, or impracticable, and in the third stage it is accepted and its claims sustained by the people.

That the legal prohibition of the liquor traffic should receive derision, ridicule and disparagement is not surprising nor important, for many great reforms which have been of great benefit and are foremost in our day, passed through the same hardship in gaining supremacy. In writing a few thoughts and giving some facts upon the subject I shall make free use of an article that appeared in the Princeton Review not long since written by Henry Wade Rogers, from a lecture delivered by Joseph Cook in London and other writers of like prominence.

PROHIBITION—ITS RELATION TO CRIME.

In 1670 Sir Matthew Hale, Chief Justice, expressed himself in the following manner: "After an observation of more than 20 years in the courts, I have found that if the murders and man-slaughters, the burglaries and robberies, the riots and tumults, the adulteries, fornications, rapes and other enormities that have happened in that time were divided into five parts, four of them have been the issue and products of strong drink—of tavern or ale house drinking.

Noah Davis, the learned Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New Jersey, Whether judging from the declared judicial experience of others or from my own, or from carefully collected statistics running through many series of years, I believe it entirely safe to say that one half of all the crimes of this country and of Great Britain is caused by the intemperate use of intoxicating liquors, and that of the crimes involving personal violence, certainly three-fourths are chargeable to the same cause. Lord Morpeth in his official capacity as Secretary for Ireland declares that of cases of murder, attempt at murder, offences against the person, assaults, and cutting and maiming, in 1837, were 12,996; in 1838, 11,058; while in 1840 there were only 175. The cause of this diminution in the number of offences is attributed to the famous temperance movement introduced by Father Matthew. The movement began in 1838 and swept all Ireland like the tidal waves of the sea, cleansing the whole land where hitherto had been breeding all kind of crimes and disorder in the State. The consumption of strong drink fell from 12,296,000 gallons to 5,290,000 and the number of prisoners at Dublin fell in one year from 136 to 23 and 100 cells stood empty. The prison at Smithfield closed its doors.

In 1875 a committee of the House of Commons of the Dominion of Canada, stated that of 28,289 commitments to the jails of the Province, of Ontario and Quebec during the three previous years 21,236 were committed for drunkenness, or crime committed under the influence of drink. The conviction for crime in the State of Maine with a prohibitory liquor law, was in proportion of 1 to every 1,589 of the population and during the same time the conviction for crime in the city of New York without a prohibitory liquor law, was in proportion of 1 to 620 of population. Crime in the State of Connecticut under the prohibitory law in 1854, diminished 75 per cent., and upon the restoration of the license system in 1873, increased 75 per cent. in one year.

Some of the Life Assurance Societies pay from 7 to 17 up to 18 per cent. below and above the moderate drink. This fact is taken from an official report. During the past 16 years we insured 9,345 policies on the life non-abstainers (carefully excluded) who are not strictly temperate.