THE PERFECTED LIFE. The Greatest Need of the World.

God is all for quality; man is for quantity. But the immediate need of the world at this moment is not more of us, but, if I may use the expression, a better brand of us. To secure ten men of an improved type would be better than if we had ten thousand more of the average Christians distributed all over the world. There is such a thing in the evangelistic sense as winning the whole world and losing our own soul. And the first consideration is our own life-our own spiritual relations to God-our own likeness to Christ. And I am anxious, briefly, to look at the right and the wrong way of becoming like Christ -of becoming better men: the right and the wrong way of sanctification.

Fruitless Effort.

One of the futile methods of sanctifying ourselves is trying; effort-struggleagonizing. I suppose you have all tried that, and I appeal to your own life when I ask if it has not failed. Crossing the Atlantic, the Etruria in which I was sailing, suddenly stopped in mid-ocean—something had suddenly broken down. There were a thousand people on board that ship. Do you think we could have made it go on if we had all gathered together and pushed against the sides or against the masts? When a man hopes to sanctity himself by trying, he is like a man trying to make the A Special Line of Corset Covers, boat go that carries him by pushing it—he is like a man drowning in the water and trying to save himself by pulling the hair of his own head. It is impossible. Christ . held that mode of sanctification almost to ridicule when he said: "Which of you by taking thought can add a cubit to his stature?" Put down that method forever as

Another man says: "That is not my way. I have given up that. Trying has its place, but that is not where it comes in. My method is to concentrate on some single sin, and to work away upon that out? "We all, with unveiled face, reuntil I have got rid of it." Now, in the flecting in a mirror the character of the first place, life is too short for that process | Lord, are changed into the same image to succeed. Their name is legion. In the from character to character." second place, that leaves the rest of the nature for a long time untouched. In the third place, it does not touch the seed or root of the disease. If you dam up a and you will be changed in spite of your-stream at one place, it will simply over-self, and unknown to yourself, into the flow higher up. And for a fourth reason: Religion does not consist in negativesin stopping this sin and stopping that principle upon which this is based. In

It is like a wax-flower as compared with a that he has a good mother. I see reflected

of blank paper and make columns for the days of the week, and then put down a list of the virtues with spaces against each great many rules, and determine to live by rule. That is how Franklin did; and I suppose that many men in this day could tell how they had hung up in their bedroom, or laid away in their secret drawers, the rules they had drawn up for themselves. Again I appeal to life. You bear me witness that that method failed. And it failed for very matter of-fact reasons- are influenced and organically changed by likely because you forgot the rules. As a matter of fact, that is a false method of sanctification, and, like all the others, must | the people and the things that surround

perfectly human, perfectly natural, perfectly ignorant, and perfectly tutile. I do not say we must abandon them; but they in their opinions, in their ways of looking are futile to accomplish the real end that at things, that they were practically one.

The More Excellent Way.

Now, what is the true method? There is one method which is as simple and effectual as the others are complicated and useless. It is laid down in a single verse in the Bible; and it is so practical that any man can apply it to his own life, and as certain in its action as a law of Nature. It is a case of cause and effect. The verse I refer to is in 2nd Corinthians; and I take it from the immensely improved text in this instance of the Revised Version-the 18th verse of the 3d chapter of 2d Corin- largely made up of the same qualities and thians: "We all, with unveiled face, reflecting in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Lord, the Spirit."

Observe: "We are changed." The mistake we have been making is that we have been trying to change ourselves. That is not possible. We are changed into the same image. Now, it we are to get the benefit of the relief that these words ought to give to the man who has been spending half his nights and half his life in a frenzied struggle for holiness without having fulfilled the necessary conditions, let us carefully mark the condition demanded. For that condition being fulfilled, we are infallibly changed into the same image. The condition is that we reflect in a mirror the glory of Christ. That condition I shall refer to in a moment; but one word requires an explanation in passing. "Reflecting in a mirror the glory of the Lord." What is the glory of the Lord? The word "glory" suggests effulgence—radiance. It recalls the hallo that the old masters delighted to paint around the heads of their saints and Ecce Homos. But this is all material. What does that halo, that radiance, symbolize? It symbolizes the most radiant and beautiful thing in man, as in the Man Christ Jesus; and that is, character. Character. The glory of Christ is in character. I make a challenge. Does any man know anything more glorious in have lived at that time man or in God than character? God's was his character-Himself. Do not be misled by the vagueness of that word "glory" in modern usage. We lose the force of it because we do not employ the word in current speech. When it is in your mind, substitute "character" for "glory." "We all, with unveiled face, reflecting in a mirror the character of Christ, are changed into the same image from character to character"-from the character a little better to the character a little better still, the character getting nobler and nobler by slight and imperceptible degrees. Now, read that verse once more with all these meanings brought

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How to get the character: Stand in Christ's presence and mirror His character, self, and unknown to yourself, into the same image from character to character. Every man is a reflector. That is the Another man says: "Very well; I am not trying to stop sins in succession; but I am trying to copy the character of Christ, bit by hit point by point into my life." man. He has reflected in his very voice The difficulty about that method is, that it his country. I ask him another question, is mechanical. It makes an overbalanced and another, and another, and I see refleclife; and there is always the mark of the tions flit over the mirror from all points of tool about such a life-about such a nature. the compass. I find out in five minutes in a mirror that he has been reading Her-There is another method. I suppose you bert Spencer, and Huxley, and Darwin; have tried it. I have. It is to get a book and as I go on watching him as he stands and talks to me, his whole life is reflected back from it. I see the kind of set he has been living in-the kind of companions he for marks, and then tollow it up with a has had. He cannot help reflecting. He cannot help himself showing the environment in which he has lived—the influences that have played around him. As Tennyson says: "I am a part of all that I have met." Now, we become like those whom we habitually reflect. I could prove from science that that applies even to the physical framework of animals-that they the environment in whih they live. We all know how every man is influenced by him. I remember two fellow-students who All these methods that I have named are lived for eight years together, and by the end of that time they had become so like one another in their methods of thinking, When you asked a question it was immaterial to which you addressed it, and when you made a remark you knew exactly the mpression it would make on both of them. They had been changed into the same image. There was a savor of Jonathan about David, and a savor of David about Jonathan. You sometimes see husband and wife, after a halt century of fellowship, changed entirely into the same image. They have gone on reflecting one another so often—without trying, and perhaps even trying to prevent it—that they have become characteristics. That is the grand doctrine of influence-that we become like those whom we habitually associate with.

A Personal Companionship. What, then, is the practical lesson? It is obvious. Make Christ your most constant companion. Be more under His influence than under any other influence. Five minutes spent in the companionship of Christ every morning—ay, two minutes, if it is face to face and heart to heart-will change the whole day, will make every thought and feeling different, will enable you to do things for His sake that you would not have done for your own sake, or for any one's sake. And the supreme and the sole secret of a sanctified nature and a Christlike character and life, is to be ever with Christ and reflecting Him-catching His nature, His mind and spirit, insensibly and unconsciously, by mere proximity and con-

You say, "How can a man make Christ, the absent Christ, his most constant companion?" Why; friendship is a spiritual thing. Think over it for a moment, and merely a statement of the doctrine of the you will find that your friend influences you just about as much in his absence as when he is with you. Christ might have influenced us more, perhaps, if He had been here, and yet I do not know. It would have been an ineffable experience to

"I think when I read that sweet story of old, He took little children like lambs to His fold, I should like to have been with him then.

"I wish that His hand had been laid on my head, That His arms had been thrown around me; And that I had seen His kind look when He said 'Let the little ones come unto Me.'"

And yet, if Christ were to come into the world again, few of us probably would ever have a chance of seeing Him. I have never seen my own Queen in our little country of Britain. There are millions of her subjects who have never seen her. And there would be thousands of the subjects of

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the Lord Jesus who could never get within speaking distance of Him it he came to the world now. We remember He said: "It is expedient for you (not for Me) that I go away;" because by going away He could really be nearer to us than He would have been if He had stayed here. It would have been geographically and physically impossible for most of us to have been influenced by His person had He remained. And so our communion with Him is a spiritual companionship; but not different from most companionships, which, when you press them down to the roots you will find to be essentially spiritual.

The Spiritual Character of True Friendship. All friendship, all love, human aud Divine. is spiritual. So that it is no difficulty in reflecting the character of Christ that we have never been in visible contact with Him. He does not appeal to the eye; He appeals to the soul: and is reflected not from the body, but from the soul. The thing you love in a friend is not the thing you see. I know of a very beautiful character-one of the loveliest which had ever bloomed on this earth. It was the character of a young girl. She always wore about her neck a little locket, but nobody was allowed to open it. None of her companions ever knew what it contained, until one day she was laid down with a dangerous illness, when one of them was granted permission to look into the locket; and she saw written there: "Whom having not seen I love." That was the secret of her beautitul life. She had been changed into the same image.

Let me say a word or two about the effects which necessarily must follow from this contact, or tellowship, with Christ. I need not quote the texts upon the subject the texts about abiding in Christ-"He that abideth in Him sinneth not." You cannot sin when you are standing in front of Christ. You simply cannot do it. "Whosoever committeth sin hath not seen Him, neither known Him." Sin is abashed and disappears in the presence of Christ. Again: "Il ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Think of that! That is another inevitable consequence. And there is yet another. "He that abideth in Me, the same bringeth forth much fruit." Sinlessness—answered prayer—much fruit. But in addition to these things, see how many of the highest Christian virtues and experiences necessarily flow from the assumption of that attitude toward Christ. For instance, the moment you assume that relation to Christ you begin to know what the child-spirit is. You stand before Christ, and He becomes your teacher, and you in-His company. You hear sermons about the nine different kinds of faith-discinctions drawn between the right kind of faith and the wrong-and sermons telling you how to get faith. So far as I can see, there is only one way in which faith is got and it is the same in the religious world as it is know you, and neither more nor less; and you get to trust me just as you get to know me. I do not trust you as a stranger. But as I come in contact with you, and law. watch you, and live with you, I find out that you are trustworthy, and I come to trust myself to you, and to lean upon you. But I do not do that to a stranger.

The way to trust Christ is to know Christ. You cannot help trusting Him then. You are changed. By knowing Him faith is begotten in you, as cause and effect. To trust Him without knowing Him as thousands do, is not faith, but credulity. I believe a great deal of prayer for faith is thrown away. What we should pray for is that we may be able to fulfil the condition, and when we have fulfilled the condition the faith necessarily follows. The way, therefore, to increase our faith is to increase our intimacy with Christ. We know Him.

And then another immediate effect of this way of sanctitying the character is the tranquility that it brings over the Christian lite. How disturbed and distressed and give that over into Christ's care-the moment you see that you are being changedthat anxiety passes away. You see that it must follow by an inevitable process and by a natural law if you fulfil the simple condition; so that peace is the reward of that life and fellowship with Christ. Peace is not a thing that comes down solid, as it were, and is fitted somehow into a man's nature. We have very gross conceptions of peace, joy, and other Christian experiences; but they are all simply effects of causes. We fulfil the condition; we cannot help the experiences following. I have spoken about peace, but how about joy? In the 15th of John you will see when Christ gave His disciples the Parable of the Vine, He said: "I will tell you why I have told you that parable. It is that your joy might be full." Did you ever notice space as a fine illustration. It was not great genius, and this was his last work; indwelling Christ. It was that, but it was more. "These words have I spoken unto we have faith, we have peace, we have joy. Many other things follow. A man's usefulness depends to a large extent upon his fellowship with Christ. This is obvious. Only Christ can influence the world; but all that the world sees of Christ is what it sees of you and me. Christ said: "The world seeth Me no more, but ye see Me." You see Him, and standing in front of Him, reflect him, and the world sees the reflection. It cannot see Him. So that a Christian's usefulne is de-

pends solely upon that relationship. Now, I have only pointed out a few of the things that follow from the standing before Christ-from abiding in Christ. You will find if you run over the texts about abiding in Christ, many other things will suggest themselves in the same rela-tion. Almost everything in Christian ex-

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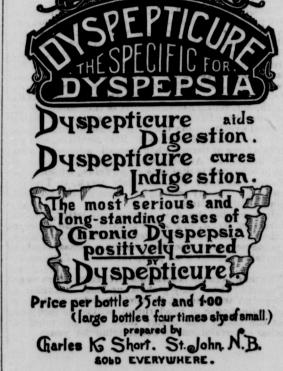
perience and character follows, and follows poor, and lived in a small garret. This necessarily, from standing before Christ and garret was his workshop, his studio, and reflecting His character. But the supreme his bedroom. He had this statue almost consummation is that we are changed into finished in clay, when one night a frost the same image, "even as by the Lord the suddenly fell over Paris. The sculptor lay Spirit." That is to say, that in some way, on his bed, with the statue before him in unknown to us, but possibly not more mysterious than the doctrine of personal chill air came down upon him, he saw that influence, we are changed into the image if the cold got more intense the water in

An Absolute Verity. This method cannot fail. I am not set- bed-clothes reverently upon the statue. In stinctively become docile. Then you learn ting before you an opinion or a theory; the morning when his friends came in they friend would call you 'lucky," also to become charitable and tolerant; be- but this is a certainly successful means of found the old sculptor dead; but the image cause you are learning of Him, and He is sanctification. "We all, with unveiled face, was saved! That is the greatest thing "meek and lowly in heart," and you catch reflecting in a mirror the glory of Christ about you. Preserve that at any cost—the that spirit. That is a bit of His character (the character of Christ) assuredly—with- image into which you are being changed being reflected into yours. Instead of being out any miscarriage—without any possi- by the unseen Sculptor, who is every mobility of miscarriage-are changed into ment that you are in His presence working ble and have the mind of a little child. I the same image." It is an immense thing at that holy task. The work of creation is think, further, the only way of learning what faith is, is to know Christ and be in that. Emerson says; "The hero is the the unfinished earth; and the Spirit of God man who is immovably centred." Get which brooded upon the waters thousands immovably centred in that doctrine of sanc- of years ago, is busy now creating men, tification. Do not be carried away by the within these commonplace lives of ours, in hundred and one theories of sanctification | the image of God. that are floating about in the religious literature of the country at the present time; but go to the bottom of the thing for yourin the world of men and women. I learn selt, and see the rationale of it for yourto trust you, my brother, just as I get to self, and you will come to see that it is a matter of cause and effect, and that if you will fulfil the condition laid down by Christ, the effect must tollow by a natural

what we are here for. That is what we are elected for. Not to be saved, in the common acceptation, but "whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate to be contormed to the image of His Son." Not merely to be saved, but to be conformed to the image of His Son. Conserve that principle. And as we must spend time in cultivating our earthly friendships it we are to have their blessings, so we must spend time in cultivating the fellowship and companionship of Christ. And there is nothing so much worth taking into our lives as a profounder sense of what is to be had by living in communion with Christ, and by getting near to Him. It will matter much it we take away with us some of the trust Him more and more the better we thoughts about theology, and some of the new light that has been shed upon the text of Scripture; it will matter infinitely more if our fellowship with the Lord Jesus | GOOD WALPEQUE OYSTERS. become a little closer, and our theory of holy living a little more rational. And anxious Christian people are about their then as we go forth, men will take know-growth in grace! Now, the moment you ledge of us, that we have been with Jesus, and as we reflect Him upon them, they will begin to be changed into the same image.

The Power of the Christ-Life. It seems to me the preaching is of infinitely smaller account than the life which mirrors Christ. That is bound to tell; without speech or language-like the voices of the stars. It throws out its impressions upon every side. The one simple thing we have to do is to be there-in the right relation; to go through life hand in hand with Him; to have Him in the room 1,000 Bbls. Fresh Raked P. E. I. OYSTERS. with us, and keeping us company wherever we go; to depend upon Him and lean upon Him, and so have His life reflected in the fullness of its beauty and perfection into

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