

For the Christian Messenger. Joseph Cook's Lectures.

LAST LECTURE OF THIS COURSE.

Prelude: The New Presidential Election. Interlude: Questions Answered.

Lecture: A Christocentric Natural Theology.

Postlude: Letters on the New Creed from Prominent Congregationalists.

The annual report of the Committee in charge of the Boston Monday Lectureship was read by the Rev. Dr. Gordon. It was estimated that the newspaper circulation of the lectures had this year reached a million readers in the United States, besides republications in England, Scotland, India and Australia.

Arrangements were made for a new course next year. The service lasted from 11.30 until nearly 2 o'clock. Of course there was a very large audience. The letters read were from distinguished critics of the New Congregational Creed. I shall on this occasion report the lecture only.

The human faculties have appeared at their best but once: they have appeared in harmony at once. Natural Theology is founded on the nature of man at its best. It is therefore of necessity Christocentric.

Destructive Criticism no longer denies that four of the epistles of St. Paul were written before the year 60. It no longer denies that a perfect man appeared and that he was the founder of Christianity. The sinlessness of Christ is asserted by those who deny his deity.

There is a department of Natural Theology which should be called Christology. The supreme step in the progress of Natural Theology will be to bring it into harmony with Him who was man at its climax. What does that harmony imply?

NOT DOGMA BUT LIFE.

The most distinguished disciple of Keshub Chunder Sen has delivered an oration in his memory. The great Hindu Theist held only Natural Theology. Yet he accepted inspiration, prayer, the pre-existence of the Christ as a Divine idea. Keshub Chunder Sen believed that natural religion could be made a living flame and he made it such in his own soul. In all his study of the great religions of the world he made the human nature of the Christ the center of his whole scheme of thought.

The Hindu Theist believed there was a kingdom of God in this world, and that all who wish to do the will of God are assisting in the foundation of that kingdom. He believed that the Christ and God were one because the will of Christ was utterly submitted to that of God. He had not grasped the doctrine that our Lord had ascended into the heavens and that wherever the Holy Spirit is Christ is. He had not risen to the supreme thought that since God's right hand is everywhere, our Lord is everywhere. Christianity was too vast for him: but on the lower plane of Natural Theology he developed a grand cosmopolitan faith, claiming and commanding the assent of all intelligent men.

These are the words of Babu Mozoomdar in the Town Hall of Calcutta: "Often has Keshub Chunder Sen said that in his soul there was a mighty Voice. He called it inspiration. He called it the Word of God. Perfectly fearless he stood on this platform, surrounded by thousands of wondering men, and said that in his soul he heard the utterances of the Most High. And if the whole world was arrayed against him, he would vindicate the righteousness of that Eternal Voice. What was that Voice? Was it not the Socratic counselor, the adviser whom the Athenian sage consulted in every emergency of his life? Was it not the Comforter, whom Jesus, while death stared him in the face, promised to send unto his sorrowing disciples? Was it not the Pentecostal Tongue of fire that descended in flames on the head of the apostles? Was it not the Law of the Spirit of Life about whom St. Paul spoke, when he taught with tremendous authority? Friends, when this stream of perennial inspiration entered into the roots of this great genius, and touched his powers and susceptibilities, he rose up, and in his rising hundreds rose, thousands rose, men rose, women rose, all rose to give glory unto God, and to proclaim peace and good will among men."

It is the fact of deep experience, however, that if you receive abundantly the spirit which Socrates had, if any lance of the Pentecostal flame enters your soul deeply, if you are completely and always in earnest, if you surrender utterly to the still, small voice, there will come to you such a sense of sin as can be appeased only by the sight of the cross. If you show me a soul on fire with devotion to the beat it knows; a spirit humble before God as the pub-

lican was when he beat upon his breast; a soul like that of which our Lord said: "He went down to his house justified." I will show you a soul that will be glad to see our Lord, and that will find no peace till it reaches that conception of Christianity which teaches that we are to be delivered not merely from the love of sin, but from the guilt of it also; and that when we are delivered from the love of it we are not thereby at all delivered from the guilt of it. Serious philosophy has asserted since the world began that the record of the past is irreversible, and that when we yield, no matter how affectionately, to God the record yet remains behind us. The more we love what God loves and hate what God hates, the more we shall loathe that record; so that the more thoroughly we yield to a Holy Spirit, of which Natural Theology teaches us, the more we shall perceive the need of an Atonement. The knowledge of a method of deliverance from the guilt of sin is the desire of all nations.

It is the frivolous loiterer in the vestibule of Natural Theology who thinks it is a sufficient house for time and eternity. I am anxious that you should study this vestibule so thoroughly as to convince yourselves that it is not a sufficient house, that it is a fragment, and that all serious yielding to God, as revealed in Nature, implies the necessity of a screen let down between us and our black past.

Let me ask, at this sacred point in my discussion, and on the very height of this long course of thought to which you have listened so patiently, whether in the domain of natural religion, when we yield to God utterly, a light comes into the soul that will enable us to tell what Scriptures are inspired? May we judge inspiration because ourselves possessed of something like inspiration? Keshub Chunder Sen thought this was the case. He developed what he believed to be a divine consciousness, and it was to him a touch-stone of all truth in the Vedas, in the Koran, in the Bible. Without objective evidence he thought he had some secret within him which could teach him what is inspired and what is not.

It is evident that even the Christian consciousness, developed within the spheres of our holy faith itself, cannot touch all the points of religious truth. A distinction must be made between the doctrines common to natural and revealed theology, and those peculiar to revealed. Many doctrines are common to both spheres; some are peculiar to revelation. How can I know by the Christian consciousness whether the doctrine of the Trinity is the truth or not? How can I know by the Christian consciousness whether the resurrection is a fact or not? How can I know by any witness of the Spirit whether the angels fell in heaven or not? How can I know whether our first parents fell or not, and whether there is a connection or not between the sin of our first parents and our present low estate? How can I know whether Christ appeared on earth, if I have only the witness of the consciousness within me? It may be that, by the Christian consciousness, I am qualified to affirm that the pure in heart, the peacemakers, and those who hunger and thirst for righteousness are blessed. The beatitudes may be understood in the depths of conscience; but the great historic facts attesting truths peculiar to revealed religion must be established by historic proof. The doctrines peculiar to revelation must be supported by both external and internal evidence; otherwise we have no right to receive them as the bases of religion. The Christian consciousness has no direct application to the truths not common to natural and revealed religion.

In the great and heroic ages, the severe truths of God's word have approved themselves to the Christian consciousness; in the weak and foppish ages they have not. No one age is deep or broad enough to touch all points of revealed truth. The Christian consciousness of no one age is a sufficient guide to religious truth. Many ages are not broad and deep enough to sound the abysses of revelation. Sometimes one aspect of truth has commended itself to the Christian consciousness and sometimes another, just as in the individual life we now feel deeply certain truths, and now others. The whole trend of the ages is not enough to measure the scope of revelation. While spiritual truth is spiritually discerned, there is a set of truths peculiar to revelation which we must take on the authority of revelation as supernaturally attested.

What is ordinarily called the Christian consciousness would say that God ought not to have permitted sin. He has permitted it. If asked previous to the creation, whether an infinitely Perfect Being would permit sin, I should answer No; but I find that an infinitely Perfect Being has permitted sin; therefore I know what assumes to be the Christian

consciousness has misled me on one point. It may do so on others. If you assure me that the Christian consciousness requires us to believe that there is a probation after death, and that if we do not believe this we do not cherish worthy ideas of God's eternal providence, I reply, that the same Christian consciousness, if unflinchingly interrogated, would tell me that God ought not to have permitted sin at all. If I am to follow the Christian consciousness, as it is often defined, I must assert that there is no evidence that the universe is under a good government. I may become a pessimist, and believe that this is the worst of all possible worlds, if I follow merely the latest conceit of culture, and affirm that my conception of what ought to be, should govern in every thing my conception of what Omniscience and Omnipotence ought to do in the creation of the world.

Let us become Christocentric in our studies and thus in our lives. Let us be humble in spite of being citizens of a modern age. Let us remember how cheap and frivolous our time is compared with many a century behind us. Let us, in spiritual things, sit at the feet of the Supreme Teacher of religious truth. The true Christian consciousness can be developed only while we lie where the beloved disciple did, in the bosom. In natural theology, Christ, as man at his climax, is the Way, the Truth, and the Life of Christ himself. He who lies in Christ's bosom, and he only, is fit to arrange the theology of the future.

Respectfully, E. M. CHESLEY.

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1884. SECOND QUARTER.

Lesson V.—MAY 4, 1884.

CHRISTIAN LOVE.

1 Cor. xiii. 1-13.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Vs. 11-13.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Love is the fulfilling of the law."—Romans xiii. 10.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

- THE LESSON. T. God's Love to Us.—John iii. 16; 1 John iii. 1; iv. 9, 10. W. Exhortations to Brotherly Love.—1 John iv. 7, 8, 11, 21. T. This Love an Evidence of Conversion.—1 John iii. 14. F. Proofs of Love.—1 John iii. 17-21. S. Love is a Fruit of the Spirit.—Gal. v. 22; Col. i. 8. S. Brotherly Love Should Abound.—Phil. i. 19; 1 Thess. iii. 12.

REFERENCE.—Verse (1) 2 Cor. xii. 4; 1 Pet. iv. 8. (2) Ch. xiv. 1; Matt. xvii. 20; Matt. xxi. 19. (3) Matt. vi. 1, 2; Matt. vii. 22, 23. (4) Prov. x. 12; James iii. 16; Col. ii. 18. (5) Ch. x. 24; Prov. xiv. 17. (6) Rom. i. 32. (7) Rom. xv. 1; Psa. cxix. 66; Rom. viii. 24; Job xiii. 15. (8) Ch. vii. 2. (10) John iii. 2. (12) 2 Cor. iii. 18.

ANALYSIS.—I. Love, the Best Gift, Vs. 1-3. II. Love Described, Vs. 4-7. III. Love is Permanent, Vs. 8-13.

QUESTIONS.—Vs. 1-3.—What is meant by charity in this lesson? What love is here discussed? What is meant by tongues? What is meant by sounding brass? By tinkling cymbal? Are these figures of something noble, or insignificant?

Vs. 4-7.—How many qualities of love are mentioned? How many in a negative form? Mention them. How many in a positive form? Name them. Is love quick to resent injuries? What is meant by envyeth not? By vaunteth not itself? By is not puffed up? By doth not behave unseemly? What phrase shows the unselfishness of love? Does this love make one weak, or strong? What difference is there between it and the world's spirit?

Vs. 8-13.—What is said about love's stay with us? What gifts pass away? Do we need these temporary gifts? Were they perfect while they were here? What is a childish thing in comparison with love? How is our imperfect knowledge illustrated in verse 12? Where shall we have perfect knowledge? What three graces abide with us? Application.—All our gifts are nothing without love; but with love they may do large service. Love is greater than good deeds, and gives them all their light and value. When love fills the heart the fountain is made pure, and our lives will be sweet and noble.

After leaving the question of conscience, the apostle goes on in the ninth chapter to discuss the duty of Christians to give for the support of the gospel. The tenth chapter is occupied with directions covering the demeanor of Christians towards their heathen neighbors. In the eleventh chapter, matters of public worship are taken up, particular attention being given to the Lord's Supper, in the celebration of which there had been no little disorder. Then, since in the Corinthian Church much had been made of gifts, and no little dissension had arisen concerning the comparative importance of these, the apostle goes on in the twelfth chapter

to discuss this whole question of gifts, and the relation of these to one another and the efficiency of the church. The twelfth chapter is really an introduction to the thirteenth, and should be so read. The apostle aims, evidently, to show that while gifts are good in their way, there is something infinitely better, and without which the gifts themselves are worthless. Certain spiritual gifts to the early church, such as tongues, prophecy, and miracles, were temporary, because needed only to establish Christianity. But faith, hope, and love are permanent, because always needed. The apostle shows that though less dazzling, they, and especially love, are the greatest of all gifts. This lesson gives the portrait of Christ.

NOTES.—Vs. 1.—Charity is love through all this lesson—Christian love. Not here Christ's love to us, but that love dwelling in and controlling us. Tongues: refers to the gift of speaking different languages, conferred at Pentecost. This gift was greatly prized. Angels: though I could speak divine language, as well as human. Sounding brass: a metal giving out a harsh, discordant sound. Tinkling: clanging. Cymbal: a rude, unmelodious musical instrument.

Vs. 2.—Gift of prophecy: a higher gift than tongues, though not so showy. The gift of interpreting God's will, and preaching. Mysteries and knowledge: prophecy in the highest degree. The secrets of God's mind. Love is better than learning. Faith, etc.: love is better than power to work miracles.

Vs. 3.—Bestow . . . goods: love is better than charity. Body to be burned: love is better than martyrdom.

Vs. 4-7.—Fifteen qualities of love are given—eight negative, and seven positive. Suffers long: (pos.) is slow to resent injuries. Is kind: (pos.) is gentle, courteous. Envieth not: (neg.) is willing to see others more prosperous, honored, praised. Vaunteth not: (neg.) is not proud, boastful. Not puffed up: (neg.) not conceited, vain. Unseemly: (neg.) is not arrogant, discourteous, inconsiderate of others. Seeketh not her own: (neg.) is not selfish. Not easily provoked: (neg.) not quick tempered, fiery, sensitive. Thus far we have had eight external manifestations of love.

But love controls the inside also. Thinketh no evil: (neg.) love purifies the thoughts: Hence it makes our words and acts pure. Rejoiceth not in iniquity: (neg.) is never glad to hear evil of others. Rejoiceth in the truth: (pos.) is glad over truth's triumph. Beareth all things: (pos.) no blow in return. Bears insults, hardships, injustice. Believeth all things: (pos.) love is confiding and trustful. Hopeth all things: (pos.) hopes for the best in men, and tries to see good in them. Endureth all things: (pos.) bears up under vexations and trials.

Vs. 8.—Never faileth: the more dazzling supernatural gifts of prophecy, tongues, and knowledge, cease. With a revelation in the New Testament, as well as the Old, we don't need prophecies, etc. But love remains.

Vs. 9.—Know in part: unlike love, these other gifts were partial and incomplete.

Vs. 11.—When I was a child: our highest knowledge here is but a child's knowledge; hence we shouldn't make it our great end. Compared with love it is a childish thing.

Vs. 12.—Glass: mirror made of polished steel. Darkly: imperfectly. Even in the mirror of God's Word, some things are seen but dimly. But love is complete.

Vs. 13.—Abideth: while dazzling gifts pass away, the needed graces remain.

The Lesson Story for the little ones.

By charity, Paul does not simply mean giving away money, but love. Love to Jesus first of all; if our heart is full of his love, we will love one another. It is no matter how many Golden Texts or Bible verses you can repeat, if you have not love. If you give all your money to the poor, or even give yourself up to die, it is of no use unless done from love. Love will make you kind, glad when others do right, and sorry when they do wrong. Love will keep you from getting angry easily, and help you to bear with a great deal of bad temper from others. You will hope they will soon learn to do better, and you will not be willing to believe evil tales against them. Love does not want the best of everything, but would rather some one else had the nicest. Thus love helps you to behave with true politeness. Love will last forever; it is what makes heaven so joyous, and if we would keep Paul's rule, our lives here would be almost as happy as if in heaven.—Primary Quarterly.

Bouths' Department.

Original and Selected. Bible Enigma.

No. 274.

Find the names here referred to and their initials are a prayer offered by King David, and suitable for any one:

- 1. A place where Paul tarried on his way to Rome. 2. A place mentioned but twice in Scripture. 3. One of David's valiant men. 4. A city of the priests, mentioned in Joshua. 5. A city in the mountainous district of Judah. 6. One of the dukes of Edom. 7. A color mentioned in the Bible. 8. One of the fortified cities in the land of Gabaath. 9. The Canaanite king of Bezek. 10. A river mentioned in Daniel. 11. A general of Judas Maccabeus. 12. One of the two capital cities of Bashan. 13. One of the six sons of Simeon. 14. A daughter of Hosea. 15. A keeper of camels, in the reign of David. 16. One of the five kings of the Midianites. 17. An encampment of the Israelites.

CURIQUS QUESTIONS.

No. 228.

- 1. A live minister of the Gospel, neither tall nor short, whose name consists of 12 letters. 2. Although he is not disposed to move frequently yet he is necessarily a moving person. 3. One of his predecessors was stoned to death. 4. Transpose his name and it becomes a charm. 5. Behead him and he becomes part of a bridge. 6. Behead and curtail him and he is part of a circle. 7. His given name is a fowl preceding 8. In the third month of the year he is supreme. Who is he?

No. 229.

Form a word square of the following described words:

- 1. A fruit very soft when ripe. 2. One of the quarters of the earth. 3. A supposed alkaloid obtained from dragon's blood. 4. A pendant ornament. 5. To each one. 6. Leased to another.

No. 230.

The beginning of eternity, The end of time and space, The beginning of every end, The end of every place.

No. 231.

- Transpositions. 1. Change a dog to a cow by four intervening words, a letter at a time. 2. Change a face to a foot by three intervening words, in the same way.

Find answers to the above—write them down—and see how they agree with the answers to be given next week.

Answer to Bible Enigma.

No. 273.

Pharaoh, Eliphaz, Agur, Cracknels, Elam.

PEACE.

ANSWERS TO CURIQUS QUESTIONS.

No. 224.

- 1. Palm. 2. Spar. 3. Date. 4. Lime.

No. 225.

Spain, pain; Flax, lax; Table, able; Cape, ape.

No. 226.

Shout, South; Seat, East, Teas; Thorn, North; Stew, West.

No. 227.

Inverted Pyramid. COMPRESSION CELESTIAL PORTION AT HEOL YE W E

A boy twelve years old was the important witness in a lawsuit. One of the lawyers, after cross-questioning him severely, said: "Your father has been talking to you and telling you how to testify, hasn't he?" "Yes," said the boy. "Now," said the lawyer, "just tell us how your father told you to testify." "Well," said the boy, modestly "father told me the lawyers would try and tangle me in my testimony; but if I would just be careful and tell the truth, I could tell the same thing every time."

Dream not thy life away; Each setting sun Should mark new victories gained, Fresh labors done.

Though grief, though loss be thine, With patience wait; Soon, soon thy feet shall reach His glory-gate.

Yes, wait, my soul, on God; Heaven waits on thee; And all who wait on him His face shall see.

Mr. Gladstone, in response to the request of the Bangor Liberal Club for a piece of timber to be utilized in framing his portrait, has forwarded a portion of a lime tree which he felled in Hawarden Park.

Temperance.

How can a Christian Advocate the practice of Moderate Drinking?

As this question is on my mind, will you not follow me for a little as I try to set before you the evils of this custom? My desire is to show you the curse of the habit, and the manifold evils which accompany it.

Very much of the responsibility connected with the intemperance of our land lies with those who were never drunk in their lives.

We have the opinions of the best of the medical faculty of this as well as other countries, that even the moderate use of alcoholic stimulants is injurious to health. Doctor Gordon, of London, stated before the Parliamentary Committee on Drunkenness that while pursuing his studies at Edinburgh he had occasion to open a great many bodies of persons who had died of various diseases, and many had been reputed for their moral and religious habits. In all these cases there was more or less affection of the liver, and he attributed it to the fact that they were known to be in the habit of habitually drinking moderately of intoxicating liquors. Another doctor, Andrew Coombe says: "I regard even the temperate use of wines, when not required by the state of the constitution, as always more or less injurious." Now, this is medical authority as to its use moderately. If, then, professional men that have made this a study pronounce their use as injurious to health, if they are correct does not the moderate user commit a sin in doing that which shortens life? And it is an authenticated fact that moderate drinking predisposes to disease.

And yet can Christians drink moderately and feel that they are right in God's sight? If not, then, my Christian brother, resolve at once to shun everything that may prove an occasion of sin. He that would be safe must avoid the very appearance of evil. How can a Christian pray, "Lead us not into temptation," unless he is determined by God's help not to run into it? "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate," saith the Lord, "and touch not the unclean thing."

Learning to Love Opium.

ARREST OF THREE DROWZY YOUNG GIRLS IN A SEVENTH WARD LAUNDRY.

The New York Herald says: "Complaints that the Chinese laundries in the Seventh ward are frequented by young girls has often been made of late by the mothers whose daughters are in the daily habit of visiting such places. It was said that the girls were given opium to smoke, and that they often returned home suffering from the after effects of the drug. For several days past Detective Shalvey has been detailed to 'shadow' the suspected 'joints.' He was watching the laundry of Lee Young, at No. 13 Canal Street, yesterday afternoon, when he saw three young girls enter. It was then about one o'clock. The detective waited an hour before going into the shop. He found Lee Young wide awake, but his visitors were lying drowsily on a bed in a back room. All of the inmates were arrested and arraigned before Justice White at the Essex Market Police Court.

The girls gave the names of Annie Conklin, thirteen years old; Bridget Connelly, seventeen years old, and Sarah Sullivan, fourteen years old. Bridget Connelly said she was married. She and her companions pleaded that they went to the laundry solely to get something to eat. They said the Chinaman was 'awful good' to them; he cooked chops and made coffee for them whenever they called. The plea of not guilty was entered by Lee Young. The Court was informed by the police that evidence could be procured to prove that the viands furnished under such circumstances were cooked in a weak solution of opium, and were given to those who seek to acquire a taste for the opiate. The Justice said he was not ready to immediately investigate the case, and remanded the prisoners.