



SERMON.

The Heroic Life.

BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

"For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again."—Luke 5: 29-34.

All the discourses of Jesus are the words of God to our soul, whether they convey instruction, warning, rebuke, invitation, or consolation. Yet have I known professors who would fain rend their Master's vesture that they might have only the softest part of it to be a pillow for their idle heads. "That," they say, "was a gospel sermon, sweet food for our souls," because it happened to tell of what Christ has done for us; but on the next occasion they cry out, "That was not a gospel sermon; it was legal; it laid a burden upon our shoulders," because it dared to tell of what Christ has commanded us to do for him. Sinners, it seems to me, accept Christ for a servant rather than for a Master. Feeling certain that you are not of that order of religious cavillers, but that you will accept anything that comes from Christ, I am glad to have

A Practical Subject.

We live under a spirit whose law is perfection, and therefore a little fault causes us much self-condemnation. We judge ourselves by a severe rule than we would apply to others; for our privileges and responsibilities are exceptionally great. I allow in other men what I would denounce in myself. I could approve in some men actions which to me also would be lawful but would not be expedient, upon the higher rule of glorifying God in all things. When I have heard of certain deeds of unconverted and unenlightened men I have excused them, saying, "Poor souls, considering who they were, and where they were, their conduct is not so heavily to be blamed;" and yet if I had behaved one-half as badly there would have been rebellion and presumption in the deed.

If you are what you profess to be, my brethren, more is expected from you than from any other men beneath the sun, and therefore I shall throw aside all hesitancy in setting before you a supreme standard, and asking of you what we never can get from sinners, nor from men of the world. Know yet not that your Lord has said, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven?"

I. Our first observation in plunging into our discourse is this. Much that is naturally good

May Fall Far Short

of Christian character. Do not make the mistake of saying that moral excellence is not good. Some have broadly declared that there is no good thing in an unconverted man; but this is scarcely true. It will generally be so understood that its meaning will be false, and that it is a great pity; we must not utter falsehood in order to honor God; there is a great deal of good—good under certain senses and aspects of the term "good"—in many unconverted people. Many who are total strangers to the grace of God yet exhibit sparkling forms of the human virtues in integrity, generosity, kindness, courage, self-sacrifice and patience. I could wish that some who call themselves Christians were in certain respects as good as others whom I know of who have never borne the Christian name. It is always right to speak the truth, and truth obliges me to say as much as this.

Observe the three things mentioned in the text against which there is no law, but of which much is to be spoken in commendation. These acts are good, but they do not come up to

Christ's Standard.

The first mentioned is, "If ye love them which love you." Thousands have never reached so high as this standard. "If ye love them which love you." But even if we reach as high as that it is by no means a great attainment: is it? Our Lord says that sinners also love those that love them. Grace is not needed to make a man the loving husband of a tender wife; grace is not needed to make affectionate sons and daughters; we see them all around us. I am sure it does not require grace in the hearts of the bulk of you to make you feel kindly towards those who treat you in a friendly manner; "sinners also love those that love them." You have all come as far as that, and such feeling is good, the more of it the better; yet it is not up to the mark of Christ's teaching if it stands alone. Can you love those who have belied your character, who have done the best they can to ruin you, and who will do the same again? Can you feel towards them an earnest desire for their present and eternal welfare? If you could do them good would you delight to do it, and repeat the deed until you had made them too happy to be malicious, too much indebted to continue at enmity? This would be glorious indeed.

God-Likeness.

This is high, and I think I hear some one say, "I cannot attain unto it; I can love those that love me, but loving those that hate me is another business; I shall have to look at the matter two or three times before I attempt it." I dare say you will, my friend, and hence it is that it needs the work of God Himself to make us Christians. Godliness is Godlikeness, and this is not easy to attain. The next thing, in the verses before us, is grateful return. "If ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye?" It is a very right thing that it persons have served us we should endeavor to repay the benefit. By common consent, "one good turn deserves an-

other." It is certainly a horrible thing that men should be ungrateful; but yet supposing that you, dear hearer, are grateful, and have lately taken special pains to do good to one who a lifetime was good to you, what thank have you? You have done what you ought to have done, and no more; you have paid an old debt, as every honest man should do, but this does not prove you to be a Christian, for Christianity includes this and rises above it, like an Alp above the surrounding plain.

Followers of Jesus are called upon to do good to those who have done them harm. You know of the old saying, evil for good is devil-like, evil for evil is beast-like, good for good is man-like, good for evil is God-like. Rise you to that God-like point. If a man has taken the bread out of your mouth, seize the first opportunity to help him to a livelihood. If he has bespattered you, be ready to forgive him, but say not a word against him. Watch for a time, when by great kindness, you may heap coals of fire on his head. "Hard teaching," says one, "I know it is, and harder doing, but it is blessed doing. It is sweet to render good for ill! There is a self-conquest about it which ennobles the soul more than the conquest of an empire; there is a getting near to Christ in such actions that is more of heaven than all beside."

Neighborly Help.

Again, you note in the thirty-fourth verse that mention is made of helping others in a neighborly way with the expectation of their returning the friendly deed. "If ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye?" Temporary help is often rendered in the expectation that, if ever we are in the same need, we shall only need to ask, and receive like aid. I help you and you help me—a very popular thing to do, and the more of such brotherly and neighborly co-operation the better, but still there is nothing so very virtuous in it. "What thank have ye, for sinners also lend to sinners to receive as much again." You as a Christian are to rise to something higher than this—namely, to be ready to help without the expectation of being helped again, ready to aid those who, you are certain, could not help you; who are too poor even to come to your rescue; ay, and ready to help those who would not help you if they could, who may even return your kindness with words of falsehood and acts of unkindness. Can you rise to this? for this is to be a Christian, this is to be like your heavenly Father.

Thus, brethren, I think I have shown you that there are certain good things in the world which, do not reach to

The Standard of Christian Virtue.

This holds good of all religious actions. You go to the house of God; so do the heathens go to the house of their god. You spend certain times in prayer; so do the Mahomedans. You are very devout; so are Parsees. You are known to be a religious man; so were a great many who have turned out to be rogues. You are a deacon, or other church officer; yes, so were certain bank directors, who were none the more honest for that. But you are a preacher, yes, and so was Judas, who hanged himself, and so went to his own place. Religious acts count for nothing unless there is a true heart at the back of them. These things ought we to have done, but if we leave heart work undone nothing is done.

Oh, it shames me when I sit down and look over my life and enquire, "Is this a life a Christian ought to live?" Does not the same question arise in your minds? Do you not feel in many points that even unconverted men have excelled you? Do you not know some persons who are no Christians who are, nevertheless, more patient than you in the endurance of pain? Do you not know unbelievers who are generous to a high degree, and show much of self-sacrifice in helping their poor neighbors? Do you not know men whose devotion to science is greater than your devotion to Christ? What manner of person ought I to be, when those who do not profess to know the mysteries of everlasting love rise to such courage in battle, such endurance in pushing over seas of ice? If even a test like this staggers me, and I say it is a hard lesson, where, where must I be in the sight of God, who sees all my failures?

Might be Called Heroic.

To illustrate this I will confine myself to the gospel according to Luke. In the passage that we have been reading we have evidently a form of virtue which is quite out of the ordinary range of men's thoughts. It concerns love. "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you." In the point of love, kindness, consideration for men's needs, and desire to do good, the Christian life is to rise above every other, till it becomes sublime. Heathen moralists recommend kindness, but they did not suggest its being lavished upon enemies. I have been somewhat amused by the caution of Cicero. He says, "Kindness must not be shown to a youth, nor to an old man; not to the aged, because he is likely to die before he can have occasion to repay you the benefit; and not to the young man, for he is sure to forget it." Those of us who are middle-aged may value the orator's generosity as we like, but we may reflect that he only recommends its exercise towards us because we are likely to be good debtors, and pay back what we receive, perhaps, with interest. That gentle laugh which ripples over the congregation is the best refutation of such barbaled selfishness. Our Lord bids us seek no reward from men, and he assures us then a greater

Reward Will Come.

Next, read Luke 9: 54, 55, and you will see that the Christian is to rise above human passion in the matter of gentleness. A Christian should be ready to give way; he should be quiet, peaceable, gentle. In trying to do good, he wishes to bless certain people, and they refuse to hear him, let him not grow indignant and de-

nounce the offenders, but let him change the scene and carry his message to those who perhaps are hungering for it. He may go round again very shortly to those who repulsed him and find them in a better mind. Be gentle, brother; soft words are hard to sinners. They refused you at first, try them again; at any rate, be not provoked, for then they will have conquered you.

The true believer is to be willing to bear reproach; ay, and to bear much more than reproach, as saints of God have done time out of mind. So far from flinching from suffering, we are not even to give it a thought as to how we shall speak if we are brought before kings and rulers, for a part of the Christian's heroism is to lie in his

Calm Self-Possession.

The man who is so gentle that if men will not listen to him he goes elsewhere, is so steadfast that he cannot be silenced; bold as a lion he stands before his accusers, and he is not troubled as to how he shall put his words together, for he relies upon the indwelling Spirit.

See how far the true believer is lifted up above this world, as you turn to Luke 12: 22, where the Lord bids us cultivate a holy ease of heart as to all temporal things. The rich man finds his wealth in his bursting barns, but the believer finds his treasure in the all-sufficiency of God. The Saviour says, "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after."

Another point in which Christian heroism is seen is in humility and in delight in service. A Christian man is to be one who is ready to do anything for the good of others, however lowly the service. He will be a door-keeper in the house of the Lord, if he may but

Serve His Brother

and glorify his Master. "Where are these Christian people?" asks a hearer. "Where are these good and humble people? I cannot find them." Are you not one of them yourself? If you are not, make the confession, and go before God and ask him to set you right, and when you are of a lowly, loving spirit yourself you will find others of a like mind. I must admit that they are not easy to come at, but when you are meek and lowly you will find them, on the principle that like draws to like, and birds of a feather flock together.

The next verse of this seventeenth chapter shows us that Christians are to be men of service. The Lord Jesus Christ would not have us always be asking, "How can I be happy? How can I obtain spiritual enjoyment? There is more joy in plunging your arm up to the elbow in the mire to find a jewel for Christ than in washing one's idle hands with the scented soap of respectable propriety. Oh, to get clean away from all idea of self-seeking in religion. We are first of all saved by grace like drowning mariners snatched from the deep, but afterwards we are taught to man the life-boat ourselves for the rescue of others from destruction. Christianity finds me a soldier wounded in battle, and it heals my wounds, but it does far more than that: it girds me with armor, it gives me a sword, it teaches me to fight, and it makes a hero of me if I yield myself to its full power. God grant it may do this.

III. I will now close with the reflection that the Christian

Supplies Due Nourishment

for the most heroic life. Bear with me while I show you this in a few sentences. We are helped to holy heroism by the reward which it brings: for our blessed Master, though he bids us spurn the thought of reward on earth, yet tells us there is a reward in the thing itself. Just follow my text in the thirty-fifth verse: "Love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great." What reward? Why, the reward of having done good. This is quite enough. If you go to your brother who has treated you so badly, and say, "Brother, we are going to be friends," and you manage to heal all wounds, you will not want any other reward. You will sleep sweetly at night, and the music that awakes you in the morning will be sweet as the bells of heaven. Suppose you have an enemy, and persistently do him all the good you can, you will not wish to be paid for it; it is such a grand thing to have acted like a Christian that you will be

Blessed in the Deed.

Therefore, do not you be so mercenary as to expect to be paid in dirty bronze and tarnished silver, but ask to find your recompense in the spirit by which you are led to do good, and in the smile of your heavenly Father. We are expected to be like God because we are his children. "Ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind to the unthankful and to the evil." We expect to see something of the father in the child. If we are children of God we ought to do what others never think of.

If you are the children of God remember what a brother you have, and what an example he has set you. Come with me to the cross, and there he hangs. It is your Lord, remember! See, the iron passes through his hand: it is your Lord who is thus maimed! The nails tear through his feet: the feet of your Lord! He wears a diadem as monarch, but it is a coronet of thorns: it is your Lord who is thus crowned! He wears crimson, too; but it is his own blood; and he is your own Lord! And they are hissing at him, jesting at his prayers, and scoffing at his cries—all this at

Your Lord!

And what of you? The other day you were ashamed to own that you were his disciple. Are you not disgusted at such cowardice? You were silent the other day when sinners were blaspheming him: you were niggardly when his poor people needed help; you refused to give when his church and his cause knocked at your door. You would not forgive a fellow Christian the other day, and you parted company with one who had been your friend for years, and all for a hot word; and yet you call yourself a Christian! Yes, and I, too, am a Christian, and have my own private cause for self-humiliation; and that is our Master bleeding there. How can we bear to look him in the face? What sorry disciples we are! O blessed Master, let thy blood drop on us till thou hast blotted out these many faults of ours and made us like thyself. Amen.

The best medical authorities say the proper way to treat catarrh is to take a constitutional remedy, like Hood's Sarsaparilla.

The Sword of the Spirit.

To be a Christian is to be a warrior. The good soldier of Jesus Christ must not expect to find ease in this world: it is a battle-field. Neither must he reckon upon the friendship of the world: for that would be enmity against God. His occupation is war. As he puts on piece by piece of the panoply provided for him, he may wisely say to himself, "This warns me of danger; this prepares me for warfare; this promises opposition. Difficulties meet us even in standing our ground; for the apostle, two or three times, bid us—"Stand." In the rush of the fight men are apt to be carried off their legs. If they can keep their footing they will be victorious; but if they are borne down by the rush of their adversaries everything is lost. You are to put on the heavenly armor in order that you may stand, and you will need it to maintain the position in which your Captain has placed you. If even to stand requires all this care, judge ye what the warfare must be! The apostle also speaks of withstanding as well as standing. We are not merely to defend, but also to assail. It is not enough that you are not conquered; you have to conquer, and hence we find that we are to take not only a helmet to protect the head, but also a sword with which to annoy the foe. Ours, therefore, is a stern conflict, standing and withstanding; and we shall want all the armor from the Divine magazine, all the strength from the mighty God of Jacob. —Spurgeon.

Can You Eat

Heartily, with relish, and without distress afterward? If not, we recommend to you Hood's Sarsaparilla, which creates a good appetite and so invigorates the stomach and bowels that the food is properly digested and all its nutriment assimilated.

Notice.

TENDERS will be received up to the Tenth day of February next, at 12 o'clock, noon, for the purchase of the

Stock of Dry Goods belonging to the Estate of Turner & Finlay.

An inventory can be seen at the store, No. 12 King street, St. John. Tenders must state whether for cash or on time, and if on time the security offered. The highest or any tender not necessarily accepted. St. John, N. B., 23rd January, 1892.

SAMUEL C. PORTER, JAMES T. GILCHRIST, Trustees of Turner & Finlay.

Feb. 6th.

Notice of Dissolution

THE undersigned hereby give notice and certify that a certain limited Partnership under the laws of the Province of New Brunswick, conducted under the firm name of "W. C. PITFIELD & Co.," for the buying and selling at wholesale of dry goods and other merchandise, and generally a wholesale dry goods and general jobbing and commission business, which by the certificate of Limited Partnership registered in the office of the Registrar of Deeds of the City and County of Saint John in the said Province, was to commence the Twenty-eighth day of December, A. D. 1889, and terminate the First day of January, A. D. 1892, did terminate and is and was dissolved the said First day of January, A. D. 1892.

(Signed) WARD C. PITFIELD, S. HAYWARD.

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAINT JOHN, to wit:

Be it remembered that WARD C. PITFIELD and SAMUEL HAYWARD, parties to and the signers of the annexed notice and certificate, personally came and appeared at the City of Saint John, in the City and County of Saint John and Province of New Brunswick, before me, J. E. BARNES, one of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace and for the said City and County of Saint John, and acknowledged the said WARD C. PITFIELD that he signed the said notice and certificate, and the said SAMUEL HAYWARD that he signed the same.

Given under my hand at the said City of Saint John this Twenty-first day of December, A. D. 1891.

(Signed) J. E. BARNES, J. P. City and County of Saint John.

Partnership Notice.

THE undersigned, desirous of forming a Limited Partnership under the Laws of the Province of New Brunswick, hereby certify:

1. That the name of the firm under which such partnership is to be conducted is "W. C. PITFIELD & Co.,"

2. That the general nature of the business intended to be transacted by such partnership is the buying and selling at wholesale of dry goods and other merchandise, and generally a wholesale dry goods and general jobbing and commission business.

3. That the names of all the general and special partners interested in said partnership are as follows:

WARD C. PITFIELD, who resides at the City of Saint John in the City and County of Saint John and Province of New Brunswick, is the general partner, and SAMUEL HAYWARD, who resides at the Parish of Hampton in the County of Kings and Province aforesaid, is the special partner.

4. That the said SAMUEL HAYWARD has contributed the sum of forty thousand dollars as capital to common stock.

5. That the period at which the said partnership is to commence is the Second day of January, A. D. 1892, and the period at which the said partnership is to terminate is the Second day of January, A. D. 1896.

Dated this Thirtieth day of December, A. D. 1891

(Signed) WARD C. PITFIELD, S. HAYWARD.

PROVINCE OF NEW BRUNSWICK.

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAINT JOHN, SS.

Be it remembered that on this Thirtieth day of December, A. D. 1891, at the City of Saint John and Province of New Brunswick, before me, JAMES A. BELVEA, a Notary Public in and for the said Province, by lawful authority duly commissioned and sworn, residing and practising in the said City of Saint John, personally came and appeared,

WARD C. PITFIELD and SAMUEL HAYWARD, parties to and the signers of the annexed certificate, and in the said certificate mentioned and severally acknowledged, the said WARD C. PITFIELD that he signed the said certificate, and the said SAMUEL HAYWARD that he signed the said certificate.

In witness whereof, I the said Notary have hereunto set my hand and Notarial Seal at the said City and County of Saint John, the said Thirtieth day of December, A. D. 1891.

(Signed) JAMES A. BELVEA, Notary Public.

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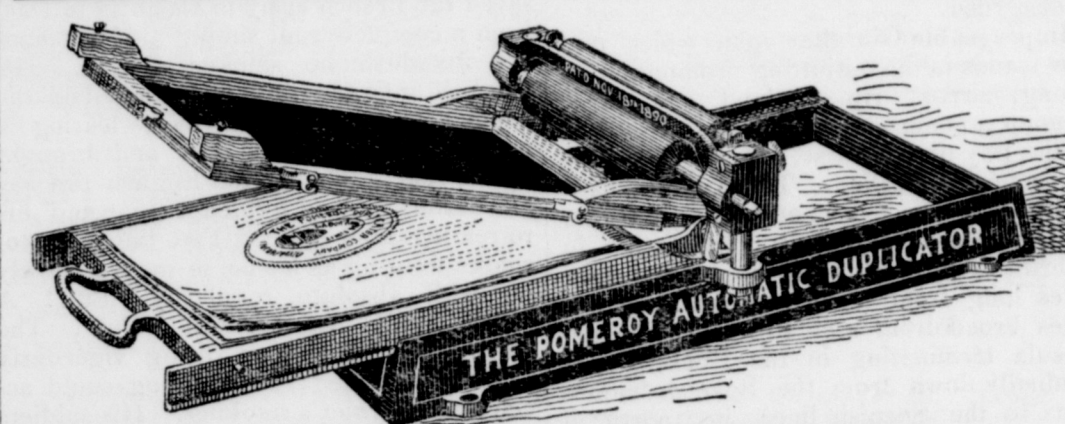
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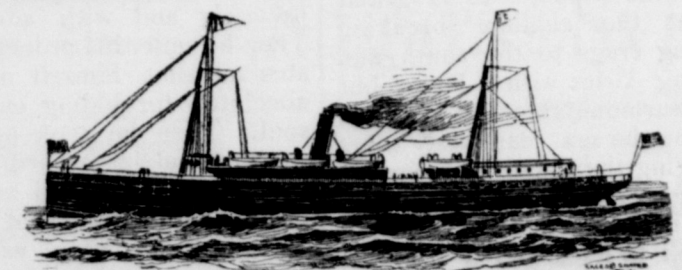
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