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Henry Drummond.*

The last half of the century now drawing to its close has scarcely produced a man whose life and work offer so abundant and inviting material to the biographer as do those of Henry Drummond, and the task of telling the story of this remarkable life could hardly have fallen into better hands than those of Professor George Adam Smith.

Of the author's pleasing style and other literary qualifications it is of course unnecessary to speak. He has shown that he also possesses that tact, discrimination and faithfulness in dealing with his subject so essential to the best work of the biographer. Professor Smith knew Drummond long and intimately and, like all who so knew him, felt for his friend the warmest love and admiration. But his friendship does not destroy his power of kindly criticism. It does not blind him to Drummond's limitations or prevent him from pointing out the unsatisfactory character of some of his reasoning. It is, of course, but a faint picture of a man's life and work that even the best biography can give, and this is especially true of such a life as was Drummond's, with his noble, sunny and mesmeric personality and his grand enthusiasm for truth and for humanity, ever seeking and finding manifold expression. But Dr. Smith has performed his task with rare ability and there can be no doubt, we think, that in the Life of Drummond he has made to English biographical literature a contribution which will be treasured with the best.

Henry Drummond's life falls wholly within the last half of the century. He was born August, 1851, and died March, 1897, being still in the very prime of his manhood, when to human vision it seemed as if his best had not yet been given to the world. Death came as the result of a somewhat rare form of disease, described as "a malignant growth of the bones." It came after two years of weakness that gradually grew to complete helplessness, accompanied with intense pain—an experience which severely tested and made manifest the heroic Christian qualities of the man. For a man like Drummond, with his active disposition, his lively human interest in all things that pertained to healthy human life, and his longing to be at work, it was a sore trial to accept the discipline of a bed of lingering pain. But it was accepted, not only with resignation, but with a cheerful, manful heroism which makes those two last years of passivity and pain not less eloquent as a testimony to the reality of the foundation on which his faith was built than were the years filled with the eager activities which went with healthy, joyous life.

Henry Drummond came of good Scottish stock. His immediate ancestors were tradesmen. His grandfather, William Drummond, did some thinking on his own account, and after Professor Drummond had written his famous book, he found among his grandfather's papers a suggestion that the laws of the natural and the spiritual realm might be identical. His father, Henry Drummond, head of the house of William Drummond and Sons, seedsmen and nurserymen at Stirling and Dublin, was a man of great worth, and, in the latter part of his life, active in religious work. His mother was a Blackwood. For her he cherished a very tender affection, and throughout his life she was his confidential friend. Life in the Drummond home was evidently of the best North Country type,—religious, intellectual, morally pure and otherwise wholesome. As a boy Henry Drummond showed the genial qualities which throughout life made his personality so attractive. There was a sunny-heartedness, an enthusiasm and honest kindness about him which captivated, and withal a nameless something which distinguished him from others. John Watson (Ian Maclaren) describes very pleasantly his first seeing Drummond on the play-ground at the Stirling High School. A game of cricket was on, and Drummond, being at the bat, was run out in a way which would have roused some resentment in most others. But it made no impression on Drummond's sunny temper. "It's all right, and you fellows are not to cry 'shame,'" he cried. "What impressed me," says Ian Maclaren, "that pleasant evening in the days of long ago I can now identify. It was the lad's distinction, an inherent quality of appearance and manner of character and soul which marked him and made him solitary." But this distinction did not separate him from the closest human fellowship. He was most natural and genial in his intercourse with men. "Perhaps the most conspicuous service which Henry Drummond rendered to his generation," says his biographer, "was to show them a Christianity which was perfectly natural. You met him somewhere, a graceful, well-dressed gentleman, tall and lithe, with a swing in his walk and a brightness on his face, who seemed to carry no cares and to know neither presumption nor timidity. You spoke, and found him keen for any of a hundred interests. He fished, he shot, he skated as few can, he played cricket, he would go any distance to see a fire or a football match. He had a new story, or a new puzzle, or a new joke every time he met you. . . . If it was a rainy afternoon in a country house, he described a new game, and in five minutes everybody was in the thick of it. . . . If you were alone with him, he was sure to find out what interested you and listen by the hour. The keen brown eyes got at your heart and you felt that you could speak your best to them. Sometimes you would remember that he was Drummond the evangelist, Drummond the author of books which measured their circulation by thousands. Yet there was no assumption of superiority nor any ambition to gain influence—nothing but the interest of one healthy human being in another. . . . He was one of the purest, most unselfish and reverent souls you ever knew, but you would not have called him saint. The name he went by among younger men was 'The Prince'; there was a distinction and radiance upon him that compelled the title."

Of Drummond's work as an evangelist, as an author and as a traveller and explorer, it is evident that we cannot speak here at any length. Loving nature and deeply interested in natural science, the exploration of new lands had a great attraction for him. He visited the Rocky Mountains, Central Africa and the New Hebrides, and the jottings from his note books relating to his observations and experiences while on his travels add some interesting chapters to the biography.

It was while Drummond was engaged in his theological course at New College, Edinburgh, that Moody and Sankey made their first visit to the British Isles. The account which Professor Smith gives of this work is highly appreciative and interesting. Drummond had already attempted some mission work in the city with encouraging results. When the evangelists came to Edinburgh, he was soon found working heartily with them. Moody quickly recognized his rare ability for evangelistic work, especially in dealing with young men. When they left Scotland to labor in Ireland and England, he also went, and "from April 1874 to July 1875, he followed up the work of the evangelists in the cities of Ireland and England, and he labored by their side in London." He was constantly being called upon to address large audiences and to deal with men personally in respect to their spiritual interests. This was a wonderful experience for a theological student only 22 years of age to be plunged into. When it was over, Drummond hesitated for a time as to his future. There were many invitations to conduct evangelistic services. Mr. Moody wrote him an urgent invitation to join him in the work in America, but after mature consideration, Drummond felt that he ought to return to his studies, and the winter of 1875 accordingly found him addressing himself again to his theological course in Edinburgh.

In temperament, in culture, in modes of thought and manner of life Drummond and Moody differed greatly, but they felt for each other the highest appreciation, the warmest friendship. Of Drummond, Moody wrote: "Never have I known a man who, in my opinion, lived nearer the Master or sought to do his will more fully. . . . No man has been with me for any length of time that I did not see something that was unlike Christ, and I often see it in myself, but not in Henry Drummond. All the time we were together he was a Christlike man and often a rebuke to me." And when Drummond was drawing near the end he spoke one day of Moody as "the greatest human I ever knew."

After the completion of his theological studies there was a short period of waiting, and then Drummond was appointed lecturer on Natural Science in the Free Church College, Glasgow. Here he resumed mission work and delivered to a congregation of working men in a suburb of the city a series of addresses which afterwards afforded the nucleus of *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*, the book which made him famous. Drummond's first attempts to find a publisher were not successful, and the MS. was laid away and almost forgotten. Then a publisher turned up unsought. As soon as the book was through the press, Drummond started on his African tour. For six months he was beyond all news of affairs at home. Then, one midnight, between Nyassa and Tanganyika, a bundle of letters was thrust into his tent. He jumped from bed, struck a light, read, and discovered with surprise that, during those months of silence, his book had been making him famous.

While recognizing in the book much that is beautiful, and much that is valuable for the inspiration and nourishment of the Christian life, Professor Smith points out what he considers the weakness of the author's argument in his introduction. But Drummond's mistaking analogies for identities does not by any means destroy the value of the book for the discriminating reader. Drummond's acceptance of the doctrine of evolution involved some changes in his religious beliefs, which are reflected in his later work, *The Ascent of Man*, but his faith in the gospel of Christ as the power of God unto salvation, and his personal faith in Christ as his Saviour remained unshaken. In such a period of change and unrest, it was inevitable that Drummond's mind should respond to the influences around him. Whether or not the ground which he reached is permanently tenable, is still, as much as ever, matter of debate among Christian scholars; but whatever one may think of the ground which Drummond reached, the record which we find here of his search for truth and of the manner in which he advanced to the views which he adopted, must make this book, to every earnest, enquiring mind, one of very great interest.

* Life of Henry Drummond by George Adam Smith; Toronto: Fleming H. Revell Company. Price $2.00 net.

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The Bread of Life.

BY ALEXANDER MACLAREN, D. D.*

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1. The first point to note is Christ's loving care going out towards the approaching crowd. While all the evangelists tell of this miracle, John alone records the Lord's question to Philip, and its answer, which throws a flood of light on the after stages of the incident and on Christ's tone of feeling. He saw the crowd coming, from his place on the hillside, and no momentary shadow of reluctance to be disturbed passed over his spirit, nor any word of disappointment escaped his lips, as the hope of a brief breathing-time faded away. The imperfection of their motives did not chill his welcome. He surrendered the prospect of repose without a murmur, and accepted even the rude intrusion of this unspiritual crowd of curiosity hunters as an opportunity for service to the Father and to them. It is not easy for us to do likewise.

The question to Philip gives a glimpse of his tender care and forethought, which embraced the lower as well as the higher necessities of men. It implied that the visitors were to be welcomed, and kept there for some hours at least, and it hinted to the disciple that they were to be cordially received, and not driven off, as he and the others might be disposed to do. Disciples often make a hedge round their teacher higher and more prickly than he wishes. Philip appears to have been of a matter-of-fact turn of mind, and characteristically set himself to run quickly over a rough calculation, which came out that some thirty or thirty-five dollars would pay for one insufficient meal for each. Jesus said and did no more then, but left the intention to provide food and the calculation of what would be wanted to work in the disciples' minds all day. No doubt the conversation was duly reported by Philip. "This he said to prove him." Jesus does so still, bringing us up full front with some great work, that we may realize what is needed for doing it, and measures our own small stores against its great demands, and so be led more and more to wait on him for power beyond our own. Often, too, the greatness of the demand is overwhelmingly clear to us long before the way to meet it is disclosed, as Philip and the others had to think over the problem all day long, and saw no way through it.

2. The next point is the disciples' discovery of the small means at their command. No doubt they had been inquiring among the crowd as to what provision they had, and had come across the lad who had brought his little stock in trade in hope of finding a market. Possibly they had bespoken it as a small beginning of the two hundred pennyworth. Small indeed,—five loaves of the cheapest kind of grain and two small fishes! It is good for us to be driven to take stock of our resources if the discovery of their scantiness does not hinder us from taking them to Him. Truly all that we can of ourselves produce will go but a little way towards satisfying a world's hunger; but if that conviction is driven home to us as Christ took means to drive it home to the disciples, we shall do as they did, and lay the poverty of our provision at his feet and shall have this miracle repeated in our own experience.

3. Next comes the miracle itself. There is majestic calmness and confidence in the command

* From an article on the Bible lesson for February 19 in the 'S. S. Times.'